



Case No. SCSL-2003-01-T

THE PROSECUTOR OF
THE SPECIAL COURT
V.
CHARLES GHANKAY TAYLOR

TUESDAY, 14 JULY 2009
9.30 A.M.
TRIAL

TRIAL CHAMBER II

Before the Judges:

Justice Richard Lussick, Presiding
Justice Teresa Doherty
Justice Julia Sebutinde
Justice El Hadji Malick Sow, Alternate

For Chambers:

Mr Simon Meisenberg
Ms Doreen Kiggundu

For the Registry:

Mr Gregory Townsend
Ms Advera Nsiima Kamuzora
Ms Rachel Irura
Mr Benedict Williams

For the Prosecution:

Mr Stephen Rapp
Ms Brenda J Hollis
Mr Mohamed A Bangura
Mr Christopher Santora
Ms Maja Dimitrova

**For the accused Charles Ghankay
Taylor:**

Mr Courtenay Griffiths QC
Mr Morris Anyah
Mr Terry Munyard
Mr James Supuwood
Ms Salla Moilanen

**For the Office of the Principal
Defender:**

Ms Claire Carlton-Hanciles

1 Tuesday, 14 July 2009

2 [Open session]

3 [The accused present]

4 [Upon commencing at 9.30 a.m.]

09:30:41 5 PRESIDING JUDGE: Good morning. We'll take appearances
6 first, please.

7 MS HOLLIS: Good morning, Mr President, your Honours,
8 opposing counsel. Appearing this morning for the Prosecution are
9 the Prosecutor Stephen Rapp, Mohamed A Bangura, Christopher
09:31:00 10 Santora, Maja Dimitrova and myself Brenda J Hollis.

11 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, Mr Griffiths.

12 MR GRIFFITHS: Good morning, Mr President, your Honours,
13 counsel opposite. For the Defence today are myself Courtenay
14 Griffiths, assisted by my learned friends Mr Morris Anyah,
09:31:20 15 Mr Terry Munyard and Clir Supuwood and also our case manager
16 Salla Moilanen and also we're joined by the acting Principal
17 Defender Ms Claire Carlton-Hanciles.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, Mr Griffiths, I believe you're going
19 into evidence today.

09:31:42 20 MR GRIFFITHS: Mr President, yes, but I understood that we
21 were awaiting a decision regarding an application I made
22 yesterday.

23 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, we are. I was going to announce
24 that later in the day, but --

09:31:56 25 MR GRIFFITHS: Very well. So I call Mr Taylor, the
26 accused.

27 DANKPANNAH DR CHARLES GHANKAY TAYLOR: [Affirmed]

28 EXAMINATION-IN-CHIEF BY MR GRIFFITHS:

29 Q. I'm sure I don't have to remind you, Mr Taylor, because

1 you've been observing these proceedings now for many months, but
2 it's vitally important that you keep your voice up and that you
3 speak slowly and clearly. Can you give the Court your full name,
4 please?

09:33:37 5 A. My name is Dankpannah Dr Charles Ghankay Taylor, the 21st
6 President of the Republic of Liberia.

7 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, as you're aware you are charged on an
8 indictment containing 11 counts which alleges that you are
9 everything from a terrorist to a rapist. What do you say about
10 that?

11 A. It is quite incredible that such descriptions of me would
12 come about. Very, very, very unfortunate that the Prosecution,
13 because of disinformation, misinformation, lies, rumours, would
14 associate me with such titles or descriptions. I am none of
09:34:43 15 those, have never been and will never be whether they think so or
16 not. I am a father of 14 children, grandchildren, with love for
17 humanity. I have fought all my life to do what I thought was
18 right in the interests of justice and fair play. I resent that
19 characterisation of me, it is false, it is malicious and I stop
09:35:24 20 there.

21 Q. Now help us, why did you launch an invasion of Liberia in
22 December 1989?

23 A. Liberia has a very long what some may call a checkered
24 history. The NPFL that launched the revolution that I led was
09:35:54 25 the second NPFL, not the first. Following years of turmoil that
26 I would say goes back to as far as 1955 or before, and maybe at
27 some point in time we will deal with what 1955 meant to
28 Liberians, we had problems. The government of one of my
29 predecessors, Samuel Kanyon Doe, had led a very violent campaign

1 against citizens of the country and I have no direct quarrels
2 with him because maybe he may have had his own reasons, but
3 citizens of Nimba were killed. The general that led the rising
4 during that particular time, General Thomas Quiwonkpa, was
09:37:06 5 captured, killed in Monrovia and cannibalised by then members of
6 the Armed Forces of Liberia. Elections were held, they were
7 stolen by Doe and there was a reign of terror and so we went in
8 to bring about some order and restore democracy in Liberia.

9 Q. Now help us, Mr Taylor. During the course of the NPFL's
09:37:44 10 campaign in Liberia, were atrocities committed?

11 A. I will be the first to admit that bad things did happen in
12 Liberia during the operations of the NPFL, for several reasons.
13 Let's not forget we are dealing with a period of tribal problems.
14 Doe had killed Nimbadiens, Gios and Manos and Krahs were
09:38:21 15 involved in the operations, assisted by some other groups. There
16 was bad blood, the need for revenge on the part of certain
17 groups. All of these things were going on, so when we launched
18 this revolution to bring about stability in the country. Yes,
19 there were times when some individuals, because of their own
09:38:51 20 selfish motives, engaged in certain actions, but what is very
21 clear is that when we found out that atrocities had been
22 committed, we acted.

23 There are so many cases that have come in evidence before
24 this Court where the Prosecution have said that we - they called
09:39:16 25 the names of several generals that were executed, yes, we did.
26 They were tried before military tribunals using the military code
27 of justice that officers on this side of the Court know very
28 well, the uniform code of military justice, and if individuals
29 and citizens were murdered in cold blood they were taken before

1 military tribunal, they had a fair day in court, and if they were
2 found guilty and the punishment was whatever I, as the leader of
3 the NPFL, approved. There was just no indiscriminate killing of
4 people. But these terrible things happened but we took action as
09:40:04 5 we found out. Now, I don't claim that we knew everything that
6 happened, but whatever happened that we got to find out, we acted
7 upon.

8 Q. Now you call it a revolution, Mr Taylor; why?

9 A. Change. Liberia had a history of one party. The True Whig
09:40:30 10 Party in Liberia was all of our party, whether you wanted to be a
11 member of the party or not you were just a True Whigger. That
12 Whig is that old southern style politics that the quote unquote
13 Americo-Liberian brought as the freed slaves returned from the
14 United States and they had what they called the Whigs. So the
09:40:54 15 True Whig Party in Liberia was the only party, and that continued
16 throughout the Tolbert administration and when Doe came in he
17 continued. So the revolution was to bring about a full change to
18 bring about democracy, multi-party democracy, may I say, and a
19 rule of law which we no longer knew. After the failed attempt of
09:41:22 20 General Quiwonkpa, things got really out of hand.

21 Q. Was that revolution informed by any particular ideology?

22 A. You know, when we get into ideology, I have tried not to
23 become so ideologically attached to some of these different
24 dogmas that you hear, but it was informed by one thing; a desire
09:41:52 25 for democracy and the rule of law.

26 Q. Now moving on, Mr Taylor, did you knowingly assist Foday
27 Sankoh and the RUF to invade Sierra Leone?

28 A. I, Charles Ghankay Taylor, never ever at any time knowingly
29 assist Foday Sankoh in the invasion of Sierra Leone.

1 Q. Did you plan such an invasion with him?

2 A. I never ever planned any invasion of that friendly country
3 with Foday Sankoh.

09:42:49

4 Q. Did you have prior knowledge that such an invasion would
5 take place?

6 A. Now, I may have to probably just seek some clarification.
7 I was aware from Libya that a Sierra Leonean group, the Sierra
8 Leonean Pan-African Revolutionary Movement, harboured the intent
9 to carry on such operations in Sierra Leone at the time in Libya,
10 and so that's why I said I need some clarification. But as to
11 the Foday Sankoh operation, no.

09:43:23

12 Q. Did you ever provide the RUF with military assistance?

09:44:04

13 A. I did not provide the RUF with any military assistance to
14 invade Sierra Leone. However, between the periods of August 1991
15 throughout May of 1992, there was cooperation between the RUF and
16 the NPFL following the invasion of Liberia by ULIMO. They had
17 been armed, trained and sent in by the Momoh government. Now, I
18 provided for the protection of the borders of Liberia, as was my
19 duty and responsibility at the time - I provided small amounts of
20 arms and ammunition, more ammunition than arms to that particular
21 group.

09:44:40

22 Now let me be specific. Before this Court these judges
23 have seen a letter produced by the Prosecution of Foday Sankoh
24 writing me a letter complaining about small amounts of arms or
25 ammunition, yes, and I think he had a reason to complain because
26 in fact I was struggling myself and probably his expectations
27 were too high. But I did, between that period in question, and
28 it ended in May of 1992 after several of my men that were
29 providing security on that border, and in fact jointly fighting a

09:45:03

1 common enemy, happening to be ULIMO, we withdrew our men and
2 ceased all, and I mean all, cooperation with the RUF.

3 Q. Did you thereafter provide any military assistance to the
4 RUF?

09:45:55 5 A. None whatsoever.

6 Q. Were you thereafter aware of atrocities being committed in
7 Sierra Leone?

8 A. Well, I put it this way: There is no one on this planet
9 that would not have heard through international broadcasts or
09:46:29 10 probably discussions about what was going on in Sierra Leone. I
11 would be the first to say yes, we did hear of certain actions
12 that were going on in Sierra Leone that we - that were a little
13 strange to us because those things did not occur in Liberia.

14 Q. What things?

09:46:51 15 A. Well, we heard that people were getting killed, women were
16 getting raped and different things, and we couldn't understand
17 it. I could not understand it, because these are things that we
18 did not tolerate in Liberia and so for me it was unacceptable.

19 But then again we had no way of verifying whether, you know,
09:47:17 20 these were true because we did not have anyone in there to tell
21 us because, you know, these days when you see reports on
22 television - I'm seeing on television this morning that I ordered
23 people to cannibalise people in Sierra Leone, and when you begin
24 to look at the different slants in the news, well, you hear them,
09:47:37 25 you cannot verify them, and it was not in my - it was not my duty
26 to verify them, but I would say we did hear about those things in
27 Sierra Leone.

28 Q. And had you ordered the RUF or any other group in Sierra
29 Leone to carry out such actions?

1 A. That would be virtually impossible because the actions that
2 we took in Liberia, and those actions have been spelt out before
3 this Court, they have talked about - the Prosecution has talked
4 about several generals that were executed, well, they were
09:48:18 5 executed for murder under the uniform code of military justice.
6 They were all - in fact they were executed for rape. And so if
7 we were taking these stringent measures in Liberia, even if one
8 were to assume for the sake of argument that, as the Prosecution
9 states that I had command and control of Sierra Leone, which is
09:48:42 10 not the truth, realising the fact that we were dealing
11 stringently with rape and murder and harassment in Liberia, why
12 would anyone believe or bring themselves so low to believe that
13 what I was not permitting in Liberia, even if I had control in
14 Sierra Leone, I would permit in Sierra Leone.

09:49:06 15 It was inhumane, it was wrong. I would have never, even if
16 during the period between August 1991 and May of 1992, if I,
17 during that period while we had cooperations for my security in
18 Liberia, and I may say selfishly for our security because in fact
19 we used the presence of the RUF for that, but if that was
09:49:43 20 occurring during that period I would have done everything to stop
21 it and in fact probably the cooperation, and let me just move the
22 probable, the cooperation between the RUF and the NPFL, again
23 during that period, would have probably ended in a shorter period
24 of time. I would have never, never, ever permitted such to
09:50:10 25 continue if I had anything to do with it.

26 Q. Specifically, Mr Taylor, did you ever order the trademark
27 atrocity of the Sierra Leonean conflict; amputations?

28 A. It's impossible for that to have ever been ordered by me.
29 Let's look at the Liberian civil war. There's been no evidence

1 before these judges, regardless of all of the witnesses brought
2 here, the low ones like the Marzahs of this world, the sick
3 puppies like the Marzah of this world, you understand me, that
4 would say that this was ever, you know, a situation that could
09:51:01 5 have happened. No, ever.

6 Q. To your knowledge did amputations take place in Liberia?

7 A. Never. That's the point I'm making. Amputations
8 throughout the history of Liberia and in all of the evidence
9 here, even though the Prosecution has tried to drag the Liberian
09:51:21 10 civil crisis in here through the back door, when the indictment
11 is as of 1996, there's not one case before this Court of
12 amputations in Liberia. None whatsoever. It's not a phenomena
13 of Liberia. It is wrong. It never happened in Liberia. I would
14 have never, ever accepted that in Liberia, and we would have
09:51:45 15 never encouraged that in Sierra Leone.

16 Q. Mr Taylor, did you plan or order or otherwise participate
17 in the invasion of Freetown on 6 January 1999?

18 A. Let's look at the period in question, 1999 January. I'm a
19 member of the Committee of Five trying to --

09:52:19 20 Q. Explain what that is, please.

21 A. The Committee of Five, upon my election as President of
22 Liberia, ECOWAS had been dealing with the Sierra Leonean problem
23 then under the Committee of Four. Upon being elected, jokingly
24 my colleagues in ECOWAS said to me: Well, you know, listen, we
09:52:48 25 have a problem continuing in Sierra Leone and you are an old
26 rebel, so you know how to deal with rebels, so why don't you -
27 we're going to put you on this committee to see how much help you
28 can be to us because you know how to deal with rebels. I laughed
29 and said, well, I'm no longer a rebel so, but I will do whatever

1 I can. They said, well, don't forget you share borders with
2 Sierra Leone so we want to bring you on this committee. And so I
3 was placed on the Committee of Five to help to bring peace to
4 Sierra Leone.

09:53:34 5 Q. I'm sorry, you haven't answered my question, Mr Taylor, so
6 let me ask you again. Did you plan or order or in any other way
7 participate in the invasion of Freetown on 6 January 1999?

8 A. Okay, I answered that question. I stopped there because
9 your second question was what was the Committee of Five, but
09:53:58 10 working on that committee my job - I was put on the front line to
11 help to bring peace to Sierra Leone. There were discussions that
12 started, so my entire period was spent between trying to fix war
13 torn Liberia that had gone through a terrible seven year civil
14 war, while at the same time helping my colleagues to bring peace
09:54:28 15 to Sierra Leone.

16 Now within this period of time one would have to be almost
17 a Superman to be performing, trying to rebuild his country, his
18 economy that is torn and having to deal with being a part of
19 planning and ordering some invasion of Freetown on 6 January
09:55:02 20 1999. In fact upon hearing of that invasion at that particular
21 time I was outraged, because we had been doing everything as of
22 August 1998 in consultation with our colleagues in ECOWAS. We
23 had commenced putting pressure on the RUF to come to the peace
24 table.

09:55:30 25 So what I had done, I had closed the border as of August
26 1998 with Sierra Leone as a way of trying to put pressure on the
27 RUF to first of all stop making ceasefire agreements and breaking
28 it on the other hand, so it is impossible - in fact it is just
29 incredible that on the one hand I'm trying to work with Liberia

1 with all of my own difficulties, working with my colleagues
2 trying to bring peace and at the same time getting involved in
3 trying to order, plan or execute some action in Sierra Leone on 6
4 January. Impossible. It could not have happened. I had no
09:56:18 5 knowledge of it and was outraged, as were all of my colleagues in
6 ECOWAS, upon hearing of this terrible thing that happened. We
7 could not understand it.

8 Q. Help us, when and how did you hear about the Freetown
9 invasion?

09:56:36 10 A. My national security advisor on the morning of 6 January.
11 As is done in Liberia almost every morning, one of the first
12 individuals that I meet is the national security advisor that
13 will come in with news reports and so called intelligence
14 overnight, and this was revealed to me by the national security
09:57:03 15 advisor. Unlike what some of the witnesses have come here and
16 said about me being sitting before a television 24/7, that's
17 virtually impossible. The work of a President is not sitting
18 before a television. That is what other people are there to do.
19 My national security advised me of it as of the morning of 6
09:57:28 20 January.

21 Q. And who was your national security advisor?

22 A. John T Richardson.

23 Q. And help us, what was in fact going on in Liberia in
24 January 1999?

09:57:39 25 A. In January of 1999 we were going through - I was dealing
26 with the United Nations in trying to get them to help Liberia in
27 capacity building. There were discussions about movement of
28 refugees and trying to get them returned, Liberian refugees and
29 other parts of West Africa, West African refugees. I was very,

1 very busy with government.

2 Q. Now, help us with this. What was your major preoccupation
3 after you were elected President in 1997?

4 A. We had a seven year civil war. The country was torn apart.
09:58:41 5 Everything was destroyed. The roads were bad. In fact some of
6 the roads that I hear claims of in this Court that we were
7 supposed to be transporting arms and ammunition on, I don't know
8 if these roads even existed.

9 We had total decay. We had seven years of civil war, lives
09:59:03 10 torn apart. My principal preoccupation was how do we begin to
11 rebuild the war torn country? How do we begin to bring families
12 back together, mend fences and reconcile? I was engaged with
13 trying to get international assistance to build the country.

14 After the years of the former President Doe where things
09:59:37 15 had gone far down the drain, the economy was virtually wrecked.
16 Add seven years to that and Liberia had really gone back I would
17 say a quarter of a century. We were, some argued, operating in
18 the 1920s. And I was preoccupied with trying to make friends,
19 encourage countries to come in, look at investments and other
10:00:06 20 things.

21 For example, let's look at one principal area that we were
22 preoccupied with. One of the big issues being raised as though
23 people don't understand better, but I guess this is the way
24 propaganda goes, let's look at the timber industry. All of the
10:00:25 25 equipment in the country had been destroyed during the war, had
26 been picked apart, parts taken off. The time required to
27 revitalise for example the timber industry took us about two and
28 a half years between trying to encourage people to return, giving
29 them incentives to come back to the country.

1 We were just preoccupied with Liberia, not talking about
2 having added the whole Sierra Leone part of it with my colleagues
3 encouraging me, but in short I was preoccupied with trying to get
4 Liberia back to life. This was my preoccupation.

10:01:06 5 Q. And how soon after you were elected President did you
6 become a member of the Committee of Five?

7 A. Almost immediately.

8 Q. And why did you become a member?

9 A. Well I felt that after my colleagues jokingly asked me to -
10 in fact forced me to - join, I thought that I could be of some
11 help because I realised that unless peace returned to Sierra
12 Leone there was no way that Liberia could make it. Absolutely no
13 way. There was still some 260,000 Sierra Leonean refugees in
14 Liberia during the war while there were also some maybe 50/60,000
10:02:11 15 Liberians in Sierra Leone and Guinea.

16 Now when you look at that you can see that it was
17 extraordinarily important that everything was done to bring peace
18 to Sierra Leone because number one, yes, there were all these
19 accusations. There are always accusations and I'm sure these
10:02:36 20 learned judges understand that when Presidents accuse Presidents,
21 sometimes they're trying to what they call draw smoke. For
22 example so many times I accused Tejan Kabbah and he accused me.
23 It didn't mean that it was factual, okay?

24 So you had this situation where you have all these
10:02:59 25 movements, you have the refugees you're trying to bring in and so
26 it was the situation where I felt that we were so intertwined
27 that the international community looking at these accusations
28 were denying me aid. We could not get aid, we could not get
29 assistance, and so they tied the life of Sierra Leone. If I may

1 say that figuratively speaking, they tied the life of Sierra
2 Leone to the life of Liberia. So for me it became a duty and a
3 responsibility to help in whatever way that I could to help end
4 this conflict in Sierra Leone, because unless it ended Liberia
10:03:46 5 would never move. That's why I got involved.

6 Q. Did you want to remain President of Liberia?

7 A. Did I want to remain?

8 Q. Yes.

9 A. Well, of course I felt I could make a difference. Yes, I

10:04:03 10 wanted to remain President of Liberia because I felt I could make
11 a difference.

12 Q. Now in your capacity as a member of the Committee of Five,
13 what was your main objective?

14 A. The first thing that they did was to put me on the front
10:04:27 15 line, I would say really put me on the front line because we had
16 a border, and then said to me, "We really want you to get
17 personally involved in whatever way you can and keep us informed
18 through consultations to help to bring peace to Sierra Leone."

19 So my objective at that particular time was to do just that; get
10:04:53 20 involved, help them work, arm twist here and there wherever we
21 could to bring about this peace that not just Sierra Leoneans
22 needed, but Liberians needed.

23 Q. Mr Taylor, in your capacity as a member of the Committee of
24 Five did you have personal contact with Sam Bockarie?

10:05:17 25 A. Yes, I did.

26 Q. Why?

27 A. Being on the front line and being in charge of the Sierra
28 Leonean issue as my colleagues had asked me to - and by the way,
29 let me just add for the judges this is contained in resolutions

1 of ECOWAS that will be presented to this Court, communique on
2 the approval of ECOWAS stating exactly what I'm saying, asking me
3 to get personally involved on the front line in helping to
4 resolve the issue in Sierra Leone.

10:05:55 5 Q. Now in your capacity as a member of the Committee of
6 Five --

7 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Mr Griffiths, I don't think your witness
8 answered that question why did he have personal contact. He
9 veered off.

10:06:11 10 THE WITNESS: Yes, okay. Well my colleagues had asked me
11 to have this personal contact because of my experience they had
12 said before as quote unquote the old rebel, so we had to maintain
13 this contact because I was placed with that responsibility to
14 make sure that we did. And so we established this contact and
10:06:37 15 began the process of what you may want to call being really a
16 mediator at the time, and so we made contact with Sam Bockarie
17 because at this particular time Foday Sankoh, remember, is in
18 prison.

19 But let me just add that contact was not just solely my
10:07:01 20 prerogative. As I was in contact with Sam Bockarie, so were the
21 other members of that committee. They could call him. In fact I
22 could speak to him, I kept them briefed, but they also could call
23 him at any time they chose.

24 MR GRIFFITHS:

10:07:23 25 Q. What year did you first make contact with Sam Bockarie?

26 A. Our first real contact with Sam Bockarie was in late 1997
27 to early 1998. I can't recall the exact month, but it was very
28 close around this time following the second Heads of State
29 meeting which occurred in September. So I would put it to about

1 the last quarter in '97 to the beginning of '98 when we - I
2 ordered the general at the Lofa side of the border to contact
3 Mr Bockarie and RUF people to invite him to Liberia for
4 discussions and to inform him what my role was and on whose
10:08:21 5 behalf I was acting, which was ECOWAS.

6 Q. What's the name of the general in Lofa?

7 A. Sadly, so there is also a Mosquito in Liberia. The name is
8 General Christopher Vambos, aka Mosquito, who knew Sam Bockarie
9 during the period that the RUF and the NPFL cooperated.

10:08:46 10 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: What was that surname again, please?

11 THE WITNESS: Aka Mosquito. But the last --

12 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: No, the surname.

13 THE WITNESS: Vambos. I think it's V-A-M-B-O-S.

14 Christopher Vambos.

10:09:08 15 MR GRIFFITHS:

16 Q. Help us a little further in this respect, Mr Taylor. Did
17 you equally have contact with Issa Sesay?

18 A. No. Issa Sesay at that particular time, no. Sam Bockarie
19 was the leader of the RUF and we dealt with Sam Bockarie.

10:09:27 20 Q. Did you at any later stage have contact with Issa Sesay?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. How did that come about?

23 A. My first contact with Issa Sesay was in 2000. Around about
24 I would say May/June of 2000 was my first contact. This was the
10:09:55 25 period where Foday Sankoh had been arrested for the second time
26 in the infamous situation in Freetown. Sam Bockarie is now in
27 Liberia and ECOWAS, we were all very, very, very disturbed by the
28 issues in Sierra Leone at the time of the unfortunate arrest of
29 United Nations peacekeepers and so we, through hundreds of

1 calls - it looks so simple now where the other side have tried to
2 claim that we had control, but it is very important that we
3 understand that the arrest of those UN peacekeepers was not a
4 very small issue at the time. It was virtually a global issue.

10:10:57 5 Speaking figuratively I can say there were phone calls coming in
6 to me from everyone, their mothers and their grandmothers, about
7 these UN peacekeepers that had been caught in Sierra Leone, and
8 so I got in contact with him after being asked to do everything
9 that I could to help in their release. This was the first main
10:11:19 10 contact with Issa Sesay.

11 Q. And help us: At the time you made contact with him was
12 Issa Sesay formally the head of the RUF?

13 A. No, he had not formally become the head of the RUF;
14 however, he was the most senior general in the RUF at the time.

10:11:39 15 Q. And so how did it come about that he was the person you
16 spoke to in the absence of Foday Sankoh?

17 A. Well, Sam Bockarie is not there who took over after Foday
18 Sankoh, and questions were asked and we knew - don't forget at
19 the time in 1998 that we established the contact with Sam

10:12:09 20 Bockarie as leader of the RUF we provided for the RUF a
21 guesthouse in Monrovia, not a safe house, a guesthouse. Not a
22 safe house; a house that was provided for them that served as an
23 office, as a lodging place, and a place where every diplomat
24 accredited near the capital of Monrovia went, saw them, consulted
10:12:44 25 and more specifically ECOWAS ambassadors. Okay.

26 So we knew because the RUF had personnel at that property,
27 and so through communications we got to know that the main person
28 that was operating in Sierra Leone after the arrest of Foday
29 Sankoh was Issa Sesay. So we then sought to contact him.

1 Q. Was he happy to adopt the role of leader?

2 A. Well, I'll tell you, Issa was one - he's a very careful
3 person. I say this because in answer to your question,
4 subsequent to this meeting when I convened a Heads of State
10:13:35 5 meeting in Monrovia later on in July of 2000 to try, along with
6 my colleagues, several presidents of West Africa had convened a
7 meeting to deal with the Sierra Leonean problem - we then posed
8 the issue of leadership to Issa Sesay. He was a little reluctant
9 and did not really accept unless he told us he got the permission
10:14:02 10 from Foday Sankoh, where both Obasanjo and Alfa Konare, Obasanjo
11 the former President of Nigeria, and Alpha Konare, the former
12 President of Mali that was chairman of ECOWAS that left that
13 meeting to go to Freetown to meet Tejan Kabbah to get Foday
14 Sankoh's approval. So if I may say, your Honours, I think he was
10:14:27 15 one of those reluctant leaders at the time.

16 Q. Did you, Charles Taylor, appoint him as leader of the RUF?

17 A. No, I never did. Never could have. If anyone did I would
18 say ECOWAS did. Because at that meeting in 2000 I just mentioned
19 that I convened a Heads of State meeting in Monrovia. At that
10:14:49 20 meeting were the President of The Gambia, President Yahya AJJ
21 Jammeh.

22 Q. Can you help us with some spellings, please?

23 A. I think it's on the record. I wouldn't like to mislead the
24 Court. I think it's on the record, please. I think these are
10:15:07 25 names. I will just ask for some help from the Court. Present at
26 that meeting also was the chairman of ECOWAS, President Alpha
27 Konare, he attended that meeting. Also present at that meeting
28 is the late President of Togo, Gnassingbe Eyadema. Also present
29 at that meeting was the former President of Nigeria, Obasanjo was

1 present. I convened this meeting to discuss with them this
2 problem that they had placed in my lap about Sierra Leone and the
3 question came up: What do we do? Foday Sankoh is imprisoned,
4 the July 1999 peace accord is in trouble, there's no one to talk
10:16:07 5 to, what do we do? So we met and at that meeting all of the
6 Heads of State present agreed that the probable thing to do was
7 to ask Issa Sesay to take over the leadership. Issa at that
8 meeting said: Well, I have to go and contact my people back
9 behind me in Sierra Leone, but even more particularly I need the
10:16:31 10 approval of the leader of the RUF, and so Presidents Obasanjo and
11 Konare flew to Freetown. Tejan Kabbah brought Foday Sankoh to
12 them. The message was delivered to Sankoh. He approved it.
13 Obasanjo and Konare left; went to their respective countries.
14 Issa Sesay returned to his post. Two weeks later Obasanjo and
10:17:08 15 Alpha Konare flew back to Liberia, and at the Roberts
16 International Airport Issa Sesay was appointed leader of the RUF.
17 Q. Mr Taylor, did you ever deal in diamonds with the RUF in
18 return for arms?
19 A. Never. There is not one human who believes in the truth
10:17:40 20 can say that I, Charles Ghankay Taylor, dealt with the RUF or
21 anyone in the RUF taking diamonds for arms or taking diamonds for
22 anything. None.
23 Q. I'll ask you very directly, Mr Taylor: Based on the
24 evidence called by the Prosecution, and I'm speaking louder
10:18:00 25 because I'm told that my voice was very faint, were you regularly
26 receiving mayonnaise jars full of diamonds from the RUF?
27 A. Never ever did I receive, whether it is mayonnaise or
28 coffee or whatever jar, never receive any diamonds from the RUF.
29 It's a lie, it's a diabolical lie. Never.

1 Q. Why did you step down as President in 2003?

2 A. Following the burning of the arms in 1999 Liberia came
3 under attack by a group calling itself LURD. LURD happened to
4 have been armed and supported through Guinea by the United States
10:19:18 5 government. I do not say this in speculation. We - my
6 government confronted the United States government accusing them
7 of this allegation. They never denied it. In fact the
8 ambassador accredited of the United States [indiscernible] capita
9 confirmed that arms and ammunition had been given to quote
10:19:50 10 unquote the Guinean armed forces and whatever they did with it,
11 they could not account for it. Well, diplomatically we know what
12 that means. It simply means that look, this is covert and we'll
13 do it. So they did. Now, when we --

14 Q. Take your time, Mr Taylor.

10:20:33 15 A. During the war, as LURD approached Monrovia, it was a very
16 sad thing that happened. Mortar shells launched by LURD,
17 shrapnel from those shells were taken to the UN embassy. They
18 confirmed that the shrapnel were shrapnel from the United States
19 mortars. Now, these shells had dropped on an area that is
10:21:10 20 considered a diplomatic compound of the United States Embassy in
21 Monrovia called Greystone, where hundreds of Liberians had
22 assembled for rescue. Several mortar shells fell on that
23 compound and there were scores of people killed. There were
24 limbs thrown all over the place. The citizens in that compound
10:21:38 25 took the bodies and took them at the gates of the US Embassy and
26 said to them: Well, here is what you have done to our people.
27 The United States government strangely, and maybe for the first
28 time, and I stand corrected, did not condemn the shelling of
29 those civilians in Monrovia.

1 During the war citizens had retreated to Monrovia, so I
2 would say there were maybe about a million people that had
3 gathered in different parts of the city, and I must admit we've
4 always known America to be, under some circumstances, humane;
10:22:25 5 there are other cases where they're not. But for the United
6 States government not to condemn these people on the diplomatic
7 compound convinced me that the United States in their regime
8 change policy where George Bush had called upon me to leave, he
9 said Taylor must leave, the United States had sent from Iraq at
10:22:48 10 that time 5,000 US Marines, the Prosecution knows this, I think
11 they should bring the information, they have a right - they know
12 this. 5,000 marines were within eyesight of the presidency. I
13 could stand on my back porch and look at huge - this huge
14 American flotilla right outside of the Executive Mansion door.
10:23:14 15 Their failure to condemn these atrocities convinced me that they
16 would go to any length and probably kill the whole country to get
17 rid of Charles Taylor. I then decided in the interests of peace
18 and the love for my people that I would leave. That's why I
19 resigned. I did not, as has been said, run away. I followed the
10:23:37 20 constitutional process as enshrined in the constitution of
21 Liberia. The legislature was informed that as of 11 August
22 midday I would turn over the affairs of office to my
23 Vice-President, and so when he sat here and lied before these
24 judges that it was --
10:24:01 25 Q. Who sat here?
26 A. Moses Zeh Blah that he, "Oh, it just happened. He didn't
27 even know", he lied. The legislature was written a letter. He
28 is the President of the senate. He was present in the senate
29 meeting. He presided over the senate meeting when the letter was

1 read. Two weeks before programmes were prepared. Heads of State
2 were invited. South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, was there. We had the
3 President of Mozambique, Chi ssano, present. The President of
4 Ghana, Kufuor, was present. These things don't just happen
10:24:35 5 overnight that boom, spur of a moment somebody shows up.

6 Q. Well, that's what Moses Blah told these judges.

7 A. Well, he lied to these judges. Diabolically he lied and we
8 will prove it here. There are videos and films of Moses Blah who
9 is - you know, I know Moses very well. He read a prepared

10:25:01 10 speech. Now, one would have to be crazy to believe that he sat
11 down during the programme and wrote a prepared speech. Nonsense.
12 He lied to these judges in so many other ways that we'll get into
13 later.

14 Q. And help us, was there an agreement setting out the terms
10:25:24 15 for your resignation?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. What was it?

18 A. I was attending a conference for peace in Accra.

19 Q. When was that?

10:25:42 20 A. That was around, I stand corrected on this, about June - I
21 want to believe, May/June of 2003, when this infamous indictment
22 was unveiled. And I said to my colleagues that, "Look, the
23 situation in Liberia is getting very, very tenuous right now and
24 I've just had enough of this." I explained this very incident
10:26:18 25 that I've just explained to the judges about the shell they had
26 falling and how people were getting killed and shells were
27 falling all over the city. And I told them that I wanted to -
28 that I would step down and they had agreed. Now as we walked out
29 of the meeting, all of the Heads of State to go to the conference

1 hall, the news came out that the indictment had been, what do you
2 call it in legal terms? Had been opened, whatever.

3 Q. Unveiled.

10:26:56

4 A. Unveiled. We returned to the hall, because they knew that
5 problems were about to come, we go back to the hall and they say,
6 "Oh, my God. What is this?" I say, "Well, gentlemen, we do have
7 a new problem." And they said to me, "Well, look, this is
8 unacceptable. We're here for peace."

9 Q. Who said that?

10:27:16

10 A. All of my colleagues: Thabo Mbeki, Kufuor, Obasanjo.
11 Kabbah Tejani was in that meeting.

12 Q. And what did he say?

10:27:42

13 A. Well, I can tell you. If I recall Tejani's own behaviour,
14 I want to believe Tejani knew. He did not react in any way. He
15 kept quiet. But my colleagues said, "But this is unacceptable.
16 We cannot do this." And they said, "Well, Mr Taylor, our
17 brother, what would you do?" I said, "Well, I have to think
18 about it." And they say, "Well, look. It is important that you
19 carry out what you said you would do here with us and if you do,
20 we are going to move immediately to the United Nations and tell
21 the United Nations that this is unacceptable and that this
22 indictment should be squashed." They sat in that meeting and
23 instructed --

10:28:18

24 PRESIDING JUDGE: Excuse me, Mr Taylor. We have a message
25 from the stenographer that you're talking a little too quickly
26 for it to be recorded, so if you could just slow down a little
27 bit.

28 THE WITNESS: Okay, I'll do that. At that meeting it was
29 decided that if I carried out what I had said I would do,

1 everything would be done for this indictment to be squashed.

2 They then instructed the President of Ghana --

3 MR GRIFFITHS:

4 Q. Who was that?

10:28:54 5 A. John Kufuor to invite the British and American ambassadors,
6 because these were the two countries that had been pursuing this
7 war against me of regime change, and we will get into that at
8 some other point. So the British and American ambassadors were
9 called and were told by both the Chairman of the African Union --

10:29:24 10 Q. Who was that?

11 A. President Thabo Mbeki at the time and the President - the
12 Chairman of ECOWAS, John Kufuor, that it was decided by the
13 African Union and ECOWAS that if President Taylor stepped down
14 this indictment would be squashed and that this was a decision
10:29:45 15 and that ECOWAS and the African Union would pursue this.

16 My understanding subsequent to that, it was pursued when
17 Obasanjo told me during the period of the negotiations for my
18 going to Nigeria that in fact he has spoken to all permanent five
19 members of the United Nations and they had agreed that he
10:30:14 20 famously in fact in a statement said, "I will not be harassed",
21 that tape exists, where they had told him that they would not
22 harass him upon my move to Nigeria, and that is what I understood
23 at the time.

24 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Mr Griffiths, sorry to interrupt. You
10:30:36 25 did ask about two pages before the question, "Was there an
26 agreement setting out the terms of your resignation? What was
27 it?" I'm not sure that there's a straight answer to that. I
28 would appreciate a straight answer.

29 THE WITNESS: Yes, your Honour, you are right. When we're

1 dealing at the - just as maybe the judges and lawyers do, by
2 agreement there was nothing written. From a diplomatic
3 standpoint when Heads of State meet and talk to other world
4 leaders and they say, "Well, this is the case", I consider that
10:31:16 5 an agreement. There was nothing written, but ECOWAS and the
6 African Union had been told through Obasanjo that everything
7 would be done to squash this. This is what I mean. There was no
8 written document, but for me it was sufficient and I think for
9 even my colleagues it was sufficient.

10:31:39

10 MR GRIFFITHS:

11 Q. And did you subsequently step down?

12 A. Yes, I did. On 11 August as I promised I stepped down and
13 left the country.

10:31:57

14 Q. And thereafter, Mr Taylor, the public suggestion is that
15 you subsequently tried to escape from Nigeria.

10:32:29

16 A. Well, you know, when you are dealing with the level of
17 power play that I saw during that particular period, it's
18 amazing. In the first instance I was not imprisoned in Nigeria,
19 so I could not flee. I was a free man in Nigeria. I went to
20 where I wanted to go. President Obasanjo and I met maybe once or
21 twice every three months. And let me say here Olusegun Obasanjo,
22 a former President of Nigeria - who I must admit I would still
23 want to consider a friend if he chooses to come before the world
24 and tell the truth - Obasanjo knew that I was travelling, where I
10:33:01 25 was going to, and when.

26 And let me just explain further. Obasanjo had invited me
27 at the airport in Abuja. He informed me that he was on his way
28 to the United States to meet with George Bush. But throughout
29 the three years in Nigeria Obasanjo had constantly reminded me

1 that Nigeria was under tremendous pressure to quote unquote turn
2 me over, and he had said he could not do that. He came under so
3 much pressure that even there are documentary reports of even the
4 former Secretary of State Colin Powell even coming to Obasanjo's
10:33:52 5 rescue and saying, "Well, look. Don't hold this man responsible.
6 It was a deal. That's how Taylor got over there."

7 Q. Who said that?

8 A. Former Secretary of State Colin Powell in Defence of
9 Obasanjo's actions. He met with me and told me that he was under
10:34:10 10 tremendous pressure on many occasions, but that he was on his way
11 to the United States and he knew that he would come under
12 additional pressure. But he would not yield to such pressures.
13 And in fact Obasanjo said to me that Kofi Annan had called him
14 and warned him that he should expect pressure in Washington DC,
10:34:30 15 and I said to him that I wanted to travel. Now, I'm sorry that
16 we do not have a map here I think for the judges to see this.

17 Q. Maybe at a later stage we can assist in that way.

18 A. Very good. Calabar, Cross River State, is approximately I
19 would say under 50 miles from the Cameroonian border. Where I
10:35:03 20 was stopped in an area of Nigeria, the northern part of Nigeria
21 is about 1,000 miles from Calabar. Now - in an area called
22 Maiduguri.

23 I was en route. Obasanjo had said to me that he was on his
24 way to the States and that I could go to where I wanted to go and
10:35:32 25 when he got back he would, you know, inform me and I could
26 return. I was en route.

27 Now, the news reports that came out said that Mr Taylor was
28 trying to escape to Cameroon. Now for God's sake, anyone wanting
29 to escape, if in fact he was being sought or he was imprisoned,

1 neither of those applied to me. Why would I drive 1,000 miles
2 from Calabar to the border with Chad and leave Cameroon 50 miles
3 away?

10:36:23 4 Now, one would have to be crazy to believe that. Obasanjo
5 knew I was going to see an old friend Idriss Deby in Chad.
6 Idriss and I had been friends from Burkina Faso days before he
7 launched his revolution. He's a personal friend of mine. I was
8 being escorted by Nigerian Secret Service, Nigerian security
9 police, driven by Nigerians in a four car convoy. Now unless you
10:36:52 10 judges and the world believes I am stupid, which I'm not, I could
11 not have been escaping with Nigerian Secret Service, armed
12 police, driven by them, travelling 1,000 miles.

13 Now, why my dear friend told the world that I was escaping,
14 I swear maybe one day he will come and tell these judges and the
10:37:18 15 world. Now, I do know he was under a lot of pressure. I do know
16 this. I remember he said to me at the airport, "Look, maybe
17 after this third term problem I'll see what we can do", but he
18 was under tremendous pressure and he left.

19 I get to the border and I'm stopped. I am amazed, "What do
10:37:45 20 you mean I'm stopped?" All of the Nigerian security get out.
21 These border people say they are border security and they are
22 ordered to arrest me. I was arrested.

23 Q. Can we come back to that in a moment and just clarify
24 something before we forget?

10:37:58 25 A. Yes.

26 Q. What do you mean when you mention a third term?

27 A. At that time in Nigeria, and Obasanjo and I had spoken as
28 friends several times about it, the constitution of Nigeria gives
29 two terms to the presidency. There was a discussion in Nigeria

1 at the time where Obasanjo was trying to seek to probably in some
2 shape or form amend the constitution to seek a third term, and
3 there were a lot of dissension to that particular thing and it
4 was causing a lot of problems. So he said to me, "Well, I'm
10:38:39 5 going. I'll be back. Maybe after this third term situation I
6 will know what to do", and so this is what he mentioned to me.

7 Q. However --

8 PRESIDING JUDGE: Mr Griffiths, throughout Mr Taylor's
9 testimony certain names have been mentioned of people. For
10:38:55 10 instance. The last one I don't think is on the record, I could
11 be wrong, but I think it was Idriss Keby [phon] or Deby.

12 THE WITNESS: No, Deby. The President of Chad, Idriss. I
13 think it is Idriss Deby.

14 PRESIDING JUDGE: All right, thank you. Well,
10:39:12 15 Mr Griffiths, for the sake of the record if you could make sure
16 that where possible, those names mentioned by Mr Taylor are spelt
17 for the record.

18 MR GRIFFITHS: I will do, Mr President, yes.

19 Q. We're at the border now, Mr Taylor.

10:39:31 20 A. I am stopped and told that I'm needed back in Calabar.
21 "For what?" They say, "Well, we are arresting you to send you
22 back. We have orders from Abuja." I said, "Who is in Abuja?" I
23 said, "The President is in Washington DC." So they said, "Well,
24 these are our orders."

10:39:56 25 I was arrested, kept for several hours and not taken back
26 to Calabar. I was treated like a common - real common criminal.
27 The border security were extremely rude. I was handcuffed. The
28 Nigerian Secret Service and other officials with me said nothing.
29 What was said at a particular time - because I said, "But you

1 people are escorting me. Look at what's happening." They said,
2 "Well, this is a different operation and once we hear now there
3 are orders from Abuja, we can do nothing about it."

4 They arrested me, put me on a plane and flew me to
10:40:36 5 Monrovia. Not to Abuja, not to Calabar; directly to Monrovia. I
6 arrived at the airport and I am turned over to some United
7 Nations security and they fly me into Freetown.

8 Q. Now how old are you now, Mr Taylor?

9 A. Let me say I have exhausted my 61st year.

10:41:04 10 Q. Now tell me in light of that experience, even though you're
11 61, if you were alone in a room with Obasanjo, what would you do
12 to him?

13 A. You know, as I sit here I am still perplexed. I can't
14 claim to understand all of the intrigues that happened to me. I
10:41:36 15 guess I may want to describe maybe a sequence of events that
16 would take place. I would probably want to find out from him,
17 "Why in the hell did you do this?" And maybe the next thing
18 would probably be maybe two former Presidents involved in a
19 little tussle, because I am damn angry of what Obasanjo did to
10:42:01 20 me. He had - until now I do not understand it.

21 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, are you guilty of these offences on this
22 indictment?

23 A. I am not guilty of all of these charges, not even a minute
24 part of these charges. This whole case is a case of deceit,
10:42:36 25 deception, lies. And quite frankly, I cannot understand how some
26 of these people were brought to the point - and may I just - I
27 stand corrected on this to tell some of the lies that I have
28 heard sitting over there. It's I guess what you lawyers call
29 incredulous. It's impossible. Whether I live a hundred years,

1 it's impossible what I have heard here where humans can come and,
2 in an organised fashion, lie. Lie and lie and lie. I just don't
3 understand it.

4 There is no way. I am not guilty of any of these. Is this
10:43:39 5 whole - as I go back into my mind in the records and the issues
6 of the time, the period of the - you know, we're just leaving the
7 Cold War and there is regime change in Iraq, there is regime
8 change in Liberia. When you look at all of these nuances and you
9 look at the characterisations of Heads of State, I am this mad,
10:44:06 10 wild man. They demonise you and set you up that even if a common
11 criminal walked off the street and maybe put a bullet in your
12 head, it would mean that people should cheer. They get people to
13 a point where - I mean, maybe for survival they lie. I mean,
14 people have been threatened. I've got ministers - former
10:44:29 15 ministers - of my government that wouldn't even take a phone call
16 from me. "Mr President, we're scared. We've been told if we
17 ever talk to you, we're finished." I mean, this is a house
18 constructed on disinformation, misinformation, rumours,
19 assumptions, conjecture. Whether - like I said, whether I live a
10:44:54 20 hundred years, this is the experience of a lifetime that no
21 human --

22 MR GRIFFITHS: Can I pause for a moment, Mr President, and
23 assist with some spellings. Idriss Deby I-D-R-I-S-S separate
24 word D-E-B-Y. Alpha Konare A-L-P-H-A separate word K-O-N-A-R-E.
10:45:28 25 John Kufuor J-O-H-N separate word K-U-F-U-O-R. Joaquim Chissano
26 J-O-A-Q-U-I-M C-H-I-S-S-A-N-O. Thabo Mbeki T-H-A-B-O separate
27 word M-B-E-K-I. Olusegun Obasanjo O-L-U-S-E-G-U-N
28 O-B-A-S-A-N-J-O. Gnassingbe Eyadema G-N-A-S-S-I-N-G-B-E
29 E-Y-A-D-E-M-A. I think those are all the names mentioned so far.

1 PRESIDING JUDGE: Thank you, Mr Griffiths.

2 JUDGE DOHERTY: Mr Griffiths, Christopher Varmoh otherwise
3 known as Mosquito.

4 MR GRIFFITHS: The spelling of Christopher Varmoh that I'm
10:46:53 5 familiar with is Christopher, the familiar spelling, and Varmoh
6 V-A-R-M-O-H.

7 THE WITNESS: May I just complete my answer?

8 MR GRIFFITHS:

9 Q. Of course you can.

10:47:10 10 A. I was a little moved, so - people have brought themselves
11 so low. Here people have me eating human beings. Now, how can
12 people just be so low to even think about such a thing of me? I
13 mean, Charles Taylor is supposed to be, with an orderly of one of
14 my security personnel, sitting down eating human beings.

10:47:53 15 Charles Taylor is supposed to be out there like some little
16 common street thug involving himself in the acquiescence in rape
17 and murder, when this very Court has evidence before it of the
18 so-called many executions that occurred. Well, those executions
19 again were not executions of civilians. They were military
10:48:18 20 people that knew they were officers that committed atrocities
21 against the people. They were tried and killed.

22 I mean this whole case has been about, "Let's get Taylor",
23 so it's impossible for me to be guilty of these things. This is
24 the whole construct. "We will build up this thing on Taylor. We
10:48:45 25 will destroy him. We will bring him down." Haven't they had
26 their pound of flesh yet? I am not guilty of all of these
27 charges.

28 Q. I now want to go back, Mr Taylor, and start right at the
29 beginning. You told us at the outset that your name is

1 Dankpannah Dr Charles Ghankay Taylor. What does the Dankpannah
2 stand for?

3 A. I am still the most senior traditional chief in Liberia.

4 "Dankpannah" means chief. In the African setting, maybe for our

10:49:35 5 I learned colleagues on the other side that are Americans, they do

6 not know that we have chiefs in Africa and I'm the most senior

7 traditional chief. "Dankpannah" is chief. That's the meaning of

8 it. Of all of the tribes in Liberia there is - unlike what

9 they've thought about the Poro society, there have been - and I

10:50:02 10 hope we can deal with it here - these are the traditional groups

11 in Liberia. All over the country there are 27 tribes.

12 Dankpannah is the chief. That means I am the national chief.

13 Still I hold that position and I hold it until death. That's

14 what "Dankpannah" means.

10:50:19 15 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Did the witness say - did you refer to

16 the Poro groups as --

17 THE WITNESS: These are traditional groups. It is a

18 traditional society.

19 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: And Dankpannah is the chief?

10:50:30 20 THE WITNESS: Not of that Poro group, but there are so many

21 social groups in Liberia. The Poro is one. You have the Mallin

22 is another. You have the Bodeios. There are so many traditional

23 groups in Liberia. But all tribes in Liberia have chiefs, and so

24 I am the most senior chief in the Republic of Liberia today.

10:51:02 25 MR GRIFFITHS:

26 Q. Now what's your date of birth, Mr Taylor?

27 A. 28 January 1948.

28 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Mr Griffiths, this is a bit off, but what

29 does the doctorate refer to?

1 MR GRIFFITHS: Very well.

2 THE WITNESS: I received two honorary doctorate degrees,
3 one from the University of China and the other from the
4 University of Liberia. These doctorate degrees are what you may
10:51:42 5 term respect. It's a form of recognition. It is not an academic
6 doctorate as going through a Masters and a PhD, but it is a
7 degree of recognition I guess similar to what our learned judge
8 received a few days ago - or should receive, may I say.

9 MR GRIFFITHS:

10:52:14 10 Q. Now, what does the "Ghankay" stand for?

11 A. Ghankay is my name. I am a member of the Gola tribe.
12 Ghankay, the expression Ghankay, the interpretation of that is
13 leader, one that is strong. Ghankay, one that is strong.

14 Q. Now you've told us that your date of birth is 28 January
10:52:43 15 1948, yes?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And what's the names of your parents?

18 A. My mother is the late Louise Yassa Zoe Taylor.

19 Q. And your father?

10:53:05 20 A. Father is Neilsen Philip Taylor. Both deceased.

21 Q. And Neilsen is spelt N-E-I-L-S-E-N?

22 A. That is correct.

23 Q. And Louise normal spelling, Yassa Y-A-S-S-A, Zoe Z-O-E,
24 Taylor, am I right?

10:53:25 25 A. That is correct.

26 Q. And how many siblings do you have, Mr Taylor?

27 A. A total of ten.

28 Q. How many children in total did your parents have?

29 A. My mother had a total of 15 children. Some were lost along

1 the way.

2 Q. And where do you appear in the list of children?

3 A. I'm the third.

4 Q. And help us, do you have both brothers and sisters?

10:54:04 5 A. Yes, I do.

6 Q. How many of each?

7 A. Presently alive I have four brothers and four sisters still
8 alive.

9 Q. And where do they live?

10:54:18 10 A. They all live in Liberia.

11 Q. Now your father Neilsen Philip Taylor, what did he
12 initially do for a living?

13 A. My father was - started off as a small scale farmer
14 involved in the cultivation of cane sugar. We grew up with that
10:54:52 15 cultivation before he moved on to something else.

16 Q. And what was it that he moved on to?

17 A. He later on became a teacher.

18 Q. And did he remain a school teacher?

19 A. No, later on - his last area of work was - he became a
10:55:18 20 judge.

21 Q. And, firstly, where in Liberia did he work as a school
22 teacher?

23 A. I'm going to have to take you back a little bit here, if
24 you don't mind. My father was brought up by the Lutheran
10:55:39 25 Overseas Mission to Liberia and that's how the name Neilsen comes
26 about. The Lutherans - they are basically situated in Europe -
27 had missions in Liberia at the time. My father was trained by
28 the Lutherans and sent somewhere around I would say 1943/'44 to
29 an area of the country called Zorzor in Lofa County.

1 Q. And Zorzor is spelt Z-O-R separate word Z-O-R. Is that
2 right?

3 A. As a school teacher, yes, that is correct.

4 Q. And did he remain in Zorzor?

10:56:31 5 A. No, he taught in Zorzor for some time. At Zorzor, we're
6 looking at a period where there were no roads in Liberia. He had
7 to walk. I think it took him ten days to walk from Monrovia to
8 Zorzor. The Lutherans were missionaries and so they went into
9 parts of the country that had not yet been inhabited by whatever.

10:56:57 10 And so he stayed there for about a year or two and then they
11 brought him back to Millsburg. That's M-I-L-L-S-B-U-R-G. It's a
12 small town just outside of Monrovia.

13 Q. And you say that he later became a judge. Where in Liberia
14 did he practice as a judge?

10:57:28 15 A. Gee, I don't know the different circuits. I think it's the
16 first circuit of Montserrado now at the Temple of Justice. I
17 think it's the first circuit court in Monrovia.

18 Q. Now help us a little bit, please, about the background of
19 your father.

10:57:54 20 A. My father is from what we call the Americo-Liberian stock.
21 My grandmother migrated from the United States in the late 1890s
22 as some of the freed slaves that came into Sierra Leone and
23 Liberia.

24 Q. What was her name?

10:58:26 25 A. Her name was - what's grandma's name? But the last name is
26 Bracewell. Okay, we can go on. It will come to me and I'll tell
27 you.

28 Q. Try Serena Anne?

29 A. Yes, she was Serena Anne Bracewell. She had come as a

1 little girl and grew up in Arthington.

2 Q. From where in the United States had she migrated?

3 A. They had come from the learned judge's area from the south.

4 During that particular time there were so many blacks that left

10:59:16 5 the United States to come to Sierra Leone and Liberia.

6 Q. Now that name Bracewell, does it have any significance in
7 Liberia?

8 A. Yes, the Bracewell family is a very, very, very large
9 family. In fact they've always been involved in politics in

10:59:39 10 Liberia.

11 Q. So that's on your father's side. What about on your
12 mother's side, Yassa Zoe Taylor, what's her background?

13 A. My mother is what you call an aborigine Liberian. She's
14 from the Gola tribe and did not, quote unquote, come to

11:00:08 15 civilisation until she was a very big girl. Let me explain what
16 I mean by civilisation. When you are in interior and she

17 couldn't speak English, couldn't read or write or anything, and
18 she was brought down as a house worker for the Americo-Liberian

19 family that was settled in Arthington at the time. So she was

11:00:34 20 brought down as a girl to clean the house and she was the house
21 girl.

22 Q. And in which household was she working?

23 A. She was working in the household of my grandmother Serena
24 Anne and it was in that house that she learned to speak English

11:00:59 25 and that's where she grew up, in my grandmother's house.

26 Q. So effectively she was a domestic servant?

27 A. That is correct.

28 Q. Did your mother attend school?

29 A. Very little. My mother managed to go to the third grade.

1 She did not go beyond that.

2 Q. So how did the relationship between your mother and father
3 come about?

4 A. Well, as the story is told, my grandparents were very, very
11:01:44 5 religious individuals. They were Baptists. And remember I said
6 that my father attended a Lutheran institution, but my parents
7 were Baptists. And my mother was a very pretty lady and, as the
8 story goes, some friskiness occurred in the house between them
9 and my mother was impregnated. But because my grandparents were
11:02:21 10 very strict they - during those days if you impregnated someone,
11 you had to get married. There was no two ways about it. There
12 was a side of the family that objected to it. It was from what
13 we were told - you know, I was not born at the time so I'm just
14 talking history what they told us.

11:02:44 15 Q. Why did they object?

16 A. Well, because they felt that my mother, being a so-called
17 native girl, could not get married into an Americo-Liberian
18 family and they objected. But my grandparents on the other side
19 against the rest of the family said, "Well, if she was good
11:03:03 20 enough for him to touch, she is good enough for him to marry" and
21 they insisted and they got married.

22 Q. And how old was your father at the time?

23 A. My father was no more than 21/22 and my mother, I would say
24 about 17/18.

11:03:25 25 Q. Now, you mentioned that certain parts of the family
26 objected to that union?

27 A. That's correct.

28 Q. Can you help us with that. What was the state of relations
29 back in the first half of the 20th century between

1 Ameri co-Li beri ans and aborigi nes?

2 A. One of the problems that we still have in Liberia today is
3 the same problem that can go all the way back to the date you
4 just mentioned. An opportunity was lost by the settlers that

11:04:15 5 came from the United States to bond with the traditional people.

6 I think that was a big mistake then, as now. If you were an
7 Ameri co-Li berian you stuck, so to speak, with Ameri co-Li beri ans.
8 If you were from the aborigi nes group you stuck with them. The
9 opportunity for education - if you look at the age of my mother,
10 she gets married at 18 and she's in the third grade because she
11 comes down when she's a big girl. She's already, what, a big
12 girl. She had to learn to speak English and start school.

11:04:41

13 So there was not this social integration at the time. It
14 was a real big tussle. I mean, aborigi ne Li beri ans did not have
15 an opportunity to go to school. They were just - in fact it was
16 called the interior and, as a result, that opportunity was lost.
17 And quite sadly it exists to a great extent in Liberia today.

11:05:04

18 One of my predecessors tried very hard to work against it. I
19 fought - and maybe we will probably get to this. This is why I
20 succeeded, because I am about the first President of Liberia that
21 fell almost dead centre; half Ameri co-Li berian and half
22 aborigi ne, so I mean I could fit in any camp. So that social
23 problem existed at that particular time and it still exists now.

11:05:34

24 Q. Now where did your parents - in which town did they get
25 married?

11:06:03

26 A. They got married in Arthington. That's

27 A-R-T-H-I-N-G-T-O-N.

28 Q. And where were you brought up?

29 A. I was brought up in the little town of Millsburg. That is

1 on the record, Millsburg.

2 Q. And where is Millsburg and Arthington, where are they
3 located?

11:06:42

4 A. They are on the outskirts of Monrovia on the Saint Paul
5 River.

6 Q. In what county?

7 A. In Montserrado County, about 25 miles outside of the city.

8 Q. And how do you spell Montserrado?

9 A. That's M-O-N-T-S-E-R-R-A-D-O.

11:06:57

10 Q. Thank you. And help us, what's the population of
11 Arthington at the time that you lived there?

12 A. I would say about 10,000.

13 Q. And Millsburg?

14 A. About half of that, 5,000.

11:07:16

15 Q. And help us, Mr Taylor, what was the economic and social
16 conditions in which you grew up? Tell us a bit about your
17 background.

18 A. I came up in a very humble background. As I just said to

11:07:44

19 the Court, my father was initially involved in the planting of
20 cane sugar and I'm not talking about any grand scale. I guess
21 during those days if you had about an acre of sugar cane you were
22 supposed to be a farmer. But we worked on the sugar cane farm
23 and I guess this - we couldn't plant cotton. They did cotton
24 back in America, but sugar cane was what they had to do, and we
25 learned how to use the - what we called at that time the cutlass
26 but what you call the machete, how to clean, so I learned how to
27 work with my hands.

11:08:10

28 Q. And help us, did you have running water and electricity at
29 home?

1 A. Running water and electricity? You're talking about
2 something far fetched. You were lucky to get a clean glass of
3 water. No, no, no, no. In fact, let's go back to even the type
4 of the house that we lived in. We lived in either mud houses. I
11:08:43 5 was brought up in a mud house covered with something called - we
6 call it a tarpaulin. I don't know if they have tarpaulin. I
7 don't know how to spell it. I don't know if the judges know what
8 tarpaulin is? It's some roofing cover that is put over the
9 houses, you know? So when you live in that kind of house,
11:09:08 10 running water? No, there was no running water. We went to the
11 creek to draw our water. We took baths at the same creek. We
12 did fishing in that creek. By fishing we would go and build dams
13 and build the water and catch whatever was there and set traps to
14 catch fish. No, there was no light and running water. That's
11:09:35 15 maybe a different world, not for us.

16 Q. Did you wear shoes, for example?

17 A. No, I did not wear shoes until I was a big boy. I would
18 say about eight/nine years of age. I went to kindergarten school
19 with my ten toes on the ground. And I guess for those that may
11:09:59 20 not know you walk on your bare feet until the bottom of your
21 feet, you know, becomes so tough and the skin gets so tough that
22 I don't even think get torn. You know, we almost could step on
23 glass bottles and not get cut literally I mean because of the
24 hardness of the feet. No, no, I came up in some very, very,
11:10:22 25 very, very humble circumstances.

26 Q. Now you told us that your father, having started life as a
27 farmer, later became a school teacher and then a judge. Did he
28 qualify as a lawyer at any stage?

29 A. What they did during those particular time, he did go

1 through - it was not a university law programme. He trained -
2 what was done at that particular time when he started, you had to
3 go through what they called an apprenticeship programme that
4 lasted a certain number of years. It was not in a university
11:11:09 5 setting, but an apprenticeship over I think it took him about two
6 and a half years you are trained and then before you go to the
7 court.

8 Q. Now, where were you when your father was appointed a judge?

9 A. I at that particular time had travelled by that time to the
11:11:32 10 United States to study.

11 Q. Now did you grow up with your parents, Mr Taylor?

12 A. No, I did not.

13 Q. Who did you grow up with?

14 A. I was brought up by my father's Godmother. Now for the
11:11:54 15 judges, in our areas every child that is born in the church there
16 is something like a second parent that is appointed to stand in
17 place. In case something happened to your biological parents
18 they became your Godmother, so my father's Godmother who was an
19 older lady took me at a very early age.

11:12:28 20 Q. How old were you?

21 A. Oh, I was first turned over to them about eight months old
22 I'm told. I was about eight months.

23 Q. And what were their names?

24 A. Her name was Martha Anne McAfee.

11:12:46 25 Q. M-A-R-T-H-A, Anne normal spelling, McAfee M-c-A-F-E-E?

26 A. She was from the settler population. In fact, the McAfee
27 family, she had also come over from the United States as a young
28 girl.

29 Q. And was she married?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And what was her husband's name?

3 A. His name was Charles Cisco, so she became Martha Anne
4 McAfee Cisco.

11:13:22 5 Q. Now, why were you turned over to them at such a young age?

6 A. I will tell you what, from what I'm told my father and my
7 mother they were still very young and my grandmother and Martha
8 Anne McAfee are very good friends. Like I'm saying, she is the
9 Godmother of my father. So after I'm born, you know, the old
11:13:48 10 people did this. She went and I'm told she said, "This baby I
11 like. I want this baby. Give me this baby. I'll take care of
12 him. You don't have to worry about it."

13 People were not so - in our setting and even right now in
14 Liberia and other parts of Africa, people are not - you know, we
11:14:08 15 don't have some of the problems in the West where people are
16 afraid to trust your babies with people. So they waited until I
17 had stopped being breast - I'm told breast-feeding had stopped
18 and I was turned over to her.

19 Now, we are not talking about long distances. Arthington
11:14:28 20 and Millsburg are two joining small towns. From her house to my
21 mother's house I would say no more than maybe a 20 to 30 minute
22 walk, so we are not talking about taking me 2 or 300 miles away.
23 I mean, it was just like one big family. People just didn't take
24 it to be anything so big.

11:14:54 25 Q. And did you remain with Martha for all the time thereafter?

26 A. Yes, I stayed with her until her death. I was then just
27 about to graduate. I was a big boy then, about 18. Upon her
28 death I had then qualified for teacher's training and then went
29 on my own, but I was with her until her death at age about 18.

1 Q. So effectively then from about eight months old until aged
2 18 she brought you up?

3 A. That is correct. And to help you, counsel, I call her
4 mother and call my mother sister.

11:15:45 5 Q. Now at what age did you start school, Mr Taylor?

6 A. Oh, at a very early age. I did the pre-education at home,
7 so at about age seven I went to school in the first grade and so
8 most of my preschool years I was taught at home. Remember now
9 we're talking about an Americo-Liberian family, they are all

11:16:17 10 educated, and so she really taught me at home. So I went to
11 school not at the ABC, what we used to call it then, but I went
12 at age seven first grade.

13 Q. And what was the name of the school?

14 A. I went to the Arthington Central School.

11:16:39 15 Q. And how far was that school from where you lived?

16 A. Oh, I would say it took us about 45 minutes to an hour from
17 where I lived to the school. Every morning we had to walk and
18 then walk back.

19 Q. And so what time did you have to get up in the morning in
11:17:02 20 order to get to school?

21 A. Very early, I would say around 5 o'clock, because during
22 those days we didn't have a clock but we woke up to the crow of
23 the rooster. For people that know the village life, these small
24 towns, the rooster will crow just about the break of day and once
11:17:26 25 that rooster crowed we knew it was time to get up. So I now can
26 put it to about I would say maybe 5.30/6 in the morning. We had
27 to get up very early on the chicken crow.

28 Q. How long did you stay at Arthington Central School?

29 A. I was at the Arthington Central School up to grade eight.

1 Q. So how old would you have been then?

2 A. Oh, I was - I'm trying to figure out. I went to Ricks
3 about 13. I would say that took me about, what, five or six
4 years.

11:18:18 5 Q. So where did you move to? Which school?

6 A. I was pretty good - and I don't say this boastfully - and I
7 got a scholarship from a business house in Liberia to study at a
8 Baptist - a foreign missionary Baptist school.

9 Q. Called?

11:18:43 10 A. Called Ricks, that is R-I-C-K-S, Institute. This was a
11 school that been had built by the - I'm sure Prosecutor Rapp
12 would know this. The Southern Baptist Convention built that
13 school in Liberia.

14 Q. And you mentioned a scholarship. Who provided the
11:19:04 15 scholarship?

16 A. That scholarship was provided by an outfit in Liberia
17 called the Rasamany Brothers Corporation. I think that is
18 R-A-S-M-N-Y, but I stand corrected on that.

19 Q. R-A-S-A-M-A-N-Y --

20 A. That is right. Rasamany Brother Corporation.

21 Q. -- Brothers Corporation?

22 A. That is correct.

23 Q. And who were they?

24 A. They were business people. They did large business in
11:19:33 25 Liberia, one of the biggest corporations in the country.

26 Q. Of what ethnic origin?

27 A. They're Lebanese.

28 Q. And how many people from Arthington received such a
29 scholarship?

1 A. I was the only one.

2 Q. How long did you remain at Ricks Institute?

3 A. I was at Ricks Institute for about two years --

4 Q. And then?

11:20:01 5 A. -- up to grade ten and then the Government of Liberia had a
6 programme in conjunction with Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, the
7 United States. Tuskegee is a black school, college or university
8 in Alabama. They had a programme with the Government of Liberia
9 to train teachers to go out in different parts of the country
11:20:40 10 into the rural area to teach. An examination was launched. I
11 took the examination and passed and was accepted at the school
12 and that school was called the Kakata Rural Teachers Training
13 Institute.

14 Q. Pause there. Tuskegee spelling T-U-S-K-E-G-E-E. Kakata
11:21:12 15 K-A-K-A-T-A, Rural as in rural, Teachers Training Institute. How
16 long did you remain there for?

17 A. The programme was a two year programme. I did the two
18 years. It was structured in a way that in addition to being
19 trained as a teacher you were also being qualified as a high
11:21:52 20 school graduate at the same time so you didn't have to lose what
21 you left behind, so it took me two years in the joint programme
22 to complete it.

23 Q. And upon completion of that course at the Kakata Rural
24 Teachers Training Institute, what did you next to?

11:22:16 25 A. Following the graduation, I was initially assigned to Bomi
26 County, Bomi Hills in Bomi County - Bomi Hills I'm sure is on the
27 record here - to teach at the junior high school in Bomi Hills.

28 Q. Pause there. Now, at what level were you qualified to
29 teach?

- 1 A. Up to the junior high level.
- 2 Q. And in what year did you begin teaching?
- 3 A. My first - in 1967 I as a very, very, very young man
4 entered the classroom in Bomi Hills.
- 11:23:09 5 Q. And help us, what was the name of the school at which you
6 were teaching in Bomi Hills?
- 7 A. It was called the Charles H Dewey Junior High School.
- 8 Q. D-E-W-E-Y?
- 9 A. That is correct.
- 11:23:27 10 Q. And you've told us that was in Bomi Hills?
- 11 A. That is correct.
- 12 Q. Now, what kind of town was Bomi?
- 13 A. Bomi at that time was a mining town. They mined iron ore
14 at Bomi.
- 11:23:45 15 Q. Who mined iron ore at Bomi?
- 16 A. We had a consortium of American and Swedish groups that
17 were doing iron ore, but mostly Americans from the Pittsburgh
18 steel set-up in Pennsylvania, United States.
- 19 Q. What were they called?
- 11:24:10 20 A. That Pittsburgh group, they called them, I think it's
21 Birmingham, I'm not too sure, but it was out of Pittsburgh, but
22 that group --
- 23 Q. Try Bethlehem?
- 24 A. Is it Bethlehem Steel Corporation out of Pittsburgh.
- 11:24:29 25 Q. I hope it's not in dispute.
- 26 A. No, he knows Bethlehem Steel.
- 27 Q. And this was iron ore mining, was it?
- 28 A. Yeah, that's correct.
- 29 Q. Now your students, what kind of age bracket were they?

1 A. Quite older. I would say the students ranged anywhere from
2 between 20, 25, 30. And let me just clarify this for the judges.
3 This is a mining industrial town. People are working for the
4 company. Some of these people in this area are of the same
11:25:16 5 calibre of aboriginal Liberians that have not had an opportunity
6 to go to school, so some of them start school very late and
7 they're working and they're living in this town. So you had
8 people in junior high school that were by far older. I started
9 teaching at the age of about 18/19, and there were many in that
11:25:42 10 class 25-30, but they were well behaved.

11 Q. And help us, your students were that age, how old were you?

12 A. 18/19.

13 Q. And was that fact of any significance?

14 A. No, not really. We were taught that just like this
11:26:01 15 courtroom is the - this is the palace of these judges, they
16 control this room, the teacher is the king of his classroom. You
17 either do what we say in the classroom, behave, or you don't have
18 to be in there. It was as simple as that. So we had no
19 difficulties and I'm saying that they were well behaved in that
11:26:22 20 industrial town.

21 Q. Now help us, how long did you remain there?

22 A. One year.

23 Q. And then?

24 A. My people in Arthington became a little jealous and said
11:26:33 25 that --

26 Q. Why?

27 A. Well, why should one of their own being so qualified and
28 recognised be sent to a different part of the country when they
29 needed me to help at home and so they made a lot of fuss and the

1 education department transferred me to Arthington in 1968.

2 Q. And where, to do what?

3 A. To teach at the Arthington Central, the school that I went
4 to as a young boy, where I taught math and science courses.

11:27:10 5 Q. And for how long did you stay there?

6 A. I was there for a year until the end of that year.

7 MR GRIFFITHS: I note the time, Mr President, and although
8 we're a couple of minutes early that would be a convenient point.

9 PRESIDING JUDGE: All right, thank you, Mr Griffiths.

11:27:31 10 We'll take our usual morning adjournment now and we'll resume at
11 12 o'clock.

12 [Break taken at 11.27 a.m.]

13 [Upon resuming at 12.00 p.m.]

14 MR GRIFFITHS: May it please your Honours:

12:02:15 15 Q. When we adjourned, Mr Taylor, you were dealing with the
16 period you spent as a teacher at the junior high school in
17 Arthington. How long did you stay there?

18 A. Excuse me a second your Honours. May I just ask your
19 Honours for permission to have a plain sheet of paper to - is
12:02:39 20 that permissible?

21 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, Madam Court Attendant. Something to
22 write with as well.

23 THE WITNESS: Please, yes. Thank you very much, yes.

24 MR GRIFFITHS:

12:03:01 25 Q. How long did you stay there in Arthington?

26 A. I was in Arthington for one year.

27 Q. And thereafter what happened?

28 A. I decided that I had to further my education, that I needed
29 to do something else in addition to the teaching, so the

1 following year I moved to the capital city, Monrovia, continued
2 my teaching programme but also enrolled in - at that time it was
3 called an extension programme. There was something like a
4 [i ndiscernible] college programme through an extension university
12:04:01 5 in the United States called La Salle Extension University where
6 there was something like what we call a corresponding course in
7 accounting, while teaching.

8 Q. Pause there. Let's try and unravel some of that, please.
9 First of all, can you assist us as to what year it was that you
12:04:26 10 moved to Monrovia?

11 A. 1969.

12 Q. Secondly, you said that you continued teaching. Where were
13 you teaching?

14 A. The city of Monrovia had a special programme - I think it
12:04:45 15 was a programme - and I stand corrected on this one. I think it
16 was the Michigan, as in Michigan in the United States, had a
17 special programme with the ministry of education and they had
18 what they termed a consolidated school system. All of the junior
19 and senior high schools within the vicinity of Monrovia came
12:05:15 20 under a special programme where special schools were built,
21 special programmes were launched to help the nation. I was
22 accepted as a teacher in that programme. It was called the
23 Monrovia Consolidated School System.

24 Q. MCSS?

12:05:40 25 A. That's correct.

26 Q. What subject did you teach?

27 A. Math again. I was basically a math and science teacher.

28 Q. And the school at which you taught, where was that located?

29 A. That school was located on Newport Street, in Monrovia.

1 Q. Is that N-E-W-P-O-R-T?

2 A. That is correct.

3 Q. And your students, what age bracket did they fall into?

4 A. Now we have a lot of different - what we call a different
12:06:13 5 kettle of fish here. Mixed. I would say it was mixed. We are
6 now in Monrovia so you have some fortunate students that are of
7 high school age and junior high school age. I would put their
8 ages in the junior high programme - at the regular age that would
9 be, what, 12, 13, 14. Because senior high in Liberia ends
12:06:42 10 roughly if you look at the age of 18. So I would put it to about
11 13 - 12/13.

12 Q. And help us: At that time, bearing in mind we are talking
13 about 1969, who was President of Liberia?

14 A. At that particular time we still had - Tubman was still
12:07:06 15 around.

16 Q. And you said you enrolled on a course, yes?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Can you help us with the spelling of the name of the - I
19 think you called it an extension university at which you enrolled
12:07:24 20 for a correspondence course?

21 A. Yes. It's L-A and then you have S-A-L-L-E. It was called
22 the La Salle Extension University.

23 Q. And what was the course that you were pursuing with them?

24 A. It was a course in accounting.

12:07:54 25 Q. And help us, you say it was a correspondence course.
26 Explain to us what you mean?

27 A. You registered in this programme, you paid for the course.
28 They would send you, via mail, all of the material.

29 Q. Yes?

1 A. You would study the material and they would send you the
2 examinations. You had to fill in these different materials, send
3 them back. It was just something like I would call it a long
4 distance teacher. We didn't do the exams by telephone. You had
12:08:29 5 to write, fill in all - they would send the questions out, you
6 would fill them in and send them back. It was this push pull
7 situation.

8 Q. And what was the course that you were studying?

9 A. Accounting.

12:08:40 10 Q. And how were you supporting yourself at that time,
11 Mr Taylor?

12 A. I was still teaching at the MCSS.

13 Q. And did you have any other employment at the time?

14 A. Yes. I had gotten a part-time job at the finance ministry
12:09:00 15 in the bureau of general accounting. This is what really
16 encouraged me to do this programme. So I had two jobs trying to
17 make ends meet.

18 Q. And help us, in due course did you complete the course with
19 La Salle University?

12:09:21 20 A. I completed the course. Lucky for me, yes, I did.

21 Q. And how many years did it take to complete it?

22 A. That programme lasted for about two years, between '69 and
23 '70.

24 Q. And then what did you do?

12:09:50 25 A. The death of President Tubman occurred. President Tolbert
26 took over. His brother, the late Steven Tolbert was appointed
27 finance minister. In an attempt to upgrade the ministry of
28 finance, he decided to give an exam in the ministry of finance to
29 begin a new system of qualifying those that he wanted to use. I

1 took the examination and, along with another gentleman, made a
2 very high score. Then I was taken on full-time as a junior
3 accountant in the ministry.

4 Q. And how long did you stay in that post?

12:10:46 5 A. Up until 1972.

6 Q. And what occurred in 1972 to change that?

7 A. All along I was really working and trying to improve myself
8 because I wanted to advance my education. This is a funny story,
9 but I think it helped. I was dating a girl and this old school
10 friend of mine had come back from the United States with a
11 masters degree and took the girl from me. So I said, "Oh, my
12 God, I have to go to school. This is just too much for me". I
13 then decided I had to go to America to extend my - well, that's
14 not the only thing but this really pushed me because this guy
15 came back boasting he had a masters and we went to Ricks

16 Institute together and he comes back and he takes this girl from
17 me. So I said, "Well, okay, then I'm just going to have to speed
18 up the trip to America", because with the two jobs I had in
19 Liberia I could not attend university, there was just no way to
20 attend university. So I then applied through a friend who had
21 the address of a junior college in the United States,
22 Chamberlayne, that's C-H-A-M-B-E-R-L-A-Y-N-E, in Boston,
23 Massachusetts for admissions and I worked very hard and saved
24 some little money to go to continue my college education.

12:12:30 25 Q. What year was it when you left?

26 A. I left in 1972.

27 Q. And how did you finance your flight tickets?

28 A. I worked, saved a little bit of money, but it was not
29 sufficient. Now the director of the bureau of general

1 accounting, the late Danlett, that's D-A-N-L-E-T-T, Danlett
2 Tucker liked me a whole lot because I was very hard working and
3 she had a very good friend, who was now late also sadly, by the
4 name of Victor Hickel.

12:13:22 5 Q. Spelt?

6 A. That Hickel I think is - H-I-C-K-E-L I think he spells it,
7 Hickel. He volunteered and bought me the ticket to go to study
8 in the United States and that's how I got there.

9 Q. Now, if I could pause for a moment and provide two
12:13:55 10 spellings. Tubman, Mr President, William VS Tubman, T-U-B-M-A-N,
11 President of Liberia, 1944 to 1971. And William R Tolbert
12 Junior, T-O-L-B-E-R-T, President of Liberia 1971 to 1980.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE: Mr Griffiths, I will leave it entirely to
14 you but I see your client is writing something. You might want
12:14:33 15 to inform yourself what is being written because of course it's
16 open to inspection by others.

17 MR GRIFFITHS: I am grateful for that indication, your
18 Honour:

19 Q. Now, help me with this: Who was President of the United
12:14:50 20 States when you arrived there in 1972?

21 A. '72, it was Richard Milhous - I think he's called Nixon.

22 Q. I think we know who you're talking about, so don't worry.

23 A. Tricky Dick.

24 Q. And to where in the United States did you travel on
12:15:19 25 arrival?

26 A. I first went into Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to see a
27 cousin of mine down there.

28 Q. Pause there and help us with this: At that time was there
29 a major sporting event occurring?

1 A. Yes, as I flew through Europe that was the time of the
2 Munich Olympics. I can remember that. And the news at that
3 time, sadly what was shown on the news, the Israeli unit sports -
4 I think the wrestlers had been captured by some terrorists at
12:16:04 5 that time and were being held. That was the major news at that
6 time.

7 Q. What was your point of entry into the United States?

8 A. First into New York and then on to Philadelphia.

9 Q. And your ultimate destination was what?

12:16:19 10 A. Boston, Massachusetts.

11 Q. You've already mentioned Chamberlayne College. What kind
12 of a college was that?

13 A. It was a junior college. A two year programme.

14 Q. What were you intending to study?

12:16:34 15 A. Accounting.

16 Q. How long did you stay in Philadelphia before moving to
17 Boston?

18 A. Not very long. I arrived in Philadelphia to see my cousins
19 and I probably spent a few weeks there because I left from
12:16:54 20 Liberia somewhere in July, school had to open in September and if
21 I intended to be at Chamberlayne I had to be there at the
22 beginning of school in September. So I stayed around in
23 Philadelphia for a few weeks before going on to Boston.

24 Q. Now, when you arrived in Boston did you have the money to
12:17:24 25 pay your school fees?

26 A. No, I didn't. I didn't.

27 Q. So what happened?

28 A. As with most students during that time, and I am sure it's
29 still happening now, when you are very hungry, as we were at that

1 time, for education we took chances. I went - in fact,
2 Chamberlayne was of - they knew that I did not have all of the
3 money so they gave me a job. I washed dishes and cleaned floors
4 at the college to help to meet the fees for the first year while
12:18:07 5 at the same time I was trying to make contact with Liberians that
6 were in the Boston area to see if I could get some help also.

7 Q. And did you get any?

8 A. Yes, I did.

9 Q. From whom?

12:18:20 10 A. A cousin of my, Edwin Holder.

11 Q. Spelling?

12 A. That's Edwin as in Edwin. Holder, H-O-L-D-E-R.

13 Q. And what help did he provide?

14 A. The college wanted to help and they did help, but the
12:18:46 15 problem was they could no longer keep me on the campus. So they
16 were confronted with the issue, "Well, you can continue to work
17 here but there is one thing to give you money that you pay your
18 school fees, but the dormitory fees are different". So they had
19 waived that part of the programme, but they had told me that,
12:19:06 20 "Listen, you can work here and whatever little money you make
21 will apply to the fees, but unless you are able to pay for your
22 room and board we have to throw you out". So his contribution
23 was in finding someone in the Boston area that I could live with,
24 and he did.

12:19:24 25 Q. And who was that?

26 A. Another gentleman by the name of Edwin Lewis. That's
27 L-E-W-I-S.

28 Q. Now, did there come a time when you graduated from
29 Chamberlayne College?

1 A. Yes, I graduated two years. I was a junior in a college
2 programme. In May of 1974 I graduated with an associate degree
3 in accounting.

4 Q. And what did you decide to do at that point?

12:19:53 5 A. At that particular point I decided to get a full degree.
6 Through the grace of God I did very well. I tried to enter -
7 Boston, Massachusetts, is on one side of the Charles River in
8 Massachusetts and right across the Charles River there are two of
9 the most - the best known institutions in the world. Immediately
12:20:31 10 across the Charles River is the Massachusetts Institute of
11 Technology, MIT, followed by Harvard University. That's
12 H-A-R-V-A-R-D, not Howard. I tried to enter the business school
13 at Harvard, I could not. So the next best business school I
14 could get into because my grades were good was Bentley, that's
12:20:53 15 B-E-N-T-L-E-Y, College in a town just outside of Boston called
16 Waltham. That's W-A-L-T-H-A-M. Waltham, Massachusetts. I was
17 accepted at the business school there to pursue a degree again in
18 accounting.

19 Q. When did you start that particular course?

12:21:23 20 A. Immediately thereafter. I graduated in '74. By September
21 I entered Bentley in the accounting programme.

22 Q. And did you remain with the accounting programme?

23 A. No, I did not.

24 Q. Why not?

12:21:36 25 A. Accounting got boring for me really. But while at the
26 college I developed an interest in economics and I was really
27 informed by a famous economist W Rostow, I think that is
28 R-O-S-T-O-W, Rostow, and his whole theory on development
29 economics called the big push. Then I transferred, because it

1 was a business school, the accounting programme, economics
2 management - it's all a big business school so transferring from
3 one programme to the other was not very difficult so I
4 transferred to the economic programme and specialised in
12:22:29 5 development economics.

6 Q. And in due course did you graduate?

7 A. Yes. I obtained a BSC, a degree in economics with emphasis
8 in development.

9 Q. How long did it take you to graduate?

12:22:46 10 A. It took me the full two years again. I spent - it was just
11 a continuation of the associate programme, so you went in from
12 year three and did three and four.

13 Q. Why did you decide to take up development economics?

14 A. I was always interested really in politics but I didn't
12:23:11 15 really want to do political science, but I wanted to be in a
16 position where I could help. After I looked back at my childhood
17 years and all of the difficulties that I had, having to go to
18 teacher's training and go to the United States and wash floors
19 and dishes and all that kind of stuff, I really wanted to do
12:23:35 20 development economics where I could return to Liberia and be of
21 some help to our people, especially being informed by the theory
22 that had been developed by Rostow. It was a very interesting
23 theory and I felt utilising that particular theory in the
24 Liberian setting would help a whole lot.

12:24:11 25 Q. And at this stage, Mr Taylor, did you have any political
26 ambitions?

27 A. Definitely, I had.

28 Q. And what was that?

29 A. Well, I was interested in returning. After seeing the

1 Tubman years pass, the one party, then Tolbert coming in with a
2 little different touch to it, Tubman was more development
3 oriented, and seeing the need to help our people, I saw myself in
4 the future as being a part of a government that would help to
12:24:52 5 enable our people.

6 Q. But help me, how did you finance yourself through Bentley
7 College?

8 A. While I was at - after I had obtained my associate degree
9 in accounting, I was lucky to get a job with a plastic company.
12:25:16 10 It was a very nice man in a very at that time bad part of Boston.
11 It was called South Boston. This was a time when this was at the
12 height of the school desegregation in the Massachusetts area and
13 South Boston was --

14 Q. Can I pause you for a moment, because I am looking at the
12:25:42 15 transcript. What part of Boston did you say?

16 A. South. S-O-U-T-H, South.

17 Q. Thank you. Go on.

18 A. South Boston. Max Greenbaun, that is G-R-E-E-N-B-A-U-N, a
19 very nice man, gave me a job in the plastic factory. They made
12:26:05 20 cellophane plastic bags and I worked there. He was a very
21 generous man of my faith, he is Jewish, and he permitted me to do
22 my university and put in time to fill in the lost hours.

23 Q. And how many hours a work did you work?

24 A. I had to do the full 40 hours a week and it was a little
12:26:38 25 hard on me, but because I was a foreign student the law in the
26 United States in fact we were not permitted - it is not permitted
27 with a student visa to work for 40 hours, but if you are not
28 doing full-time university on a student visa the immigration
29 would throw you out. So I needed the money to pay my school

1 fees, so I had to do full-time university and full-time job.

2 Q. And where were you living at the time?

3 A. I was living in an area of Boston called Roxbury. That is
4 a predominantly black neighbourhood in Boston.

12:27:13 5 Q. And were you living by yourself?

6 A. For a time, yes, but it later changed.

7 Q. How?

8 A. Well, I met this nice lady and we lived together for some
9 time.

12:27:27 10 Q. What was her name?

11 A. Burnice B-U-R-N-I-C-E and her last name Emmanuel
12 E-M-M-A-N-U-E-L.

13 Q. And what was her origins?

14 A. Well she was an American citizen, but originally from
12:27:48 15 Trinidad, Tobago.

16 Q. And for how long did you live with her?

17 A. We were together for about I would say three or four years.

18 Q. Did you have any children with her?

19 A. Yes, we had one son.

12:28:11 20 Q. What is his name?

21 A. He is Charles Junior.

22 Q. Also known as?

23 A. Chucky.

24 Q. Was he your first child?

12:28:19 25 A. No, he was not. He was my second.

26 Q. Who is your first child?

27 A. My first daughter is Zoe Taylor.

28 Q. And who is her mother?

29 A. Her mother is Honerine Clarke.

- 1 Q. Spell that, please.
- 2 A. That is H-O-N-E-R-I-N-E, last name C-L-A-R-K-E.
- 3 Q. And where was Zoe born?
- 4 A. She was born in Liberia in Bomi Hills.
- 12:28:54 5 Q. Is that before you left to go to the United States?
- 6 A. That is correct.
- 7 Q. And where is Zoe now?
- 8 A. Ah, Zoe is in Liberia right now. She lives in Liberia.
- 9 Q. And of course we know where Chucky is now, don't we?
- 12:29:17 10 A. I have learned since my incarceration that he was charged
11 in the United States with torture and he is imprisoned, I
12 understand.
- 13 Q. Now, did you ever marry Chucky's mother?
- 14 A. No, I did not.
- 12:29:39 15 Q. Why not?
- 16 A. Oh, during those days - and even now - what they call in
17 French cohabitation. We cared about each other. We were living
18 together and cared very deeply, but sadly it just did not get to
19 that point.
- 12:30:08 20 Q. So did there come a time when that relationship came to an
21 end?
- 22 A. Ah, yes it did.
- 23 Q. And did you thereafter remain single?
- 24 A. For a while, yes, I remained single, but I met another lady
12:30:30 25 that I married about a year later.
- 26 Q. And what was her name?
- 27 A. Well, her name is Enid, that is E-N-I-D, middle name Tupee
28 T-U-P-E-E Taylor.
- 29 Q. And what was her maiden name?

1 A. Her maiden name was Boikai. That is B-O-I-K-A-I.

2 Q. And you say you married her. In what year?

3 A. I married her in 1980, to be exact.

4 Q. And were you living in the Boston area throughout this
12:31:16 5 time?

6 A. Are you referring to the time that we got married, or
7 before?

8 Q. Well, let's take it in stages. First of all whilst you
9 were with Burnice?

12:31:30 10 A. Yes, I remained in the Boston area.

11 Q. By the time you got married to Tupee, where were you
12 living?

13 A. In Liberia. I was on a trip to Liberia when we got married
14 in 1980.

12:31:44 15 Q. Well, we will come back to that in due course. Now, you've
16 mentioned to date dealing with Bentley College and graduating
17 from there. Now during the course of that relationship with
18 Burnice, did you continue to study?

19 A. Yes, I did.

12:32:13 20 Q. At what institution?

21 A. Following my graduation from Bentley, I enrolled in the
22 Masters Degree programme at New Hampshire College in Manchester,
23 New Hampshire, an adjoining State to the State of Massachusetts.

24 Q. Within what year was that?

12:32:33 25 A. That was in 1978 - '77. The '77/'78 programme and let me
26 tell you what I mean by '77/'78 programme. The school term - I
27 have been in jail now three years. I don't know what it is in
28 America and maybe it is changed and I will probably be questioned
29 on it by the Prosecutor. September is the beginning at that time

1 of the school year. It runs. It ends. It starts at the
2 beginning of January and it runs to June, so when I say the
3 '77/'78 school year I mean September '77 going into May '78.
4 That is one school year.

12:33:25 5 Q. And what was the programme upon which you enrolled?

6 A. I enrolled in an MBA programme with emphasis in
7 organisation development and behaviour, OBOD. The general MBA
8 programme is more like a management programme that I went into,
9 but my emphasis was in organisation and development, okay, and
10 behaviour. OBOD.

12:33:54

11 Q. How did you finance that?

12 A. Upon graduating from Bentley, I got a job with the Liberty
13 Mutual Insurance Company in downtown Boston as a reinsurance
14 personnel.

12:34:27

15 Q. And did that provide the finance for the course?

16 A. Yes, it did. It helped me substantially. I didn't have to
17 do two jobs. That one job was sufficient.

18 Q. And did you complete the MBA?

12:34:48

19 A. No, I did not. I spent one year in the MBA programme and I
20 had to withdraw because of my trip to Liberia at the beginning of
21 1980.

22 Q. And just briefly for now, what was the nature and purpose
23 of that trip to Liberia in January 1980?

12:35:33

24 A. In 1979 there was a major problem in Monrovia. President
25 Tolbert - '78/'79 there was a rice riot. Some individuals -
26 several Liberians - were killed. I had then risen to the level
27 of Chairman of Liberian Organisation in the United States.

28 Q. I will come to the details of that in a moment, but just
29 deal for now with the purpose of your trip to Liberia in early

1 1980?

2 A. To speak with President Tolbert in helping to bring about a
3 change in the country.

12:36:28

4 Q. At the time you made that trip were you still on the MBA
5 programme?

6 A. Yes. I had to withdraw though. I was still an MBA
7 student.

8 Q. You had to withdraw; why?

12:36:47

9 A. The planning process in going to Liberia took some time and
10 that time involved me moving throughout the United States and I
11 just could not continue the programme so I withdrew to take care
12 of this Liberian problem and upon returning re-entered the
13 programme.

12:37:04

14 Q. And how long were you intending to go to Liberia for at
15 that stage?

16 A. Oh, a very short time. It was not intended to be long. We
17 went in January but it ended up longer than we anticipated.

18 Q. And it's whilst there on that trip, was it, bearing in mind
19 what you've told us earlier, that you got married to Tupee?

12:37:24

20 A. That is correct.

21 Q. We will come to the details of that a little later. But
22 help us with this: You mentioned an organisation of Liberians
23 with which you were involved. What was the name of that
24 organisation?

12:37:42

25 A. It was called the Union of Liberian Associations in the
26 Americas. ULAA. ULAA.

27 Q. And when was that organisation founded?

28 A. In 1972.

29 Q. And were you involved in the process of founding the

1 organisation?

2 A. That is correct. I was one of the founders of the
3 organisation.

4 Q. And what was the objective of the organisation?

12:38:24 5 A. By the time I got to the United States in '72 there are
6 approximately 60,000, 70,000 Liberians in the United States.
7 They have local organisations called chapters throughout the
8 United States. I saw a need along with others to bring those
9 chapters together in order for us to have an impact on the
10 political scene in Liberia. I realised that we had to come
11 together and not stay disorganised speaking with different
12 voices.

13 Q. Come together for what?

14 A. In order to make, to influence change in Liberia. They
12:39:12 15 were all trying to influence changes in Liberia.

16 Q. What kind of change?

17 A. Political change; democratic change; peaceful political
18 democratic change. Remember now, we are coming out of the Tubman
19 era. We are now newly entering the Tolbert era, and so there is
12:39:35 20 an opportunity now to try to influence the process and that's the
21 whole engagement at this time.

22 Q. And tell me: What position or positions did you hold
23 within the organisation?

24 A. I finally became the chairman of the entire organisation.
12:39:56 25 The chairman.

26 Q. And how was the organisation set up? Help us with the
27 hierarchy, the internal structure.

28 A. Each state had its own chapter and its own president.

29 Q. And were you ever the president of a chapter?

1 A. Yes, I served as president of a chapter.

2 Q. Which chapter?

3 A. The Massachusetts chapter.

4 Q. And for how long did you serve in that role?

12:40:26 5 A. I was president for about three years.

6 Q. And then you were telling us about the structure of ULAA?

7 A. Yes. What ULAA became was an umbrella organisation that
8 all of the chapters subscribed to and each chapter would elect
9 individuals to represent that chapter to a national umbrella

12:40:56 10 organisation. That organisation itself would then elect a

11 leadership that would be the head of the entire organisation,
12 including the branches.

13 Q. And did you ever fill that role?

14 A. Yes, I was the national chairman.

12:41:17 15 Q. And was that following an election process, nomination or
16 what?

17 A. An election process. Within the umbrella organisation, it
18 worked similar to I would say how maybe the European Parliament
19 works. You have the member states, they elect individuals, send
12:41:42 20 them to this organisation, that organisation elect its
21 leadership.

22 Q. When did you become the leader of the ULAA?

23 A. In 1979 I took over the chairmanship of the union.

24 Q. And was the ULAA limited to the United States?

12:42:01 25 A. I would say of the Americas. You know, Canada was also
26 included. That's why we say the organisation of the Americas.
27 That included Canada.

28 Q. Tell me, did the organisation have any kind of influence in
29 Liberia?

1 A. We could not be ignored, I will put it that way. We first
2 started making an impact I would really say around the time of my
3 chairmanship because of the unfortunate situation that occurred -
4 maybe I was just - it could have been anyone as chairman at the
12:42:50 5 time, but an unfortunate situation occurred and then some
6 prominence developed as of that time in 1979.

7 Q. And what was the unfortunate situation?

8 A. We had some problems in Monrovia where some people got
9 killed and I was presiding over a board meeting in Washington DC
12:43:15 10 and the news reached us that several unarmed - unarmed Liberians
11 had been killed on the streets of Monrovia that were peacefully
12 demonstrating because of the price of rice.

13 Q. We will come back to that in a moment, but for now let's
14 just go back to the organisation ULAA. Help us with some of the
12:43:42 15 other individuals who were involved with the organisation at the
16 time you were chair.

17 A. We had several of them. We have at least five other
18 individuals that worked extremely close with me. We have Blamoh
19 Nelson. That's B-L-A-M-O-H, it's a Kru name. Blamoh Nelson,
12:44:14 20 normal N-E-L-S-O-N. He is presently a senator in Liberia. We
21 had an individual called Yundueh Monorkomna. Now I apologise. I
22 really don't know how to spell Monorkomna but we are going to
23 have find out this. And Yundueh, I know it's Y-U-N-D-U-E-H.

24 It's purely a Kru name, Yundueh Monorkomna. We have Joseph Gbero
12:44:50 25 of the Krahn ethnic group. That is G-B-E-R-O, Gbero. We have
26 another Steven Joe. By the way, Yundueh Monorkomna eventually
27 became speaker of the House of Representatives of the Republic of
28 Liberia. We also had tomorrow Tom Wowejyu, that's spelt
29 W-O-W-E-I-Y-U. Tom Wowejyu. These were all senior people. We

1 also have another Bai Gbala. That's B-A-I, then last name is
2 spelt G-B-A-L-A. We also have another individual called Moses
3 Duopu, D-U-O-P-U. These were all Liberians. There were many
4 more that were involved with the union at that particular time at
12:45:53 5 various high levels.

6 Q. How was the ULAA funded?

7 A. Chapters contributed to the umbrella organisation.

8 Q. And were officials of the organisation paid?

9 A. No. No, we were not paid.

12:46:13 10 Q. As chair of the organisation, were you based in any
11 particular place?

12 A. I was still based in Boston, but it involved a lot of
13 travel so I was always on the move.

14 Q. And who paid for the travel?

12:46:28 15 A. I had to pay for it myself.

16 Q. And you were travelling for what purpose?

17 A. Organisational purposes and, to be clear for the judges,
18 this travel comes back to your original question of the period of
19 my withdrawal from my masters programme, so we are talking about
12:46:52 20 a short time of maybe about six months. Tolbert has come to the
21 United States, we are invited to Liberia. Now I am going from
22 state to state trying to galvanise support and organising the
23 trip to Liberia and making sure that all chapters were on board
24 and that we were speaking with one voice.

12:47:18 25 Q. Tell me, were you travelling by yourself or with anyone?

26 A. I used to travel sometimes with one or two members of the
27 Massachusetts chapter. They couldn't stay long because I
28 couldn't. And this travel was mostly on the weekends, so we
29 would zip in and zip out, because remember now I'm working and I

1 still have to work to earn a living. So we were running over the
2 weekends. So between Friday and Sunday evening, you know, a lot
3 of flying, running to chapters. Sometimes I would have people
4 come down to see me. So it was a very hectic time.

12:47:55 5 Q. Could you afford all of this travelling out of what you
6 were earning?

7 A. No, not very - I couldn't, but I had to do something
8 because students - we were all students and everyone was having
9 problems. From time to time there would be some little

12:48:12 10 contribution by individual members that - for example those
11 Liberians in America that were now living and working in the
12 United States and making good money and there were several of
13 them who would throw in from time to time.

14 Q. But was it possible for you to remain solvent?

12:48:32 15 A. Not really if this had gone on very much longer.

16 Q. Pardon?

17 A. Not really if I had to do this much longer, no.

18 Q. Now help us with this: We are talking about a period in
19 American history when there was a great deal of upheaval within

12:48:53 20 the African American community. So help us with this: Was there
21 any kind of a relationship between ULAA, an organisation of black
22 Africans, and the various pressure groups within the African
23 American community?

24 A. No. We stayed away from those organisations because here

12:49:23 25 we are, we are all students and the United States laws are very
26 strict. We had to register. We did not register in the United
27 States as a lobbying group against a foreign government, which
28 would have - I am sure this side understand would have
29 constituted a crime. We registered as a student association for

1 social purposes. And so we were very careful not to get involved
2 with American groups because it would have probably landed a lot
3 of our students in jail or in trouble, so we didn't.

12:50:16 4 Q. And despite those concerns which resulted in you not being
5 involved in any such politics, did you ever have any brushes with
6 any of the American authorities in your role as chair of the
7 ULAA?

8 A. Yes, I did.

9 Q. Such as?

12:50:32 10 A. I was arrested by the FBI in 1979.

11 Q. What for?

12 A. Following the rice riot in Monrovia and the killing of
13 peaceful unarmed citizens I have told these judges that I am
14 presiding over a board meeting and, as you can imagine, tempers
12:50:57 15 flare. We were so upset. It was decided then that, look, the
16 only way we can bring about this change that we are talking about
17 has got to be through - if citizens are not protected by the
18 government, the government is shooting people on the streets, so
19 they said we should have an opportunity to shoot back. Bad
12:51:19 20 thinking, but that was the time. So there was an attempt to try
21 to buy some handguns to send back to Liberia to these unarmed
22 citizens to defend themselves. And not knowing that the FBI had
23 been listening to us, and they sent in an informer who passed
24 himself off as someone that had handguns and they meet to buy the
12:51:51 25 guns and they were arrested by the FBI, but I am chairman of the
26 organisation so I'm also - I go back to Boston and the FBI arrest
27 me. They do not take me to jail but I am summonsed to appear
28 before a grand jury in Washington.

29 Q. Pause there for a minute and we will come back to a little

1 bit more detail on that in a moment, but I want to pause at this
2 stage, Mr Taylor, and ask you about something else. That is your
3 political views. When did you start becoming interested in
4 politics?

12:52:26 5 A. I would put it to around 1971/'72. Right after the death
6 of President Tubman this urge started. We saw an opportunity to
7 begin to make some change because there was a little crack in the
8 Tolbert style and I started developing that particular urge.

9 Q. So help us. Describe for us, please, what life was like
12:53:14 10 under the Tubman regime under which you grew up?

11 A. Tubman was like a father to all of us. We were all part of
12 the Tubman culture. And Tubman had come into office at the - at
13 a very crucial time and had done some important things and really
14 felt a duty to how he dealt with the United States. Tubman was

12:54:02 15 not very highly educated individual - he had not obtained any
16 university education - and so he depended on the United States in
17 such a way that he was virtually subservant to the will of the
18 United States. Tubman did speeches and took them to the United
19 States embassy for the ambassador to read his speeches and all

12:54:34 20 this stuff and nonsense, so we all knew this comment, so we -
21 that period - and so his rule in Liberia, I would like to say
22 that in so many ways, the advantage was taken of Tubman and not
23 trying to be negative of my, of this man, but he was used in some
24 very unfortunate ways.

12:55:03 25 Q. Such as?

26 A. At the beginning of the quest for African countries when
27 the liberation struggle was at its zenith in Africa, when the
28 late Kwame Nkrumah coming home from school in the United States
29 at - he I think - Kwame went to Lincoln University in the United

1 States, there was this move for African unity. You had Liberia
2 the oldest independent African country. You had Ethiopia, the
3 oldest free state with an emperor. You had the struggle going on
4 in Kenya, with Kenyatta and another very good gentleman, a guy
12:56:01 5 Tom Mboya, these names we are going to have to get the spelling.
6 This quest for the union to bring Africa together was being
7 driven by Kwame Nkrumah, Ahmed Benbella of Algeria and that
8 group, and there was a famous meeting held in Addis Ababa, to
9 discuss the bringing together of Africa to form a united Africa.
12:56:33 10 Tubman, sadly, the West at that particular time, the United
11 States and most western countries saw a united Africa as a
12 so-called no-no, that an Africa united would be a problem for
13 them. So they sought to undermine it and they used Tubman to
14 undermine the bringing together of Africa, so if you go deep into
12:57:01 15 African history you will see about the so-called Addis conference
16 and the Casablanca conference. Tubman was financed by the United
17 States to host a Monrovia conference, to divide African leaders
18 to prevent the unity of Africa at the time. And quite strangely,
19 that division led to the creation of ECOWAS. The chapter and
12:57:31 20 everything of ECOWAS was written. That divide and rule led to
21 the OAU - it was not supposed to be OAU it was supposed to be
22 what, the united states of Africa at that time, and so because of
23 that, all of us that were growing up knowing the history of that
24 did not like it. Tubman fell out with most of his colleagues and
12:57:54 25 eventually the compromise was the OAU, and what happened to Kwame
26 Nkrumah, he was overthrown by we know who, by western
27 intelligence, so that is why the Tubman years for us, for me, was
28 a very terrible time, and so we saw an opportunity moving from
29 Tubman and moving in to Tolbert as an opportunity to begin to

1 free Liberia and as a result a lot of the other African states.
2 And before I conclude this answer: During that period Nigeria,
3 Togo, all of these countries obtained their independence during
4 that period and Liberia was instrumental and so Tubman was seen
12:58:44 5 as the godfather of Africa at that particular time and people
6 listened to him. So once he threw this, figuratively speaking,
7 this monkey wrench into the process, that killed the whole thing
8 and so I didn't like it. A lot of people did not like it and so
9 we tried to move away to latch onto Tolbert to see if we could
12:59:06 10 make that change. Now that interested in politics.

11 Q. Let's move away from Tubman's foreign policy for the moment
12 though. Internally within Liberia, how many political parties
13 were there during the Tubman years?

14 A. One and only one.

12:59:21 15 Q. What was it called?

16 A. The True Whig Party. W-H-I-G. The Whig from southern
17 America. [Indiscernible].

18 Q. And help us: For how long had the True Whig Party ruled
19 Liberia?

12:59:40 20 A. Practically from the inception.

21 Q. And who primarily composed the True Whig Party?

22 A. The Ameri co-Li beri an group.

23 Q. And was it legally possible to have an opposition party
24 during the Tubman years?

12:59:59 25 A. No one dared try that. No, no, no, no, no, it was not
26 permitted.

27 Q. And were the indigenous Liberians permitted to participate
28 in the political process during the Tubman years?

29 A. The True Whig Party was the party of Liberians. If you

1 were in Liberia, you were a True Whigger. There was no other way
2 so we were all True Whigger. There was not a question would you
3 like to join, Americo-Liberians, Aborigines, whoever, all
4 Liberians were members of the True Whig Party.

13:00:46 5 Q. And did that monolithic political position in Liberia have
6 any particular impact on your family or any of your family
7 members?

8 A. Yes. My cousin in 1955, his name was Booker, like
9 B-O-O-K-E-R, Booker T Bracewell --

13:01:29 10 Q. Spelling please?

11 A. B-R-A-C-E-W-E-L-L, Booker T Bracewell, along with others,
12 Samuel David Coleman, William Horace and others in 1955, in
13 attempting to bring about a change, by trying to challenge the
14 True Whig Party for change, were charged with treason and most of
13:02:07 15 them were killed in 1955 in a famous episode called The Plot That
16 Failed. My cousin Booker T Bracewell was one of those
17 individuals killed in that process.

18 Q. Now, in the latter years of his presidency who was Tubman's
19 vice-president?

13:02:29 20 A. William R Tolbert. William Richard Tolbert.

21 Q. Now, upon Tubman's death who took over?

22 A. His vice-president, William Richard Tolbert.

23 Q. Now, you mentioned earlier that there was a crack, to
24 quote, in the Tolbert style. What did you mean by that?

13:02:57 25 A. Tolbert was a little better educated. He had --

26 Q. Pausing there: Speaking of his education, did your father
27 have anything in common with Tolbert in terms of his education?

28 A. Yeah. They went to the same Lutheran school. Tolbert went
29 to the same Lutheran school. That was supposed to be what you

1 call your top school in the country, one of the top schools in
2 the country because here you are, the Lutheran overseas mission,
3 they had their - and most of the teachers are Europeans and so
4 this was a top school.

13:03:46 5 Q. Now, so returning to the crack, what are you talking about?

6 A. While Tolbert was vice-president, he travelled extensively.
7 Tolbert became President of the Baptist World Alliance. Now,
8 this alliance was an alliance that had its roots in the United
9 States. Remember earlier, I spoke about the southern Baptists.

13:04:21 10 The southern Baptists is a very large - well, at that time, I am
11 not sure now - a very large organisation maybe they may be even
12 Jerichos now, I don't know, but were very large, he was the
13 President of the Baptist World Alliance and travelled

14 extensively, and he had a lot of experience and he had met a lot
13:04:44 15 of people and his level of education drove him to a position of
16 wanting to effect meaningful changes in Liberia. That is that
17 crack. So we are moving from an era where Tubman is not very
18 sharp, very smart, and it may be wrong to say this but it's
19 right, it's the truth, but Tolbert is a little more in tune with

13:05:19 20 maybe the issues of the time and wanted to see some change and we
21 wanted to capitalise on that crack.

22 Q. Thank you. Now, remember, let's pause for a minute please,
23 and I am helpfully assisted by my learned friend Mr Anyah with
24 some spellings. Jomo Kenyatta, J-O-M-O K-E-N-Y-A-T-T-A, Kwame
13:05:42 25 Nkrumah, K-W-A-M-E N-K-R-U-M-A-H, and finally Addis Ababa
26 A-D-D-I-S A-B-A-B-A. I think we are missing the name of?

27 A. Selassie Haile, Selassie was the emperor.

28 Q. Yes, but there was another name you mentioned in northern
29 Africa?

1 A. Oh, Ahmed Benbella, Algeria. Ahmed, I think A-H-M-E-D.
2 Ahmed Benbella.

3 Q. Now, I am endeavouring here Mr Taylor to --

13:06:23

4 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Tom Mboya I think is pretty straight
5 forward.

6 THE WITNESS: Tom Mboya was working - he is from Kenya.
7 May I just before you move let me mention because in Egypt at the
8 time, who really served very well was Gamal Abdel Nasser. He was
9 one of the pillars of this whole African movement. Gamal Abdel
10 Nasser.

13:06:41

11 MR GRIFFITHS:

12 Q. That is what I am coming to, Mr Taylor, because we are
13 talking about a period in the 60s and 70s, aren't we, of a great
14 deal of upheaval in terms of the African continent?

13:06:57

15 A. That is correct.

16 Q. And decolonisation?

17 A. That is correct.

18 Q. Now help us: Just help us with a picture of how those
19 developments impacted upon your own political views?

13:07:13

20 A. Imagine a Kwame Nkrumah talking about the problems of
21 Africa, and wanting to see Africa liberated, and what a very fine
22 speaker Kwame Nkrumah was. And let me say, I heard and saw
23 Kwame, and I just want to add here. That whole beginning also,
24 the first meeting after Kwame Nkrumah was driving hard for the
25 African union occurred in Liberia, strangely, with Tubman, Kwame
26 Nkrumah and one other person, Sekou Toure. Now, if you --

13:07:50

27 Q. Let me pause for a minute and deal with the spellings.
28 Sekou Toure?

29 A. Sekou is S-E-K-O-U and Toure I think is T-O-U-R-E. Sekou

1 Toure. What I name, these names, I am naming those that we call
2 the forerunners of the desire to unite Africa. These are the
3 forerunners. Now listening to Kwame Nkrumah, and knowing that
4 these are our aspirations and goals also, we were driven by these
13:08:34 5 discussions at that time, and you know.

6 Q. You say the first meeting was held in Liberia; where?

7 A. Sanniquelle, strangely in Sanniquelle, Liberia. The three
8 little huts are still there today in Sanniquelle.

9 Q. Spell it.

13:08:47 10 A. S-A-N-N-I-Q-U-E-L-L-E. Sanniquelle. That is in Nimba
11 County Liberia.

12 Q. And who met there?

13 A. President Tubman, Ahmed Sekou Toure and Kwame Nkrumah.

14 Q. And how did Kwame Nkrumah get there?

13:09:10 15 A. He visited Liberia. Let's not lose sight here, your
16 Honours, of why. Tubman again I mentioned is almost the
17 Godfather of Africa. He has been in there forever and Liberia is
18 the oldest independent African country who has worked for the
19 independence. Nigeria, all of them. Tubman was instrumental in
13:09:37 20 getting independence from Britain for Nigeria and all these
21 countries. So they all went to him as the good old man and the
22 father. So they all had gone to him to discuss this particular
23 aspect of trying to see how Africa could unite.

24 Q. Can I pause again and assist with some more spellings.

13:09:57 25 Haile Selassie, H-A-I-L-E S-E-L-A-S-S-I-E. Ahmed Benbella,
26 A-H-M-E-D B-E-N-B-E-L-L-A. Gamal Abdel Nasser, G-A-M-A-L
27 A-B-D-E-L N-A-S-S-E-R.

28 Now you've mentioned the Kwame Nkrumah and the effect upon
29 you of his journey. What else was going on around Africa at the

1 time which impacted upon you? Perhaps if we just go around the
2 map and you can tell us.

3 A. Well, you had - this was a time of the liberation struggle.
4 How east Africa was moving, when I mentioned Jomo Kenyatta or
5 most people know how Jomo Kenyatta got it - we know how Kenya got
6 their independence. They started something similar to what you
7 see in Sierra Leone now, what they called the Kamajors, it was
8 the Mau Mau movement. That's how the British got out of there.

9 They beheaded them and did all kinds of stuff. So we have that
10 situation going on. In southern Africa you also have the
11 terrible apartheid regime going on at that particular time in
12 southern Africa. And there is all these movements going on. We
13 either had war or liberation struggles going on in trying to get
14 - so in the west of Africa you also had what you call now Guinea
15 Bissau with Amilcar Cabral.

16 So there was - this was the period of liberation struggles
17 and war trying to break away from the stranglehold that was upon
18 these African states. So that was the general period. In
19 northern Africa we didn't have too much problem because Nasser
20 was there. But east, southern, west Africa there was all these
21 movements going on at the time.

22 Q. Now Cabral you mentioned, C-A-B-R-A-L. His politics, his
23 sense of liberation was informed by Marxist-Leninism, wasn't it?

24 A. That is correct.

25 Q. Now help us, were you a Marxist-Leninist?

26 A. I resent Marxism and this is why even some of my colleagues
27 in Liberia until today we still have problems, because there was
28 a Marxist organisation. I am a pure democrat. I believe in the
29 capitalist structure. I have worked for it. I trained for it.

1 No. My interests with their whole discussions at the time was
2 the interests in having Africa break away from the stranglehold
3 that exists until today. Because let me say here and now I am a
4 pan-Africanist, I have always been and will always be and this
13:13:27 5 informed some of the other issues of my actions that we will come
6 to. I am pan-Africanist.

7 Q. What do you mean by that?

8 A. Well, the liberation of Africa, making sure that Africans
9 solve their own problem. We went to school with these Europeans
13:13:48 10 and Americans, we made better grades than they made. They come
11 to our countries, they sit on top of us, because they have a
12 little bit of money, as though they know it all and they do not.
13 I believe that Africans are capable of solving their own
14 problems. This is that whole pan-African attitude that remains
13:14:08 15 in me today.

16 Q. Now, you mentioned earlier that your antipathy to
17 Marxist-Leninism caused problems with some of your colleagues,
18 like who?

19 A. Well, there was an organisation in Liberia called MOJA.

13:14:23 20 Q. What does that stand for?

21 A. Movement For Justice in Africa and one of the top
22 individuals that has always has problems with me is the so-called
23 Amos Sawyer. That's Marxist-Leninist set-up that they had over
24 there and that - we could not get along then and still don't get
13:14:47 25 along today.

26 Q. Amos Sawyer later became President of the interim
27 government, didn't he? We will come to the details later.

28 A. Well, Amos Sawyer was elected to run Monrovia. I will put
29 it that way.

1 Q. Very well. Apart from Amos Sawyer, who else, if at all,
2 did you have difficulties with on that ideological level?

3 A. All of the MOJA people. There were several of them. You
4 had Sawyer, MOJA. You had Tipoteh, Dr Tipoteh, MOJA. And quite
13:15:29 5 a few others.

6 Q. And where was MOJA based?

7 A. MOJA I understand had branches in West Africa. They had a
8 MOJA branch in Liberia. There may have been a MOJA branch in The
9 Gambia. There was a MOJA branch I think in Senegal and some
13:15:51 10 other countries in West Africa. Ghana to be sure. They were in
11 Ghana, but I just didn't --

12 Q. Have you ever heard of an organisation called PAL?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. What does that stand for?

13:16:06 15 A. The Progressive Alliance of Liberia.

16 Q. And what was their political ideology?

17 A. As anti-Marxist as you can imagine. Around my orientation.

18 Q. And who was the leader of that organisation?

19 A. The leader of that organisation was the late Gabriel Barcus
13:16:30 20 Matthews.

21 Q. Gabriel, G-A-B-R-I-E-L?

22 A. That is correct.

23 Q. Barcus, help us with that.

24 A. B-A-R-C-U-S. And Matthews, M-A-T-T-H-E-W-S.

13:16:48 25 Q. Barcus Matthews, was he involved in any other organisation
26 or political party apart from PAL?

27 A. Barcus Matthews was involved with ULAA, the Union of
28 Liberian Associations in the Americas prior to his returning to
29 Liberia.

1 Q. When he returned to Liberia, did he establish any grouping
2 there?

3 A. Yes. When Barcus returned to Liberia, that was around 1978
4 I am virtually sure, Barcus decided to engage the system. By
13:17:57 5 engaging the system Barcus decided, coming from the union, and he
6 had left the union, he decided that --

7 Q. The union, let's just be clear about this, which union?

8 A. ULAA.

9 Q. ULAA?

13:18:10 10 A. ULAA. Barcus arrives in Liberia and decides that, okay,
11 Tolbert wants change, we are going to take him up to it. He then
12 begins to pursue the cause of trying to establish a political
13 party. The first time almost in the history of Liberia that that
14 will be at least considered. It was not done during the Tubman
13:18:41 15 years and Tubman led Liberia for 27 years. So he said fine. So
16 he goes and he begins the process of trying to register, to
17 establish an opposition party, political party, in Liberia.

18 Q. Called what?

19 A. It was called - he started off as the Progressive Alliance
13:19:04 20 of Liberia and he kept it. That's the PAL, the Progressive
21 Alliance of Liberia.

22 Q. Now, how would you style Barcus Matthews's politics?

23 A. Barcus was - I would just put he was trained in the United
24 States in the first instance, believed in democracy, free speech,
13:19:31 25 free press and the rule of law. He was a democrat, I would say.
26 A true democrat.

27 Q. Did you share those principles?

28 A. Barcus and I, on so many accounts I would say yes.

29 Q. And help us, Mr Taylor. What was and still is your

1 attitude towards the United States?

2 A. Well, I still consider that my own roots are still buried
3 in the United States. I still have cousins in the south. But
4 I've always felt that, one, the United States has not been the
13:20:21 5 friend that she is capable of being to Liberia. I will expand on
6 that.

7 The United States - and Americans are very good people.
8 The United States in 1847 - let me just come back one step.
9 Slaves are freed from the United States. The first NGO called
13:20:57 10 the American Colonisation Society sends these slaves to West
11 Africa; Sierra Leone and Liberia. These freed slaves are
12 American children. In fact, the first President of Liberia,
13 Joseph Jenkins Roberts, is the illegitimate child of Thomas
14 Jefferson. They are thrown into Liberia. In 1847 they declared
13:21:29 15 themselves a free, sovereign and independent state. The United
16 States takes 15 years before they recognise Liberia. Britain
17 recognises Liberia almost immediately. So from 1847 you brought
18 these black people into West Africa. They abandoned them, left
19 them and from 1847 until now Liberia, in my opinion, could have
13:21:59 20 and still could be a sure case of American ingenuity and American
21 assistance to Africa. You understand me? They failed to do
22 that.

23 Let's look at the colonial countries. Britain left
24 something in Nigeria. They left a little something in Sierra
13:22:26 25 Leone. The French colonised, they left something back. America
26 - I have nothing against America. I believe America is capable,
27 but they have failed, okay, to assist us in a way that they are
28 still capable of doing.

29 Q. But they left Firestone, Mr Taylor.

1 A. What did Firestone do in Liberia? Firestone came in
2 Liberia in 1925 and got a 100 years - no, excuse me. I delete
3 that. A 99 years, 99 months, 99 weeks, 99 days, 99 hours, 99
4 seconds agreement. And they have been sitting there, doing
13:23:08 5 nothing. They planted - they had an agreement to do one million
6 hectares in rubber. They did 240,000 hectares and that's it.
7 That's it. That's the big investment,

8 Q. But, Mr Taylor, the Americans also built Roberts
9 International Airfield?

13:23:30 10 A. Well, let's get that straight. Let's get this straight.
11 During World War II, Malaysia, the country Malaysia, did rubber,
12 was captured by, if I am not mistaken, Japanese forces. The
13 allied forces at the time needed rubber. They had Firestone done
14 and, in order to secure that Atlantic front, did two things:

13:24:14 15 They built Roberts International Airport for military purposes to
16 aid allied forces in World War II and they built the Freeport of
17 Monrovia to move the rubber that was being used for tyres and
18 other things to support allied forces during World War II. So I
19 do not look at it just as an economic venture, I look at it as a
13:24:40 20 venture of necessity; where America needed that airport along
21 with the allied forces. That's Roberts International Airport.

22 Q. But Voice of America also had an aerial there, Mr Taylor?

23 A. Oh, Voice of America. Well, these are for security
24 concerns. Let's not forget who Voice of America is. Yes, Voice
13:25:00 25 of America did have a relay station there but there is more to
26 the Voice of America story.

27 Q. Can I just pause for a minute, your Honours, and deal with
28 a spelling. Tìpoteh. Togbah T-O-G-B-A-H, Nah N-A-H, Tìpoteh
29 T-I-P-O-T-E-H. Mr Taylor, are you anti-America?

1 A. No. I am not and will never be anti-American. I just want
2 America to come up to the plate. If you are going to use Liberia
3 as your little back yard garden, well then you do something for
4 Liberia. If you are going to take us through all this education
13:25:48 5 and do everything, you cannot continue to overlook us. In fact,
6 I can almost say we are like children saying, hey, you have a
7 mother, you brought me into this world so help. You can't stay -
8 we are 150 - some 150 years old and Liberia doesn't have a
9 fitting highway. And all this nonsense about corruption, where
13:26:06 10 is the - how do you get corrupt with what you do not have? I
11 have heard the Prosecution talking about me having 100 million.
12 I challenge them here now and the world before this court in
13 Europe, let them produce one account. Lies, rumours, so this
14 whole thing, there is nothing in Liberia. There is not even a
13:26:25 15 fitting highway there and America is capable of doing it and I
16 think they should. So I could never be anti. And I dealt with
17 America as President. God willing, if I walk out of this, I am
18 prepared to deal with America in whatever instance. It's just a
19 matter of saying: Now, look, America, come up to the plate and
13:26:46 20 do what you ought to do for Liberia because you failed to do it
21 in 150 years and I challenge them to dispute it.

22 MR GRIFFITHS: Mr President, I am about to embark on
23 another topic, and I wondered whether that might be a convenient
24 moment, noting the time.

13:27:03 25 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, I think we will adjourn rather than
26 you start a new topic, Mr Griffiths. We will adjourn for the
27 lunch break and we will reconvene at 2.30.

28 [Lunch break taken at 1.30 p.m.]

29 [Upon resuming at 2.32 p.m.]

1 MR GRIFFITHS: Before we commence this afternoon,
2 Mr President, can I indicate that Mrs Claire Carlton-Hanciles has
3 left us and so there hasn't been a change on this side of the
4 room.

14:33:28 5 PRESIDING JUDGE: All right, thank you. That is noted.
6 Thank you, Mr Griffiths.

7 MR GRIFFITHS: Not at all:

8 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, before the Luncheon adjournment we were
9 talking about your political views and you had earlier mentioned
10 the succession of Tolbert as representing something of a crack,
11 to quote you, and you also mentioned various other events which
12 took place during the Tolbert period which impacted upon the ULAA
13 in the United States. So coming then to the Tolbert years in
14 more detail, did you see the succession of Tolbert as
14:34:21 15 representing a new phase in Liberian history?

16 A. Yes, I did.

17 Q. Why?

18 A. We have to look at the period. In fact the normal
19 succession to power was significant, but also we knew from
14:34:48 20 Tolbert's vast travels, his experience, that in simple English he
21 could deliver the goods so it did have an impact in knowing that
22 he had the capacity.

23 Q. And was there anything about, or anything done by Tolbert
24 at an early stage which suggested that he might be seeking to
14:35:16 25 heal their deep-rooted divisions between the Congo Town set and
26 the indigenous population?

27 A. Yes.

28 Q. What was that?

29 A. As I mentioned to the judges before, with my own family

1 there was a problem in trying to inter-marry. This is a similar
2 situation that happened in the case of Tolbert. Tolbert did
3 something very important. Tolbert's sister got married to an
4 aborigine Liberian. His sister got married to an original
14:36:00 5 Liberian called Gabriel Fargangalo, that is spelled
6 F-A-R-G-A-N-G-A-L-O. Now, in the Liberian setting that is very
7 serious. For the sister of the President to marry an aborigine
8 Liberian, that was unheard of. That was a significant move in my
9 opinion and in the opinion of a lot of Liberians that Tolbert was
14:36:32 10 trying to breach the divide. This is what I consider as
11 significant.

12 Q. And what impact did that have on individuals like you
13 looking from abroad at Liberia?

14 A. Well, it had a great impact. It had a great impact, in
14:36:55 15 that we saw this again as an opening, so Tolbert's sister marries
16 Fargangalo, great. May I just add: There is another thing about
17 Tolbert that he went out of his way to do. Tolbert was one of
18 the first presidents to, even though he was from the
19 Americo-Liberian stock, he learned to speak a local dialect, as
14:37:21 20 the Kpelle tribe. Now, that can be spelled two ways. Some
21 people call it Kpelle, K-P-E-L-L-E, or just P-E-L-L-E. These were
22 all moves that encouraged us and we saw in him this particular
23 act.

24 You get married, you speak the local dialect. He started
14:37:41 25 talking about trying to bridge the economic gap and what were
26 some of his slogans. He would talk about mat to mattress, you
27 know, and total involvement for peace. You know, all these
28 slogans, and working towards them really played a significant
29 part in our own determination that there was, you know, a move on

1 to change.

2 Q. And help us with this: You had mentioned earlier that
3 President Tubman would on occasions have his speech vetted by
4 someone at the US embassy. Did that continue under Tolbert?

14:38:26 5 A. No, no. Tolbert ran into some early problems.

6 Q. Problems with who?

7 A. With the United States.

8 Q. Why?

9 A. Tolbert broke what appeared to have been a long outstanding
14:38:47 10 red line that he crossed. Tolbert was - during the Cold War the
11 Soviet Union had a few embassies around Africa and it was almost
12 a sin for Liberia, the principal almost - and we assumed as being
13 the principal ally of the United States in Africa to open a
14 Soviet embassy in Monrovia. Tolbert did that. And that I think
14:39:16 15 is the straw that broke the camel's back.

16 Q. What do you mean?

17 A. Well, not long after that he was killed.

18 Q. What are you suggesting then, Mr Taylor?

19 A. Well, I do not want to speculate. I just - I can just give
14:39:36 20 you the progression. Tolbert opens the Soviet embassy. It is
21 disliked by a lot of people, including the United States, and
22 rightly so I want to believe because of the close relationship,
23 and if I can deal with that close relationship. You mentioned
24 before in your question the issue of VOA. There are
14:40:05 25 long-standing ties between the United States and Liberia.
26 Liberia is supposed to be America's little child, so any - the
27 Soviet embassy is serious but you have got all these security
28 posts. You have the VOA. The VOA is a radio station but it is a
29 relay station.

1 Q. The VOA is what, spell it out for us?

2 A. The Voice of America is a radio outfit that was used to
3 relay radio communication across the world, but like the BBC
4 these are all propaganda radio stations. That is in Liberia.

14:40:43 5 There is another very important security situation at the time.

6 The other thing that is there, Liberia is I think the only
7 country on the African continent that is hosting the Omega, that
8 is O-M-E-G-A, The Omega Towers. Now, what is the Omega Tower?

9 Prior to these satellites that are the spy satellites that are

14:41:14 10 launched into space that are used for navigation and other

11 military purposes, the Omega Towers were about three or not more
12 than four across the world, these are very high, high towers.

13 They are high security towers. They were used as guidance

14 systems for United States submarines and ships at sea. Very

14:41:42 15 strategic. So Liberia became strategic to the United States in

16 terms of the VOA broadcasts and we now have the Omega Towers.

17 Thirdly, Liberia from intelligence perspective, is the centre of

18 almost western intelligence on the African continent, so bringing

19 the Soviet Union during the Cold War into Liberia was detrimental

14:42:07 20 to Tolbert.

21 Now, what happens after that? A training programme is

22 conducted by the United States where the first special forces are

23 being trained. Samuel Doe, and Samuel Doe is the former

24 President of Liberia that staged a coup d'etat, are amongst the

14:42:26 25 young men that train through the special programme. Immediately

26 - and that was the best qualified training programme that had

27 ever been held in Liberia - less than a month after this

28 particular programme they kill President Tolbert.

29 Now, I am not in a position to make any claim, but I am

1 just trying to give you the progression of things. The embassy,
2 because of the close relationship between these countries, this
3 special training programme, Tolbert gets killed a month later.
4 It is anybody's guess what happened.

14:43:03 5 Q. Now earlier you made mention of some riots which had taken
6 place in Liberia during the tenure of Tolbert as president. Can
7 you help us with the historical and contextual background to
8 that, please?

9 A. Yes. Barcus Matthews leaves the United States. He goes to
14:43:31 10 Liberia and he begins the process of trying to start a political
11 party. That struggle is on for several months. Eventually the
12 party is permitted to register. It is called the Progressive
13 People's Party, PPP.

14 Q. Which year is this?

14:43:57 15 A. This is in 1979.

16 Q. Thank you.

17 A. Now, we are in the United States. We are following all of
18 these occurrences in Liberia. I want to believe that had Tolbert
19 not wanted the Progressive People's Party to be registered it
14:44:24 20 would not have registered. We know as a fact that there were
21 elements in the True Whig Party that did not want change.

22 Tolbert wanted change. I will be fair to him. I think as a
23 manoeuvre on the part of Tolbert's part he permitted the party to
24 register and I think that may have been a signal to this block
14:44:56 25 that did not want to see change that hey, it is going to come.

26 The party is registered. Rice, the staple of Liberia,
27 becomes a major issue. Barcus Matthews is very sharp, started
28 talking about reducing the price of rice, and I must not hesitate
29 in saying that to a price that I believe was impossible, but that

1 is politics. He said that rice could be brought to Liberia and
2 sold for nine dollars a bag. Now, that was virtually impossible,
3 but I think it was politics and that is what he told the people.
4 Tolbert raised the price of rice for another very good cause.

14:45:49 5 Tolbert believed that Liberia had to become self-sufficient and
6 he was in a basic - maybe economics 101 - if you increase the
7 price of rice and make it high enough that people can't afford it
8 and encourage domestic production eventually we would become
9 self-sufficient. A very good reason too, which I agree with, but
14:46:17 10 on the political side Barcus Matthews seized this as an
11 opportunity to push Tolbert against the wall. A rice riot
12 occurs. People get killed.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE: I hesitate to interrupt, but I think it
14 is important that this be noted on the transcript, that the
14:46:38 15 witness said rice riot, R-I-C-E.

16 THE WITNESS: Excuse me, rice yes, R-I-C-E.

17 PRESIDING JUDGE: It is shown on the LiveNote record as
18 rice riot. I don't want that misunderstanding being part of this
19 trial.

14:46:53 20 THE WITNESS: Thank you, your Honour. I don't have the
21 stuff here, so I don't know. Okay, thank you, your Honour. It
22 is rice R-I-C-E, the rice riot, occur and people get killed on
23 the streets of Monrovia. Barcus Matthews and all of his people
24 get arrested, thrown into jail and charged with treason.

14:47:13 25 MR GRIFFITHS:

26 Q. Pause there. First of all, when in 1979 was this?

27 A. This riot, this rice riot occurred, I am still in the
28 system, I think it is about April. I think it is about April.

29 Q. And when you said that people were killed, who did the

1 killing?

2 A. It was said at the time that the police shot these peaceful
3 unarmed citizens. Now, what is important about that, which
4 Tolbert denied this, of course, the government denied it, but
14:47:49 5 there were gunshot wounds that were on the bodies that were
6 recovered. Now, what most of us said - and I was in the United
7 States now --

8 Q. Who is most of us?

9 A. The union, most Liberians, but I am speaking now as the
14:48:08 10 chairman of the union.

11 Q. The ULAA?

12 A. I'm sorry, I keep saying the union. It is the ULAA. I
13 will remember to add that. We say fine. President Tolbert, you
14 say that the police were provoked and they killed some innocent
14:48:27 15 people. Fine. If this is the case, there are two officials
16 involved. In Liberia the police comes under the ministry of
17 justice, unlike other African countries where you may have them
18 under interior. Great. Fire the minister of justice and the
19 inspector general - we call it the director of police - and this
14:48:52 20 will be an opportunity for us to begin to mend fence. Tolbert
21 refused to fire these two officials and this is exacerbated the
22 problem and things just grew and grew and grew until they got out
23 of control.

24 Q. So did you and your organisation in the United States do
14:49:15 25 anything in response to the rice riots?

26 A. Yes, we did.

27 Q. What was that?

28 A. We had demonstrations. The Union of Liberian Associations
29 in the Americas, ULAA, under my chairmanship led demonstrations

1 in Washington DC. We were so upset we bought a casket and I
2 personally led that demonstration to the White House in
3 Washington DC. We had demonstrations in New York. There was
4 also another demonstration in Atlanta, Georgia. There were
14:49:55 5 demonstrations and protests staged by the union.

6 Q. What was the response of the Tolbert regime to the rice
7 riots, if any?

8 A. Yes, he did - there was - besides these people being tried
9 for treason he tried to amend the laws, the treason laws of
14:50:16 10 Liberia. This would have caused these young men to have been
11 executed if they had been found guilty.

12 Q. Now, you say there were demonstrations in Washington. What
13 was the focus of that demonstration?

14 A. We were calling for Tolbert to step down. As, you know,
14:50:40 15 students in America we said, "No, this has happened. You don't
16 want to act. Step down and hold elections. Since the
17 Progressive People's Party now is an opposition party they may
18 have an opportunity to win. You have lost the respect of the
19 Liberian people and it's time to step down".

14:51:03 20 Q. Was there a Liberian embassy in Washington at that time?

21 A. Definitely and we did not hesitate to go to that embassy.
22 As students we threatened to burn it down. We threatened to take
23 it over. We did not enter the embassy. All trying to vent our
24 anger at what had happened in Monrovia.

14:51:30 25 Q. Now, what about New York? New York as we all know is the
26 seat of the United Nations. You mentioned a demonstration in New
27 York. What was the focus of the demonstration in New York?

28 A. There were several. There were several demonstrations in
29 New York, but the one that I think we could focus on with more

1 details is the demonstration that occurred when President Tolbert
2 attended the General Assembly meeting in or around
3 August/September of 1979.

14:52:20 4 Q. Before we get to that, did Liberia have a representative at
5 the United Nations at that time?

6 A. Definitely, at all times.

7 Q. And who was the Liberian representative to the UN at that
8 time?

9 A. Councillor Winston Tubman.

14:52:32 10 Q. And after the rice riots did he feature in any way in
11 relation to ULAA activities?

12 A. Did he feature?

13 Q. Did he, Winston Tubman, feature in any way?

14 A. Yes, Winston came around the time that we actually took
14:52:55 15 over the consulate in New York.

16 Q. Which consulate?

17 A. The Liberian consulate in New York.

18 Q. What do you mean you took it over?

19 A. Well, we had asked the President to resign, he did not and
14:53:08 20 we said that this is Liberia's property. We wanted to - in fact
21 really to make a point. It was more of a point for the
22 President. There was no destruction carried out at the embassy,
23 but we decided that we would go into the embassy, I mean at the
24 consulate, we would sit in there, stay in there until President
14:53:29 25 Tolbert responded to our demands.

26 Q. And how did things develop, if at all?

27 A. They got a little hairy. We go in, we take over the
28 consulate. No one is hurt, we don't break anything. Winston
29 Tubman comes. President Tolbert hears of the whole incident and

1 the Liberian government on the one hand is doing everything to
2 hush this thing up because it was big press. They did not want
3 that. So Winston Tubman then says to me, he says, "Well, listen,
4 you people have to leave the consulate". I said, "Well, we have
14:54:22 5 no intention of leaving the consulate". He says, "Well, if you
6 people don't leave" - and I must admit the Liberian government
7 was - I mean Councillor Tubman, the ambassador, was not hostile.
8 He said, "Well, please, if you people don't leave we will have to
9 arrest you". I said, "Well, we want to be arrested. Arrest us."
14:54:41 10 He said, "No, we don't want to arrest you". We refused and he
11 contacted Monrovia again and finally the New York City police
12 were called in and about six of us were arrested.

13 Q. Were you arrested?

14 A. I was arrested and taken to the main police station in New
14:55:01 15 York City. We were processed and then released on bail to appear
16 in court at a later date. But the Liberian government, knowing
17 that they did not want this publicity that we were really
18 seeking, decided that they did not want to press charges against
19 us and so they let us go and Tolbert did this I guess as an
14:55:27 20 attempt to demonstrate to us that he wanted dialogue with us and
21 I think that was very generous of him.

22 Q. And tell me, who was it that organised the demonstrations
23 in Washington and New York at the consulate?

24 A. Well, not trying to beat my own drum, I was the chairman of
14:55:51 25 the union. I, along with the union, organised the demonstration.

26 Q. Now, following that demonstration at the consulate, the
27 Liberian consulate in New York, was there any other demonstration
28 by the ULAA in New York?

29 A. Yes. ULAA planned another little trick. By ULAA I mean

1 the Union of Liberian Associations. President Tolbert comes to
2 the General Assembly.

3 Q. What for?

14:56:30

4 A. To address the General Assembly. Nation states once every
5 year come and address the General Assembly of the United Nations.

6 Q. And in what capacity was he coming at that time?

7 A. Twofold. He was President of Liberia, but he was also
8 chairman of the Organisation of African Unity.

14:56:49

9 Q. And in which of those two capacities was he intending to
10 address the United Nations?

11 A. As President of the Republic of Liberia.

12 Q. Very well. So what happened? Tell us.

14:57:08

13 A. We were able to secure some tickets for the gallery of the
14 General Assembly and we bought these tickets, we got these
15 tickets and posted students at different points in the hall and
16 as he was speaking we just rudely, sadly, disrupted his speech.

14:57:29

17 We would just jump up and yell and yell and they would grab this
18 one, take him downstairs. There are cells downstairs in the UN
19 building. There are jails down there. They will grab this one,
20 take him down. So we would wait a few minutes, he starts up
21 again, another two jump from the other end. Just disruption.
22 And the UN police finally managed to pick out all of the bad
23 apples from within the hall and took them downstairs, locked them
24 up for a little while and then put them out of the building.

14:57:51

25 Q. Were you one of those arrested?

26 A. No, I did not go in the hall, but I was in charge of it
27 from outside.

28 Q. Did President Tolbert revisit the United States after that?

29 A. Well, immediately following the General Assembly visit he

1 continued on.

2 Q. To where?

3 A. To Washington DC.

4 Q. And did you have occasion to meet him at that stage?

14:58:22 5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Help us with that, please.

7 A. You know, having been through this situation myself as

8 President, Tolbert was in a very tight spot. Here is a man

9 trying to demonstrate to us that he wanted dialogue. There is a

14:58:41 10 large Liberian population in the United States about 60 to 70,000

11 individuals. All of this is going on, he really wants to make

12 peace. So what he suggests is that - in fact we asked to speak

13 to him and gladly he accepted to meet with me and a delegation in

14 Washington DC at the Liberian embassy and we did take up the

14:59:03 15 invitation and met with him at the embassy compound.

16 Q. And were you there?

17 A. I was there. I led the delegation.

18 Q. And did you address President Tolbert?

19 A. Yes.

14:59:17 20 Q. What about?

21 A. I addressed him about the need for change, the unfortunate

22 situation in Monrovia where peaceful citizens had been killed and

23 his refusal to discipline the minister of justice and director of

24 police and told him that we wanted to see meaningful change. His

14:59:49 25 response at that particular time was as follows. He said, "I am

26 doing the best that I can to bring about change". He said, "It

27 is slow, but I want change". He said, "But, look, some of you

28 have been in America very long and may not have all of the

29 details of what's going on in Liberia, so I now extend an

1 invitation to you, Mr Chairman, and a delegation to come and
2 visit Liberia and tour the country where we think you would be
3 better informed as to what is happening on the ground", and we
4 accepted that invitation.

15:00:28 5 Q. Now pause there for a moment. Which year was this?

6 A. This is in 1979.

7 Q. And in what year had you arrived in the United States?

8 A. I arrived in the United States in 1972.

9 Q. So you had been in the US then for some seven years by
15:00:50 10 then?

11 A. Yes, without a vacation to Liberia, that is correct.

12 Q. And you had never returned to Liberia during that period?

13 A. That is correct.

14 Q. So would you agree that there was some force in what was
15:01:03 15 said by President Tolbert about you having become somewhat
16 distant from events on the ground?

17 A. Not quite. Not quite. There are about, like I said, 60 to
18 70,000 Liberians in the United States. These Liberians, like all
19 of our citizens that are in the diaspora - there are hundreds and
15:01:30 20 thousands of calls every day. There is virtually very little
21 that you would not know. So while I agree that there may have
22 been some internal political things that were going on that I did
23 not know, but to a large extent we had a clear picture of what
24 was going on because of the constant cross flow of information
15:01:54 25 between Liberia and the United States.

26 Q. So he suggested then a tour. Who was going to fund and
27 organise that?

28 A. The Government of Liberia.

29 Q. And did that occur?

1 A. That did occur. We accepted the - we accepted the
2 invitation.

3 Q. Who went on the tour?

4 A. I led a delegation of four other persons.

15:02:23 5 Q. Who were they?

6 A. Bai Gbala, the President of the Minnesota chapter.

7 Q. Pause and just help us again, please, with that spelling?

8 A. If I am not mistaken I think it is already on the record.

9 It is B-A-I G-B-A-L-A, Bai Gbala.

15:02:46 10 Q. Thank you. Who else?

11 A. Yundueh, that name Monorkomna. Steven Joe and Joseph
12 Gebro. So these were the other four members of my delegation.

13 Q. Was Tupee a member of the delegation?

14 A. No, she was not.

15:03:09 15 Q. But in any event, when was it that this delegation left for
16 Liberia?

17 A. We arrived in Liberia in January of 1980.

18 Q. And was there a great deal of media interest in your visit?

19 A. Oh, yes. Oh, yes. The union had developed its name after
15:03:52 20 at least two or three incidents that occurred. Let's not forget

21 the first incident that we haven't gone into details now, I am

22 just going to touch it, attempts are made in Washington DC to buy

23 handguns. We were arrested by the FBI. That is news. We go to

24 New York. We take over the consulate. That is news. We disrupt

15:04:20 25 the General Assembly. That is news. We meet President Tolbert

26 in Washington DC. That is news. By now, Liberians have

27 developed a deep sense of appreciation for the Union of Liberian

28 Associations in America. In other words, these are our sons and

29 daughters that went to the United States to go to school, they

1 are educated now, so now they are acting in our behalf, so we
2 have this, I don't know what you want to call it, almost rock
3 star status, but we are now looked at very seriously.

4 So upon arrival in Liberia there is big press. There are
15:05:04 5 crowds. Everyone is looking. And may I just add before I stop.
6 Don't forget there is a rice riot, people are dead, and this is
7 the whole period. A delegation coming from America is seen as a
8 big deal.

9 Q. But pause there for a minute, Mr Taylor, and assist us with
15:05:27 10 this: Did it cross your mind that President Tolbert might be
11 luring you back to Liberia to kill you?

12 A. Oh, yes, it did cross my mind. Surely it crossed our
13 minds. Here is a situation where we have embarrassed the man, we
14 have disrupted his speech, we have done all of this stuff. We
15:05:51 15 have called him bad names and we are about to go to Liberia. Of
16 course it did cross our minds that we could, even if not get
17 killed, we probably could have gotten locked up like the other
18 guys that were already in jail.

19 Q. So why did you go?

15:06:07 20 A. Well, it was - that was the one thing, the chance that we
21 had to take if we would have been taken seriously in any way as
22 wanting to bring about meaningful change in Liberia. I mean,
23 here we are. It is good and well to sit in the United States and
24 demonstrate on the streets where at most the police will arrest
15:06:30 25 you, take you in and book you and let you go, but now when it
26 comes to the time to - what we say literally in Liberia - to show
27 your juice and you run away, I mean, we just couldn't do that.
28 So that was a chance that we had to take and we took it.

29 Q. So what did the tour consist of?

1 A. We get to Liberia. We meet the President. We ask to see
2 those that are incarcerated and by those that are incarcerated I
3 am referring to Barcus Matthews and all of the members of the
4 Progressive People's Party. They are all incarcerated. We asked
15:07:15 5 to see them. We do not get to see them.

6 Q. Why not?

7 A. I guess for, you know, under the blanket of security
8 reasons a lot of things happen all around the world. On the
9 security, from the biggest country to the smallest one, they do
15:07:35 10 all kinds of funny things under the guise of security, so they
11 just said for security reasons we cannot let you meet them.

12 But the second phase of the tour was to go to certain
13 regions of the country and I was invited by the President. It
14 just happened that he was touring Nimba County where there had
15:08:01 15 been some development projects completed along with the United
16 States ambassador at the time. I don't remember his first name,
17 but I know he is Ambassador Smith. I remember him. He is a guy,
18 he limped a little bit. A very nice man. And he invited me to
19 go along on that tour to see these projects and be a part of his
15:08:24 20 delegation and I went.

21 Q. And where in Nimba was that?

22 A. We visited several towns. We went to Tappita; we went to
23 Gbutuo, and also a project at the Baptists - there is a Baptist
24 mission up there, another project that I just forgot the name of
15:08:50 25 the town, but there were about three or four spots including
26 Tappita and Gbutuo.

27 Q. Help me with spellings for Tappita and Gbutuo, please?

28 A. Tappita, T-A-P-P-I-T-A, Tappita, and now Gbutuo is in the
29 records, but it is - some people pronounce it wrongly as Butuo.

1 It is G-B-U-T-U-O, Gbutuo, but in the records here it may be
2 spelt as Butuo but it is about the same place. It is about the
3 same place.

15:09:32 4 Q. And during the course of this tour were you allowed to
5 address the people in any way?

6 A. Oh, definitely. I was not hindered in any way. I
7 addressed different groups. I held press conferences and in fact
8 I, at one of those press conferences I even had the opportunity
9 to criticise the True Whig Party at the time. I was free to
15:09:53 10 operate in any way that I wanted to. He did not obstruct me in
11 any way, and I did address the press about an issue at the time.
12 The Progressive People's Party, before President Tolbert went up
13 to Nimba County, I wanted to stage a peaceful demonstration in
14 Monrovia. They were not granted the permit to demonstrate and
15:10:25 15 they did not demonstrate. While President Tolbert was on his
16 trip in Tappita, the True Whig Party staged a demonstration in
17 Tappita and so I immediately jumped on it and said that it was
18 improper, that if the Progressive People's Party could not be
19 given the right to demonstrate, the True Whig Party should not be
15:10:55 20 given the right to demonstrate either, and that it was wrong for
21 the True Whig Party to demonstrate and, you know, Tolbert was a
22 little smart.

23 He jumped on that and said that - in fact he agreed, I
24 guess you know, in a very shrewd way. Eventually, after the
15:11:15 25 press jumped all over it, he agreed that they should have gotten
26 a permit because in fact the demonstration had occurred without a
27 permit and so Tolbert seized the opportunity to criticise his own
28 party and say: Oh, he just said the student from America is
29 right. If the Progressive People's Party did not get the permit

1 to demonstrate, and the True Whig Party did not get one, the True
2 Whig Party should not have demonstrated.

3 Q. How old were you at this time, Mr Taylor?

4 A. We are talking about 1980, 48 to 80, about 30 what? 32/33?

15:11:57 5 Q. You are the one who used to teach maths.

6 A. 48/50, '67, I was 32.

7 Q. And how long were you in Liberia for?

8 A. I was in Liberia up until April of 1980.

9 Q. Having arrived when?

15:12:22 10 A. January. Late January.

11 Q. So whilst there, did a major event occur?

12 A. Oh, yes.

13 Q. What was that?

14 A. The coup of 1980 led by Master Sergeant Samuel Doe occurred
15:12:43 15 while I was still in Liberia in 1980.

16 Q. How significant event, an event, do you consider the Doe
17 coup to be in the history of Liberia?

18 A. Significant. Firstly, this was the first time in the
19 history of Liberia that the President of the Republic had been
15:13:17 20 killed in a coup d'etat. It was the first in fact coup d'etat in
21 Liberia. It was the first time that we saw the entire system
22 uprooted in an extremely violent fashion, so it was significant.

23 Q. Now just trace for us, please, as someone present in
24 Liberia at the time, what you know about the origins of the coup
15:14:04 25 and the way it played itself out?

26 A. We arrived in Liberia. Remember there are individuals in
27 prison, and may I just add by this time whether it was possible
28 or not the Progressive People's Party was being seen by a lot of
29 Liberians as the possible savior and I keep saying that it was

1 impossible for them to do what they said they were going to do.
2 When you look at that and - you see the country is not solid. I
3 mean you can sense problems. There are securities posted all
4 over the city, mumbling here and there. It had developed a grey
15:15:18 5 complexion. I am speaking figuratively now. A grey - you could
6 sense that things were not normal.

7 Now, I knew nothing of the coup, but on the - at the night
8 of the coup we - when I say "we" Tupee and I, we were at the
9 hotel and we hear this gunfire.

15:15:54 10 Q. Pause for a moment. How did Tupee happen to be in Liberia
11 at that time?

12 A. Well, Tupee is my fiancée and I am going to Liberia for
13 some time and she - and we just planned that we should be
14 together, so she took off at that time to be in Liberia with me.

15:16:19 15 Q. Okay.

16 A. The hotel manager informs me that - this is about late,
17 late morning about 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning that --

18 Q. Pause again. Date, please?

19 A. This is April 6th, 1980.

15:16:36 20 Q. Are you sure about the date, Mr Taylor? I am sure it is
21 not -

22 A. April 12, April 12, April 12, April 12.

23 Q. Thank you.

24 A. April 12. There is another set of shooting in Monrovia
15:16:50 25 April 6th what I just - I am sorry, but it is April 12. We get
26 up and by this time the announcement has been made that night
27 that the army has taken over. The hotel manager informs me that
28 there are soldiers downstairs to see me. I said, "What do you
29 mean soldiers here to see me?" He said, well, there are some

1 soldiers downstairs to see me. The soldiers could not enter
2 because when the firing started the - in some of these countries
3 they have - they are rolling steel doors, but they fold and they
4 open up and down, so you can look through them but you cannot
15:17:37 5 really go through these. These are steel, I don't know, steel
6 shutters I think they may be.

7 So I come down and the soldiers tell me, "The general wants
8 to see you". What general? They say, "The commanding general".
9 I said, "What does he want me to see me for?" They said, "Well,
15:17:57 10 the general just asked us to come and take you to the barracks."
11 Now I am scared because I think now they are about to arrest me.

12 One of the fellows that came to the hotel to call me - in
13 fact two of them started speaking the Gio language. Now Tupee,
14 my fiancée, is half Krahn and half Gio. She speaks Gio. So she
15:18:24 15 understands what they are saying and she jumps in and begins to
16 speak to them in the Gio language and they say to her,
17 apparently, what she explained to me in Gio, "Okay, this man is
18 one of the student leaders and the general wants to see to him".
19 So then Tupee says to me, "Oh, Charles, it's okay. Let's go.

15:18:45 20 It's all right". So I asked the hotel manager to open the gate.
21 He gives me his jeep and we drive to the barracks. We get to the
22 barracks. We are taken straight into the commanding general's
23 office. I get in there, I see a young man sitting behind the
24 desk with some other individuals and this young man happened to
15:19:07 25 be the famous General Thomas Quiwonkpa.

26 Q. Pause there. Let me just ask you about one or two details
27 before we come to that initial meeting - that meeting with Thomas
28 Quiwonkpa. Which hotel was it that you were staying in at the
29 time?

1 A. We were in the Holiday Inn hotel.

2 Q. And you told us earlier that you had heard that a coup had
3 taken place and the military had taken over?

4 A. That is correct.

15:19:41 5 Q. How did you come by that information?

6 A. The hotel manager. The hotel manager came up and told us
7 and said, "Oh, there is a coup d'etat. The soldiers have taken
8 over". So by the time the soldiers come now I already know there
9 is a coup and so I am frightened because they don't know me, I

15:19:58 10 don't know them, they come for me, I have not been in Liberia for
11 years, so I had to take precaution.

12 Q. Now before I come to your meeting with Quiwonkpa on the
13 morning of the 12th, what details do you know about the actual
14 events surrounding the coup and the killing of Tolbert?

15:20:22 15 A. Well, I only get to know this following our meetings and
16 subsequent conversations with General Quiwonkpa. Very strangely
17 on the tour in Nimba County - in fact, let me just digress a
18 little bit. The soldiers that staged the coup d'etat against
19 President Tolbert are all or mostly bodyguards of President
15:20:57 20 Tolbert.

21 Q. How many of them?

22 A. The council told us about 17, but they grow up to 20.

23 Q. And tell us, that group of 20 bodyguards, did they have
24 anything in particular in common in terms of their very recent
15:21:20 25 experience?

26 A. They were all a part of that special military training
27 programme that had been conducted at Camp Todee, T-O-D-E-E.

28 Q. Who by?

29 A. By the American Special Forces.

1 Q. And how long before the coup had that training ended?

2 A. Not very long. Less than a month. Almost immediately.

3 Almost immediately.

4 Q. And you were telling us about the tour in Nimba County when

15:21:56 5 I interrupted you. What were you telling us?

6 A. Well, I did explain that in Nimba County we visited these

7 development projects. I have spoken about the press conference

8 in Nimba County where the demonstration took place and it was

9 criticised, but that's about the end of the tour and then we

15:22:24 10 returned to Monrovia.

11 Q. But I was asking you initially what did you in fact

12 discover as to how and what occurred in relation to Tolbert

13 himself?

14 A. Well, let me see if I can get on that track. Let me

15:22:50 15 explain to you some of the things that happened. Maybe this may

16 come to your question. While in Nimba there is an incident in

17 the hall where the minister of interior of Liberia, a

18 Dr Kesseley, that's K-E-S-S-E-L-E-Y, is involved in a very heated

19 discussion with a member of the national legislature of Liberia.

15:23:26 20 He is very, very rude to this gentleman. I am standing a few

21 feet away and I am hearing the conversation. So I walk over to

22 him and I said, "Well, Dr Kesseley", I say, "I am shocked. The

23 President invited me here to see and guess what, I have seen.

24 You are a minister of government and you are insulting a member

15:23:49 25 of the legislature". I said, "This is outrageous. I have seen

26 enough", and I walked away. But in that hall are the bodyguards

27 that I am referring to that are securing the President. They are

28 all there and most of them hear this exchange.

29 Q. So you are brought before Quiwonkpa. Where is this?

1 A. This is at the Barclay Training Centre, BTC. B-A-R-C-L-A-Y
2 training - a normal training centre in Monrovia. It is the
3 military headquarters for the brigade of the Armed Forces of
4 Liberia. I am taken into him and I meet him behind a desk with
15:24:42 5 several other - not knowing at the time several other officers,
6 but these officers happened to have been members of the group
7 that had just carried out the coup. They are sitting in the
8 office with him.

9 Q. And what were you feeling at the time, Mr Taylor, when you
15:24:58 10 were brought before these military men, knowing that a military
11 coup had taken place just hours beforehand?

12 A. Well, my fear had been greatly reduced by virtue of my
13 fiancée telling me in the first instance that it was okay. So
14 that's a relief for me in the first instance. But in all
15:25:22 15 fairness there is still that little part of me that is saying
16 okay, well, you know, because we are never too sure. But there
17 was some assurance at that particular point. And when we get
18 into the office the first thing the general says is, "Oh,
19 Taylor". I said, "Yes, general". He said, "Sit down, let's
15:25:41 20 work". By this point I am relaxed because I know I am not in
21 trouble. He said, "Sit down, let's work".

22 Q. And then what is said?

23 A. Then what brings a little more - if it's anything I think I
24 begin to sweat at this particular time. The guys that are
15:26:01 25 sitting there with the general say to me, "Do you remember us?"
26 I said no. Then they said, "When you were speaking to minister
27 Kesseley about what he had done to the representative, we were
28 the securities standing there". And another guy said, "Remember
29 the press conference that you held when you criticised the True

1 Whig Party for the demonstration? We were all there and because
2 we know that you have come and you want to be fair, this is why
3 we have called you down to work".

4 By this time really it brings fear in me because then I
15:26:45 5 begin to think but my God, what if I had said or done something
6 wrong, I would have been in deep trouble. But by the grace of
7 almighty God I had stayed above board and that was my saving
8 grace.

9 Q. What else was said to you at that time, if anything?

15:27:03 10 A. Well, they said to me that we needed to work and try to
11 secure the revolution and that this had happened to try to bring
12 change in the country and that the time for the Congo people was
13 over and it was time for the, quote unquote, country people to
14 take over the country.

15:27:30 15 Q. Now apart from yourself and the military personnel you have
16 described, was anybody else present in that room?

17 A. Yes, there were individuals present, but not in a very
18 comfortable way. By this time the armed forces had commenced the
19 arrest of ministers and senior officials of government. In fact,
15:27:57 20 in that office at that time on the floor was the speaker of the
21 House of Representatives and other ministers of government that
22 had been arrested.

23 Q. What do you mean on the floor?

24 A. They were tied in a very uncomfortable position, lying on
15:28:12 25 the floor.

26 Q. Now, at this stage had there been any kind of announcement
27 over the public media by anyone as to what had gone on behind the
28 coup?

29 A. Yes, they had announced the coup. They had announced that

1 the President Tolbert had been killed along with a couple of
2 members of his family and that a government styled the People's
3 Redemption Council was now in control under the stewardship of
4 Master Sergeant Samuel Kanyon Doe.

15:28:58 5 Q. And was any indication given as to how the country was now
6 to be governed?

7 A. Well, not exactly. They did say that the country would be
8 governed by decree, but that's not specific enough. It was just
9 - they were early days. What they sought to do is just say we
15:29:22 10 have taken over, we want change and we will set up the council,
11 the council is set-up, they named the officials of the council
12 and said they suspended the constitution and that they would rule
13 by decree.

14 Q. And what was the mood in Monrovia like at that time?

15:29:40 15 A. Very, very, very joyous mood. Let's not forget that this
16 old Congo country situation in Liberia has festered. Here is the
17 coup by a group of non-commissioned officers that are quote
18 unquote --

19 Q. Belonging to which group?

15:30:13 20 A. Sorry?

21 Q. Belonging to which group?

22 A. That's what I am coming to. They are all so-called country
23 people and so the majority of the Liberian population until today
24 may rank about 75/25 per cent. That is 25 per cent
15:30:34 25 Americo-Liberian and I will put it maybe 20 per cent and about
26 the vast majority are the aborigine Liberians. So what we saw at
27 that particular time were the festive activities of those that -
28 of the aborigines that really embraced this coup d'etat.

29 Q. Was it purely festive?

1 A. Well, no, no, no. First of all, on their part because we
2 had, what, revenge killings going on, we had looting. We had
3 total disorder. Total disorder.

15:31:13 4 Q. Now effectively then, if I understand what you have told us
5 correctly, Quiwonkpa was offering you the opportunity to work
6 with the coup makers?

7 A. That is correct.

8 Q. What was your response?

9 A. I accepted.

15:31:28 10 Q. Why?

11 A. There are several reasons. One, we would have wanted - we,
12 and let me clarify "we". I am talking about the union. I am
13 still the chairman of the union, but there were other very
14 progressive groups in Liberia and while I don't claim to speak
15:31:57 15 for them, but the general view was that a non-violent change is
16 what we wanted. But having seen the coup take place, I saw this,
17 and strangely some of these progressives that I am talking about
18 later on I am told saw it the same way - we saw it as an
19 opportunity to finally get control and move the country in the
15:32:35 20 direction that we wanted to.

21 Our plan - my plan looking at it at the particular time was
22 that, look, here are young NCOs. Thomas Quiwonkpa was I think
23 the best educated amongst all of them. I think he had reached
24 the 11th grade. The rest of them were below the ninth grade
15:32:54 25 level. Where we could embrace them, nurture them and encourage
26 them to return to the barracks. So we saw that as an opportunity
27 to do that and begin to work and bring about this long change
28 that we had wanted to do for a long time. This was an
29 opportunity and these were our thoughts, but strangely it didn't

1 come out all the same way.

2 Q. So let's just pursue that a little further, shall we? When
3 in terms of that grand plan that the progressives had the
4 soldiers returned to the barracks who was going to take power?

15:33:37 5 A. Well, we were trying to get them back to the barracks, have
6 elections, democratic elections and let the best man win. This
7 was the whole thought at the time.

8 Q. And who did you fancy to be the best man at the time?

9 A. Well, I was sure to throw my hat into the race, that was
15:34:02 10 sure. Of course I would think I was the best. Others thought
11 that they were the best, so, but I was still thinking that I
12 would have thrown my hat in the race at the time.

13 Q. Now, help me: When you met with those military men did
14 they explain why they were coming to you for assistance?

15:34:21 15 A. Well, no. After these guys told me that they had heard me
16 and they were present in the hall, they had - I mean excuse me,
17 your Honours, I am sorry, I don't know if I am offending you, I
18 talk with my hands so I hope this is not - I am sorry. Okay.

19 PRESIDING JUDGE: Not at all, Mr Taylor.

15:34:45 20 THE WITNESS: Okay, because I normally used to - okay, very
21 good. We have these people hearing me. They know what I have
22 said, okay? They - so they are in a position now where - I guess
23 they have their own plans but, you know, our plans just didn't
24 work.

15:35:12 25 MR GRIFFITHS:

26 Q. So at that early stage at that meeting was your advice or
27 assistance sought in any particular respect?

28 A. Yes.

29 Q. What was that?

1 A. In fact I volunteered. I volunteered. Once he said to me
2 "Sit down, let's work", the first thing I asked him is, I said,
3 "General, what are you people doing about securing firstly this
4 revolution that you people have put into place?" And secondly I
15:35:53 5 said to him, "As I am driving here there is total chaos on the
6 streets." I said to him, I said, "You guys are going to have to
7 do whatever you can as soon as possible to get these soldiers off
8 the streets because the diplomatic community will begin to
9 complain. There were hundreds of citizens outside of the
15:36:16 10 barracks crying because their houses had been taken over,
11 looting, and it was embarrassing to me, as I am coming into the
12 barracks gate, some of these people see me. They already know
13 that we are here - "Oh, Taylor, Taylor, Taylor, you know, we are
14 dying, oh, we are dying, oh, we are - you know? And so I get in
15:36:38 15 there and I tell them, I said, "Listen, the first thing we have
16 got to do here is to secure this revolution by getting these
17 soldiers off the street and gaining some credibility with the
18 diplomatic community. If not you guys are going to be in
19 trouble", because by this time there are several countries, Ivory
15:37:11 20 Coast, Guinea, and I think Nigeria are very concerned.
21 Don't forget, the man that just got killed is the chairman
22 of the OAU in addition to being President of Liberia. So, yes,
23 the chairman of the OAU being killed in a military coup by young
24 officers, so there are already threatening remarks being made on
15:37:31 25 international radios, and that coupled with that, La Cote
26 d'Ivoire, that had been a very peaceful country, the daughter or
27 at least the god-daughter of the President of La Cote d'Ivoire,
28 Daisy, is married to President Tolbert's son, she is not found.
29 La Cote d'Ivoire is threatening. So there is a big problem from

1 these - I am saying to him, "You have got to get these soldiers
2 off the street. You have got to try to call the diplomatic
3 community to explain to them what this whole coup is all about.
4 If not, you are going to be in trouble" because people were
15:38:14 5 talking about trying to put a force together to come - because
6 one news story was that Tolbert was not dead and some people were
7 saying that is the OAU chairman, we are going in, we are going to
8 go in and rescue him, so my advice to them was to begin to move
9 urgently to calm things down.

15:38:30 10 Q. And was there any specific suggestion that you made to them
11 --

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. -- in order to achieve that purpose?

14 A. The first thing I did was to ask for two of the most senior
15:38:41 15 security personnel in the country that were incarcerated at the
16 time to be released to do a plan of action. One of them is still
17 alive today. He is Edward Sumo Jones, a very, very trained
18 security personnel that had worked with all the major security
19 agencies almost on the planet.

15:39:00 20 Q. Pause. Help us with a spelling please?

21 A. Edward as normal Edward, Sumo S-U-M-O, and Jones as in
22 Jones, J-O-N-E-S.

23 Q. And the second individual?

24 A. The second individual was a gentleman called T Boi Nelson,
15:39:17 25 and that is T, like just T, and I think it is B-O-I, not like
26 B-O-Y, boy. It is a Krio name, T Boi Nelson. He was the head of
27 the National Security Agency of the Republic of Liberia, an
28 agency that had tentacles far and wide and he was incarcerated.
29 I said to him, "Well, look, the first thing you need to do is

1 release these two men to me." He released them to me. We sat
2 down immediately and drew up a security plan of action to be
3 taken to the then chairman, Samuel Kanyon Doe.

4 Q. And did you take it to Doe?

15:40:05 5 A. Yes. Quiwonkpa took me into the mansion. I met with
6 Master Sergeant Doe. I then spoke to him about the plan and
7 immediately he called the minister of state to look at the plan
8 for it to be sent to the appropriate areas. Now, let me just
9 tell the judges: The minister of state - first of all, your
15:40:38 10 Honours, by the morning of the coup all of the progressive
11 leaders, the MOJA leaders, the Barcus Matthews, are all the new
12 ministers. Barcus Matthews becomes foreign minister. One of the
13 progressives Dr George Boley, that is B-O-L-E-Y, who is a Krahn,
14 He has a PhD in education, is the minister of state and personal
15:41:10 15 assistance to Doe. He is also incarcerated and is released from
16 prison on the morning of the coup. Dr Togba-Nah Tipteh, another
17 progressive, was made the minister of planning. Dr Henry Boima
18 Fahnbulleh.

19 Q. Spelling, please?

15:41:31 20 A. Fahnbulleh, F-A-H-N-B-U-L-L-E-H.

21 Q. And let's - we need help with the first name, please?

22 A. Togba-Nah Tipteh.

23 Q. No, no, Fahnbulleh. First name?

24 A. Henry, as in H-E-N-R-Y.

15:41:52 25 Q. Thank you.

26 A. Henry Boima, B-O-I-M-A, Henry Boima Fahnbulleh,
27 Dr Togba-Nah Tipteh, T-O-G-B-A - N-A-H. Togba-Nah is one word,
28 one name. Tipteh is T-I, I am not sure if it is one P but I
29 think it is T-I-P-O-T-E-H, Tipteh, he has a doctorate degree in

1 economics, he becomes the minister of planning. Dr Henry Boima
2 Fahnbulleh becomes the minister of education.

3 So some of the other leaders that are released from jail,
4 like Oscar Qui ah, becomes the minister of interior. Now back to
15:42:40 5 the point. Dr Boley is called immediately and says, 'Well, here
6 is a plan." Boley reads it, and he says well, get to the foreign
7 minister immediately, so Barcus Matthews is contacted and the
8 plan is reviewed to them and is accepted for implementation.

9 That is, calling in the diplomatic community and trying to allay
15:43:00 10 the fears out there about the chaotic situation that had
11 developed.

12 Q. Now, following the meeting with Quiwonkpa, you told us that
13 a plan of action had been put together which was to be submitted
14 to Doe. Did you go to see Doe?

15:43:22 15 A. Yes.

16 Q. That same day?

17 A. I went along with Quiwonkpa to Doe, was present when Doe
18 called Boley and instructed Boley to take the plan and call the
19 foreign minister to begin to work out trying to implement
15:43:39 20 whatever parts they wanted to.

21 Q. Tell me: Had you met Quiwonkpa before that day?

22 A. Never. I did not know any of them.

23 Q. What about Doe? Had you met him before?

24 A. Not at all. Not at all.

15:43:58 25 Q. Now, these other individuals, the various doctors you
26 mentioned who were brought into the government, did you have any
27 prior relationship with them?

28 A. We all knew each other. I knew them all very well. They
29 were MOJA, Marxist/Leninist oriented. We knew each other. We

1 did not see what I would say, so to speak, eye to eye in terms of
2 ideology, but I guess we respected each other.

3 Q. And you were 32 years old at the time? How old was
4 Quiwonkpa?

15:44:46 5 A. Ah, Quiwonkpa should have been some - I would say at least
6 ten years younger. These were very young boys. I think the
7 oldest one at the time was 27.

8 Q. Who was that?

9 A. I think Doe and Quiwonkpa was about 22/23. These were
15:45:02 10 young boys, young men.

11 Q. Now, I want to pause for a minute so that you can help us
12 with some of these personalities behind the coup. First of all,
13 Quiwonkpa; how significant was he?

14 A. This young man was extraordinarily brilliant. I am told by
15:45:27 15 him that they - he was one of the principal organisers of the
16 coup d'etat. Now, as they brought individuals in, in fact
17 Quiwonkpa should have been the leader of the revolution, but as
18 they called people in, and they were all friends, Doe was called
19 in and other people and, according to military ranks, Doe became
15:46:00 20 the leader because he was the highest ranking NCO as the Master
21 Sergeant. That is how he became the leader.

22 But what they did was, there was a Vice-Head of State,
23 there was a speaker, there was a Secretary-General, but the
24 compromise with Quiwonkpa, who was the next highest in NCO rank,
15:46:28 25 he was given this position of commanding general where in
26 reality, other than Doe, Quiwonkpa was the most powerful man in
27 the revolution.

28 Q. And what did you think of him as an individual?

29 A. You know, sometimes I was amazed at how a young man who did

1 not have any real formal education could have been so smart and
2 very caring. This man was caring. He was out there trying to
3 stop the excesses of the army. He - I mean people - military
4 people were being disciplined. He sent out troops to rescue
15:47:22 5 citizens that were in trouble. I mean, you know, you would think
6 that someone needed at least a university education, but he
7 understood these. He was well trained, very, very decent, caring
8 young man for his age. I was really, really impressed.

9 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Is the witness describing Doe or
15:47:43 10 Qui wonkpa?

11 THE WITNESS: General Qui wonkpa. That was your question,
12 counsel, was it not?

13 MR GRIFFITHS: Yes, it was my question:

14 Q. And what rank was Qui wonkpa at that time after the coup?

15:47:56 15 A. Qui wonkpa became a brigadier general, commanding general of
16 the armed forces. A brigadier.

17 Q. And who was, in your estimation, the most influential
18 individual in the coup?

19 A. I still say it's Qui wonkpa.

15:48:20 20 Q. And what about thereafter?

21 A. Thereafter also. He gained the respect. It did not take
22 very long before the citizenry realised that Qui wonkpa was the
23 real man. Let me just interject. When the coup occurred, in
24 addition to these arrests, one of the first things that they did
15:48:47 25 was --

26 Q. Who did?

27 A. The coup leaders. All senior officers of the Armed Forces
28 of Liberia were also arrested. That is all - the chief of staff
29 of the Armed Forces of Liberia, at the time Liberia was one

1 single brigade of a very small brigade of about 7,000 men and
2 they chief of staff of the Armed Forces of Liberia carried the
3 rank of lieutenant general. Now here we are, the coup occurs,
4 everyone is arrested from the chief of staff down and an order is
15:49:26 5 published by the coup leaders that no officer before the morning
6 of the coup - that no soldier should take any instructions or
7 orders from any officer. So in fact the armed forces now is
8 destroyed, there is no chain of command, they are not - everyone
9 is virtually now below the rank of master sergeant. But as a
15:49:58 10 member of the council in the military - and I am sure there are
11 military people on the other side that knows this, when they say
12 that assignment sometimes can be greater than rank but rank
13 prevails. The armed forces commander now becomes a brigadier,
14 Thomas Quiwonkpa, with the rank of general, but no other soldier
15:50:19 15 in the armed forces is given a rank. So everybody is below the
16 rank of sergeant, okay?

17 The coup leaders do not have to worry about it because now
18 they are the bosses, so they don't have to worry about rank any
19 more because everybody else is saluting them, so this is the
15:50:39 20 structure. It is good to get this picture.

21 Q. Now, how did the general populace regard Quiwonkpa?

22 A. They honoured him. They liked him. He was fair and
23 reasonable. So everyone wanted to get to him to carry their
24 problems. When there were problems they wanted to see Quiwonkpa.
15:51:01 25 I mean he was just loaded with problems and this is why I had to
26 - I stayed in the barracks with him for about three months
27 because I couldn't rest, okay? So I was one of the - I was the
28 only progressive that stayed in the barracks with him in helping
29 with the day-to-day what I will call putting out the little

1 fires, this thing, sending soldiers, go this place, do this. I
2 stayed with him for three months.

3 Q. Now, that's Quiwonkpa. Can you now please give us a little
4 pen portrait of Master Sergeant Doe?

15:51:36 5 A. I really did not know Doe very well or interact with Doe a
6 whole lot. Doe knew all about my mission to Liberia with the
7 rest of the members of the council and they respected me. As
8 they went into the barracks every day - you know, soldiers
9 apparently like barracks conditions. Every member of the
10 council, except for Doe and other people, they were in and out of
11 the barracks and so I got to know and meet all of them I would
12 say within the first 48 hours, because they were all coming in to
13 the barracks because, you know, there was very serious fear at
14 the time.

15:52:31 15 There was another officer of the Armed Forces of Liberia at
16 the time, a major by the name of Jebbo. That is J-E-B-B-0.
17 Jebbo commanded another unit of the armed forces that was a
18 respectable unit and when the coup occurred there were rumours
19 that Jebbo did not back the coup and would stage a counter. So
15:53:03 20 everybody was running in and out of the barracks consulting with
21 the general, you know, and trying to secure what they had just
22 put together. And so what they started doing immediately was
23 arresting those other individuals from that elite unit that were
24 commanded by Major Jebbo. So because of this frequency in the
15:53:26 25 barracks I got to meet most of them almost immediately.

26 Q. But Doe, what kind of a person was he?

27 A. Yes, I did not know Doe very well. Very quiet man, didn't
28 speak a whole lot. Shrewd.

29 Q. Educated?

1 A. No, Quiwonkpa had a higher education than Doe. I think Doe
2 did not go beyond the ninth grade.

3 Q. Could you talk to Doe?

4 A. Oh, yes. Oh, yes. The respect that I commanded as being
15:54:01 5 the leader of the, quote unquote, for them the students in
6 America was very high, so I could speak to Doe. If I wanted to
7 see him at any time he saw me.

8 Q. Did you think he was going to stay in power as the leader?

9 A. Quite frankly my impression was that these men would have
15:54:26 10 not stayed there a very long time. My impression of Doe was that
11 Doe, you know, had this brought upon him because, like I said,
12 Doe was not in the first little batch that started planning. He
13 was brought in. And so --

14 Q. So who started the planning?

15:54:45 15 A. Quiwonkpa. Quiwonkpa started the planning. So he did not
16 appear to me to be someone that would want to stay on very long,
17 but it turned out differently.

18 Q. Now following the coup, who was the vice Head of State?

19 A. The vice Head of State was a general called - a gentleman
15:55:07 20 called Thomas, that is regular Thomas, Weah W-E-A-H, Seng
21 S-E-N-G. Thomas Weahseng.

22 Q. Is that one word?

23 A. Let me see. It is a Kru name. Weahseng I think is one
24 word, Weahseng.

15:55:28 25 Q. And who was he, apart from being vice Head of State?

26 A. Thomas Weahseng was one of these very, very low educated
27 but smart - street smart - who previously had joined the
28 Progressive People's Party. He was a member of the PPP, one of
29 these firebrands.

1 Q. And did he remain around for any period of time after the
2 coup?

3 A. No. Weahseng ended up - along with other members of the
4 council he was executed by Samuel Doe.

15:56:31 5 Q. How long after the coup?

6 A. That was within the first year. I would say the first year
7 of the coup - from April I would say about a year. He was
8 executed.

9 Q. Why?

15:56:46 10 A. Remember I stated to this Court that the Russian - not
11 Russian, the Soviet embassy had been opened in Liberia.

12 Q. Yes.

13 A. Now, as minister of education Dr Fahnbulleh and a group
14 gathered some individuals and sent them to Ethiopia at the time
15 of the leadership of Mengistu Haile Mariam. Now, don't ask me to
16 spell that, I don't know, but I know he is called Mengistu. He
17 overthrew the emperor of Ethiopia.

18 Q. Don't worry, Mr Taylor. Mr Anyah will look it up on the
19 internet.

15:57:53 20 A. Very good. These individuals should have been sent there
21 to do literacy training, but to our greatest surprise the CIA
22 informed us that they had been sent there to do military training
23 to come back and overthrow the Government of Liberia. Now, maybe
24 somebody would say, "But why would the CIA have any interest?"

15:58:31 25 The security agencies of Liberia work with intelligence agencies
26 around the world and so information flowing will come - maybe
27 people don't know that, but this is the way it works. And we
28 were glad that we were informed because it was true because again
29 I - and I don't blame the United States because the United States

1 rightly so would not have wanted for this to occur because those
2 individuals that were planning to stage this counter coup were
3 the Marxist-Leninists and dealing with Mengistu, but the Soviet
4 embassy in Monrovia, that was a cup of tea even I - I was glad
15:59:16 5 that we had the opportunity and it was stopped. So Doe
6 immediately ordered those people back and most of them did not
7 return.

8 Now Weahseng was a regular visitor to the Soviet embassy in
9 Monrovia and they were advocating some extreme Marxist views that
15:59:39 10 some of us did not support. So when it was confirmed that they
11 were supposed to be this - remember now the Cold War situation is
12 about to take place where here are people going for training,
13 they are about to come from this Marxist Mengistu and the most
14 senior second member of the council is a regular visitor to the
16:00:04 15 Soviet embassy, this was something that none of us could take and
16 so Weahseng was arrested.

17 Q. Was he put on trial?

18 A. He was put on trial and he was found guilty.

19 Q. Of what?

16:00:17 20 A. Of treason.

21 Q. And what was done to him?

22 A. Executed.

23 Q. Now, when was it that the CIA, you say, informed you of
24 this?

16:00:33 25 A. They informed the government immediately before the
26 Weahseng arrest. Immediately before the Weahseng arrest.

27 Q. Now, previously, Mr Taylor, you appeared to be hinting to
28 us of some kind of American involvement in the coup.

29 A. Which coup now? The second coup?

1 Q. The Doe coup.

2 A. Well, I did say, counsel, that I am in no position to be
3 emphatic about that. I just said I will explain the different
4 circumstances and then one can draw their own judgment, but what
16:01:10 5 I do know is that following this coup that Doe planned we began
6 almost immediately to be seen favourably by the United States. I
7 was in the barracks and the chief of US military mission at the
8 United States embassy in Monrovia was - I mean almost took up
9 offices at the barracks, so I guess --

16:01:41 10 Q. Who was that?

11 A. Oh, Christ. I couldn't remember the gentleman's name.

12 Q. Very well, carry on.

13 A. But we appreciated that because one of the things that we
14 did not want to happen, we did not want to lose contact with the
16:01:58 15 United States, in all frankness, and I think it was proper that
16 we dealt with them. I spoke to this gentleman so many times.
17 Even diplomats came, I would sit in the meetings, you know, and
18 express the desires of what these young men wanted because - in
19 the language that the diplomatic community could understand. And
16:02:22 20 I think - and even when you look at the gesture on the part of
21 the United States government in trying - during that Cold War era
22 in trying to prevent a Marxist-Leninist revolution in Liberia,
23 especially with key United States installations in Liberia, I
24 think it was something that some of us really supported, and I
16:02:45 25 did.

26 Q. And tell me, when you first arrived at the barracks
27 summonsed by Quiwonkpa, did you see anything to confirm that
28 suspicion?

29 A. That?

1 Q. At the barracks.

2 A. Which suspicion?

3 Q. The suspicion about American involvement.

4 A. Well, I will put it this way. If you just got through
16:03:11 5 training these new people, the instructors are still in town, of
6 course you know the instructors and everybody. There is no
7 hostility at this particular time between the Armed Forces of
8 Liberia and the American trainers, or the American embassy.
9 There is no problem, so getting in and out of the barracks in
16:03:34 10 fact was not a problem. In fact, I think it was encouraged
11 because everyone knew, I knew, if the United States - and let's
12 be very frank about this. If the United States had come down
13 hard against Doe and his coup it would not have sustained itself.
14 And what do I mean by come down hard? If the United States had
16:03:59 15 said, "Hell, no, we are not going to permit this. You are
16 going", it would have taken a few months, but I think it would
17 have happened.

18 But now we are talking about the cold war era and we are
19 talking about interests. So I see here that the whole approach
16:04:19 20 in coming in I guess they were trying to make sure that whatever
21 had happened that there would be a smooth landing and that sooner
22 or later all the chaos will stop and then the next thing that
23 will come about will be they are encouraging the army to return
24 to the barracks.

16:04:38 25 Q. Now, you have already told us that President Tolbert was
26 killed.

27 A. Uh-huh.

28 Q. Where and how was he killed?

29 A. President Tolbert was killed on the 8th floor of the

1 Executive Mansion. Now, I know that place because I lived up
2 there myself. What General Quiwonkpa and the main killer of
3 Tolbert explained, this was a young man who actually shot him,
4 the Presidential - the 8th floor is the family living floor of
16:05:18 5 the President. It is very, very secured. All of the glasses up
6 there are bullet proof glasses. The doors are sealed, so when
7 the President enters, there is the living room, his bedroom, his
8 wife's bedroom, the entire area once the President - once he
9 enters it is secured.

16:05:40 10 I am told by General Quiwonkpa after the firing started -
11 and, quite frankly, it is a very sad scenario. Most of the
12 soldiers at the presidency that were guarding the President fled
13 because their friends were staging a coup. They were all
14 together, so they just didn't budge.

16:06:01 15 They go upstairs and they actually have to knock on the
16 President's door. After he had apparently called around the
17 different stations and no-one answered, he got up, got dressed,
18 because the body of Tolbert was still dressed - fully dressed -
19 in a white suit. He got up and got dressed, they knocked on the
16:06:23 20 door, they kept knocking on the door and he opened the door,
21 because they could not get in. Like I say, that area is secured.
22 You cannot enter unless the President inside opens the door. And
23 the first gentleman I am told by Quiwonkpa there was a young man
24 called the late Nelson Toe.

16:06:44 25 Q. Spell it.

26 A. T-O-E. Nelson like in N-E-L-S-O-N and the last name is
27 Toe, like in T-O-E. He fired the first shot to be followed by
28 others including a gentleman called Harrison, that is
29 H-A-R-R-I-S-O-N, Penue. Now that Penue I think is P-E - and I

1 stand corrected on this - N-U-E if I am not mistaken, Penue. He
2 is also Krahn. Then he was the second, but I am told by
3 General Quiwonkpa that the original first shot was fired by a
4 young man called Nelson Toe, a very fiery young man who ended up
16:07:32 5 getting executed with Weahseng too because of his fiery
6 behaviour.

7 Q. Now, was Tolbert the only individual in that administration
8 who met such a brutal fate?

9 A. No, following the killing of Tolbert several members of the
16:07:57 10 government were executed.

11 Q. How long after the coup was that, Mr Taylor?

12 A. I would say not more than three weeks. The council decided
13 that they had to do something to demonstrate to the world that
14 they were serious and that to set an example, as they put it,
16:08:20 15 they executed several officers.

16 Q. How many?

17 A. If I am not mistaken it could have been as many as 17.

18 Q. And where were they executed?

19 A. Right on the beach outside of the barracks. The Barclay
16:08:36 20 Training Centre in Monrovia is located on the beach, and I will
21 say from the office of the commanding general to where the
22 execution took place may be 500 metres - 500 to 1,000 metres -
23 where the execution took place.

24 Q. Did you observe it?

16:08:59 25 A. I did.

26 Q. What impact, if any, did it have on you?

27 A. I had never seen anybody killed. I have seen dead bodies
28 before as in normal death. It was a very chilling experience for
29 me. I stood on the balcony of the commanding general's office

1 and looked over to where it - the execution occurred.

2 Q. Did you know personally any of those who were executed?

3 A. I knew all of them. I knew all of them; Some of them
4 better than others. The speaker and others that were executed I

16:09:43 5 can say were personal friends of my father. The President pro
6 tems of the senate by the name of Frank Tolbert I had dated a
7 daughter of his and visited his home many, many times as a young
8 man, and there was a very good friend of mine - a personal friend
9 of mine - by the name of John, John like in J-O-H-N, Sherman. He
16:10:19 10 was the minister of commerce. The rest of the ministers I knew
11 them very well.

12 Q. So, were you party to the decision to execute them?

13 A. Really we were party to a decision to help reduce the
14 number of people that they really wanted to execute. I remember
16:10:45 15 one evening I am sitting down and General Quiwonkpa returns from
16 the - from a council meeting. Mind you --

17 Q. Council? Which council?

18 A. The PRC.

19 Q. What does that stand for?

16:10:59 20 A. People's Redemption Council meeting.

21 Q. What is that?

22 A. That is the junta that took over in Liberia. We are
23 sitting and he comes and he is very sad. These meetings were
24 held without anyone being invited in the beginning. Only those
16:11:15 25 that staged the coup d'etat were permitted. He came very sad and
26 he called me. He said, "Taylor, the chairman, Chairman Doe, has
27 decided with the council that we should execute some people". I
28 said, "What?" He said, "Yes". He said, "The people ..." - you
29 know, this is almost like Liberian English. He said, "The people

1 are plenty." I said, "What do you mean?" I said "About how
2 many?" He said, "Oh, it could be almost 200." I said, "No, no,
3 no, no." I say, "Thomas, Thomas, Thomas, this cannot happen."

4 I got to know subsequently that other individuals, other
16:11:55 5 progressive individuals, had also heard this about a day later
6 and were also pleading to say, "You can't do this." We fought -
7 at least I fought for my end to tell them that it was not - that
8 Tolbert's death was sufficient, but they insisted that some
9 people had to go because this would show that the old system had
16:12:19 10 been totally uprooted and so they finally settled on these few.

11 Q. Now, did you agree with that sentiment that in order in
12 effect to secure the fruits of the revolution these people had to
13 be killed? Did you agree with that?

14 A. No, I did not agree with that. I said that it was bad
16:12:46 15 enough for Tolbert to be killed as President when they could have
16 saved him, but that it would just be terrible in the eyes of the
17 international community to begin to line people up on the beach
18 and execute them where they were not being put on trial. There
19 was not a trial where, "We are going to try you before a military
16:13:08 20 tribunal." None of that. They just decided, "These are the
21 so-called Congo people who caused the trouble. They have to go."
22 I was opposed to that.

23 Q. So help us, please, Mr Taylor. So we have this situation
24 and among those condemned to death are family friends, people you
16:13:29 25 know?

26 A. Uh-huh.

27 Q. You disagree with this brutal decision to cut the tie with
28 the past?

29 A. Uh-huh.

1 Q. So why didn't you in turn cut your ties with the Doe
2 regime?

3 A. Good question. Well, look --

4 Q. That is why I asked it.

16:13:47 5 A. -- there are several reasons. Look, number 1 it would not
6 have made any difference if I did, but number 2 - even more
7 important number 2 - we would have lost, or I would have lost, an
8 opportunity to bring about the meaningful change that we were
9 trying to construct to bring about. Pulling out - imagine all of
16:14:20 10 the progressives in Liberia are on board. I have an opportunity
11 and it has been realised I am in the system, I am respected, I
12 speak freely to all of them. Pulling out would have been maybe a
13 very glorious act to do, but I believe at that particular time it
14 would have been a stupid thing to do because Charles Taylor alone

16:14:45 15 wanting to pull out and return to the United States would not
16 have meant anything because everybody else was on board and I
17 felt that my staying in there would also give me an opportunity
18 to be meaningful in what I saw as the way forward for Liberia.

19 Q. In any event the executions take place.

16:15:14 20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And to your mind what effect did those executions have so
22 far as the legitimacy of the Doe regime was concerned?

23 A. Oh, it really - it really did not help. After the
24 executions most of the western countries and donor agencies and
16:15:45 25 different things frowned on the whole process and this really
26 intensified the anti-activities on the part of the international
27 community towards the Doe government.

28 Q. And what about the general population in Liberia? What
29 sense did you have of their reaction to this event?

1 A. When you look at the percentages that I gave you before and
2 you look at the underlying problems of Liberia between the
3 Americo-Liberians and Aborigines, the vast majority of the
4 population that were the Aborigines were happy and wouldn't care
16:16:41 5 less and in fact I would say probably wanted more to go. People
6 saw this as this opportunity to at last vent this anger over the
7 years. "These people came. They have overlooked us. They have
8 treated us like slaves in our own country." To be frank, people
9 were happy and I would say in the majority.

16:17:12 10 MR GRIFFITHS: Can I pause for a minute, Mr President, and
11 assist with a spelling from earlier. Mengistu M-E-N-G-I-S-T-U,
12 Haile H-A-I-L-E and Mariam M-A-R-I-A-M.

13 Q. Now after you first arrived, Mr Taylor, at the barracks,
14 BTC, help us how long did you remain there?

16:17:52 15 A. I was in the barracks for about three months.

16 Q. When you say you were in the barracks for about three
17 months, did you physically sleep and eat there?

18 A. Oh, yes. Well that question physically sleep and eat
19 there, many times I slept and ate there. I still maintained my
16:18:14 20 place at the hotel. I did not move lock, stock and barrel into
21 the barracks, but I would say I can just help by extending some
22 percentages. I would say I spent as of that time about 70 per
23 cent of my time at the barracks.

24 Q. Doing what?

16:18:29 25 A. Oh, working, receiving complaints, talking to diplomats,
26 getting matters to the general, dispatching people to put out
27 troubles where people were - the soldiers are misbehaving,
28 looting people's properties, all kinds of problems. I just
29 stayed there and, you know, tried to get things back on an even

1 keel in as far as getting the soldiers back to barracks, because
2 one of the things that I really was interested in - and let me
3 tell you what I mean by barracks. I am not just talking about
4 the Barclay Training Centre in Monrovia. By the time this coup
16:19:08 5 occurs soldiers from all military bases across the country
6 instead of remaining at their bases and waiting for orders,
7 everyone is moving to Monrovia and so you have got everyone
8 coming.

9 So they see this now as - in fact one expression used at
16:19:30 10 that time was "This is our time. This is our time". And so
11 trying to get people to go back to - go back to your station,
12 helping to get logistics arranged in terms of transportation to
13 return them back, imagine at this particular time the
14 international airport is closed, trying to get things - just
16:19:52 15 getting it cranked up.

16 Don't forget these are young men that had just come into
17 power, know nothing about governance, know nothing about
18 international relations, know absolutely nothing and they are now
19 depending on us, this whole progressive group, to come and help
16:20:14 20 them steer the country back to normalcy. So I am there with him,
21 because most of the other progressive are at the ministries and
22 dealing with other members of the council and General Quiwonkpa
23 in the barracks has no-one there to help him and so I stayed
24 there to help him carry out these functions.

16:20:38 25 Q. Okay.

26 PRESIDING JUDGE: Mr Griffiths, I don't necessarily want
27 you to discontinue now, but if you could finish a little early
28 because we have got that other matter from yesterday to deal with
29 as well.

1 MR GRIFFITHS: Frankly, Mr President, that point is as good
2 a point as any.

3 PRESIDING JUDGE: All right, thank you.

4 Well, Mr Taylor, if you will - your evidence today is
16:21:00 5 finished with for today, but if you will be good enough to just
6 sit there we will deal with a matter that was raised yesterday.

7 It is not a big matter, but yesterday the Defence counsel
8 applied on behalf of the accused for the Trial Chamber to limit
9 the accused's time in the witness box to four days per week
16:21:29 10 instead of the usual four and a half days which the Court
11 normally sits. At present the Court sits only one half day on
12 Fridays, devoting the other half of the day to other duties.

13 In coming to this decision, we have considered the views of
14 both parties regarding the application. We understand that
16:22:03 15 Mr Taylor's evidence is going to be lengthy, extending over
16 several weeks and possibly even longer allowing for
17 cross-examination.

18 Mr Taylor obviously anticipates that testifying over such a
19 long period will subject him to strain and pressure and he wants
16:22:29 20 the extra half day on Friday to enable him to recuperate from the
21 evidence he has given during that week.

22 The Court appreciates his concerns. The Court sits quite
23 long hours each day as it is. Over the course of several weeks
24 the accused being examined day after day can prove quite a
16:23:01 25 stressful ordeal.

26 We therefore grant Mr Taylor's application. During the
27 course of his testimony the Court will not sit the one half day
28 it usually sits on Fridays, but instead will sit Monday to
29 Thursdays only. The sitting hours per day will remain the same

1 and this decision applies only to Mr Taylor and not to any other
2 Defence witness. Further, the Court may decide to sit on a
3 Friday of any particular week if time is lost on another day of
4 that week during Mr Taylor's testimony.

16:23:46 5 MR GRIFFITHS: I am most grateful, your Honours.

6 PRESIDING JUDGE: Thank you, Mr Griffiths. Well, the only
7 other matter is something that frankly we didn't anticipate and
8 probably should have in view of the status conference and that is
9 the caution to be given to this witness.

16:24:09 10 What the Court is aware of that under article 17 the
11 witness has certain guaranteed rights to communicate with counsel
12 and I don't think the Prosecution disagree with that. I think
13 the Prosecution though, in recognising the rights under article
14 17, are of the view that communications between counsel and the
16:24:44 15 accused while the accused is giving evidence would be subject to
16 cross-examination to the extent of examining whether the accused
17 has been coached in any way.

18 I think the case on that, which we don't have today, is the
19 Appeals Chamber decision in the ICTY case of Prlic, which did
16:25:14 20 firstly anticipate that opposing counsel would be able to
21 cross-examine but secondly laying down that there is a
22 presumption - a rebuttable presumption - of bona fides when
23 counsel deals with his witness while the witness is giving
24 evidence.

16:25:36 25 Now, as I say, we don't have the case before us and frankly
26 we don't have any submissions from either counsel on the
27 applicable jurisprudence, but it seems to me that bearing in mind
28 the guaranteed rights of the accused under article 17 that it
29 would be a sufficient caution if the normal caution is

1 administered and that caution is simply that Mr Taylor is warned
2 not to discuss the evidence he is giving with any other person
3 and that would be subject to article 17.

4 Now, is there going to be any disagreement amongst counsel
16:26:29 5 on that direction?

6 MR GRIFFITHS: Not from our side of the Court,
7 Mr President.

8 PRESIDING JUDGE: And I might add I have just been handed
9 Prlic's case and obviously I don't have time to go through it
16:26:42 10 now, but I think you will find that the Appeals Chamber in Prlic
11 did contemplate cross-examination but limited to irregularities
12 in the contact. In any event, I gather that Mr Griffiths has no
13 objection to that direction.

14 MS HOLLIS: Mr President, I guess in the course of
16:27:11 15 cross-examination we will further understand the qualification
16 you have seemingly applied to our cross-examination on this
17 matter, so at this point we have no question.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE: Well, possibly I can explain it now. The
19 Defence while Mr Taylor is giving evidence would always have a
16:27:30 20 right to communicate with the accused. It doesn't mean that they
21 are communicating with him about the evidence he has given, or is
22 giving. It means that they have a right to communicate. If on
23 the other hand - and I would consider that evidence, whatever
24 they communicate that does not bear on the evidence that he is
16:27:55 25 giving it would be privileged, but obviously the accused would be
26 open to cross-examination on accusations that he has been coached
27 and you could ask him questions along those lines. That is what
28 I meant, Ms Hollis.

29 MS HOLLIS: We understand that the scope of that would

1 include asking him if indeed he did speak to counsel, how many
2 counsel, how long and then putting questions relevant to matters
3 that deal with his testimony in court.

4 PRESIDING JUDGE: Well, as I mentioned at the status
16:28:29 5 conference, I think that every instance of this must be looked at
6 on a case by case basis, but the thing we are asking at the
7 moment is do you have any objection to that caution we have given
8 Mr Taylor and, if you do, in what way would you suggest it be
9 altered?

16:28:52 10 MS HOLLIS: We have no objection to the caution.

11 PRESIDING JUDGE: Well, that will be the caution given at
12 the end of every day then. It will simply be a caution that
13 Mr Taylor not discuss the evidence he is giving with any other
14 person, but of course that caution will be read in the light of
16:29:14 15 his rights under article 17. Thank you.

16 Now, if any specific case arises you can make a formal
17 application supported by your submissions on the existing
18 jurisprudence.

19 Thank you. Well, we will adjourn now until 9.30 tomorrow
16:29:36 20 morning.

21 [Whereupon the hearing adjourned at 4.30 p.m.
22 to be reconvened on Wednesday, 15 July 2009 at
23 9.30 a.m.]

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I N D E X

WITNESSES FOR THE DEFENCE:

DANKPANNAH DR CHARLES GHANKAY TAYLOR	24324
EXAMINATION-IN-CHIEF BY MR GRIFFITHS	24324