



Case No. SCSL-2003-01-T

THE PROSECUTOR OF
THE SPECIAL COURT
V.
CHARLES GHANKAY TAYLOR

THURSDAY, 6 AUGUST 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:

Ms Rachel Irura
Mr Benedict Williams

For the Prosecution:

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 Silas Chekera

1 Thursday, 6 August 2009

2 [Open session]

3 [The accused present]

4 [Upon commencing at 9.30 a.m.]

09:18:57 5 PRESIDING JUDGE: Good morning. We will take appearances,
6 please.

7 MS HOLLIS: Good morning Mr President, your Honours,
8 opposing counsel. This morning for the Prosecution, Mohamed A
9 Bangura, Christopher Santora, Brenda J Hollis and Maja Dimitrova.

09:31:28 10 PRESIDING JUDGE: Thank you. Yes, Mr Griffiths.

11 MR GRIFFITHS: Good morning Mr President, your Honours,
12 counsel opposite. For the Defence today, myself Courtenay
13 Griffiths assisted by my learned friends Mr Simon Chapman,
14 Mr Silas Chekera and with us again today is Ms Haydee Dijkstal
09:31:46 15 who was with us earlier this week.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE: Thank you, Mr Griffiths. Mr Taylor,
17 before you are asked any further questions I will remind you that
18 you are still bound by your declaration to tell the truth. Yes,
19 Mr Griffiths.

09:31:59 20 DANKPANNAH DR CHARLES GHANKAY TAYLOR:

21 [On former affirmation]

22 EXAMINATION-IN-CHIEF BY MR GRIFFITHS: [Continued]

23 Q. Mr Taylor, yesterday when we adjourned we were looking at
24 events at or about 22 December 1998 following your return from
09:32:20 25 Burkina Faso, yes?

26 A. That is correct.

27 Q. Now, help us with this: What was the atmosphere like in
28 Liberia at Christmas 1998?

29 A. '98. Well, around the Christmas, that is, I would put it

1 to about from about the middle of December, we are launching this
2 major polio programme. We are also just returning from a trip to
3 Burkina Faso to see the inauguration of the then chairman of the
4 OAU, who is also President of Burkina Faso.

09:33:18 5 Q. Pause there. So, at that time Blaise Compaore was chairman
6 of the OAU, was he?

7 A. Oh, definitely. He was then serving chairman of the OAU.
8 He had been reelected to office, but he was the chairman and so
9 --

09:33:35 10 Q. So when Sam Bockarie went to Burkina Faso in December of -
11 or was it November of 1998, he was visiting, in effect, the
12 chairman of the OAU, was he?

13 A. Oh, definitely.

14 Q. Okay,

09:33:50 15 A. Definitely. That is why the level of the discussions as to
16 the travel - that is why it was discussed at certain national
17 levels, and a lot of people knew that they could travel because
18 he was visiting not just the President of Burkina Faso - I don't
19 think that was the intent of letting him travel - but he was
09:34:11 20 visiting the chairman of the OAU that then had to assume also a
21 position as part of the whole peace process at that time.

22 Q. Right. Sorry I interrupted you, Mr Taylor. You were
23 telling us?

24 A. Also internally in Liberia we have a little bit of calm.

09:34:35 25 We are preparing to light a Christmas tree and all that, but
26 there are ongoing things. Travels, we have gone to Abuja before
27 then, gone to Conakry, come back, we have gone to Burkina Faso, I
28 have launched the polio campaign, I am preparing a major address
29 to the nation following the end of the Christmas holiday. So in

1 Liberia, things are not too bad. Things are fairly normal.

2 Q. What is the situation like on the border with Sierra Leone
3 at this time?

09:35:16

4 A. Oh, there is heavy, heavy fighting going on. If you look
5 at the third report of the Secretary-General, you will also see
6 that there are all kinds of activities being reported before that
7 time and it continues throughout December. Attacks practically
8 all over the country as far as we can understand at that time.

09:35:42

9 Q. Yes, but what about on the Liberian side of the Sierra
10 Leonean border? What is happening, if anything?

11 A. We closed our border and tried to put security to the
12 border to prevent any crossover at the border. We are on very -
13 what we call high alert, and we closed the border to prevent any
14 spillover of the activities in Sierra Leone in Liberia.

09:36:00

15 Q. Yes. And in terms of what is being said at an
16 international level, Mr Taylor, are there any accusations being
17 levied against Liberia at this time?

18 A. Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

19 Q. Such as?

09:36:15

20 A. There are Liberians that are fighting. Liberia is back in
21 the war. There are armed Liberians fighting inside Sierra Leone
22 supporting the different sides. All of these accusations are
23 ongoing at the time. We are busy to the best of our ability
24 writing and speaking out about denials. We are sending our
25 foreign minister outside of Liberia to explain to the people.

09:36:41

26 You know, there is a very - a terrible situation that is
27 happening at this time and if you just take a quick look at it,
28 it is - all of this time - and if we look back to evidence before
29 this Court, let's just start from the intervention. Everybody -

1 by "everybody" I mean the Sierra Leoneans know. Everybody knows
2 that there are Liberians in Sierra Leone fighting. Everybody
3 knows who they are. And up until that time, no-one is telling
4 the truth or even speaking out about it. Kabbah knows who these
09:37:32 5 people are. If you even read his statement where - the statement
6 he made before the truth commission, he talks about at the time
7 that the junta attacked Freetown he hears the chief of staff
8 ordering them to counter these forces that are not loyal to him.
9 He knows who they are. No-one speaks officially to say, "Oh,
09:37:57 10 listen, yes, there are Liberians fighting in Sierra Leone, but we
11 know who they are". No-one is talking about it. They hide it
12 and hide it and hide it to the very end and keep saying "Liberian
13 fighters. They are Liberian". Yes, we know they are Liberians.
14 I am fighting tooth and nail in explaining every day what they
09:38:18 15 already know. What they already know.

16 So let's come all the way to the return of Kabbah. Kabbah
17 returns to Sierra Leone. He knows that these people are out
18 there up-country. He knows that the Liberians are there, okay?
19 So the accusations continue. Come 6 January, the same problem.
09:38:41 20 Of course you know who they are. You know that these are
21 Liberians that - they are either two groups: Either they are
22 Liberians that were brought in and recruited by the Kamajors out
23 of Liberia, trained in Liberia by ECOMOG, right on Ricks
24 Institute campus. If these are not some of the dead bodies you
09:39:04 25 are looking at? You are looking at some of those individuals
26 that were part of the STF that joined the Sierra Leone Army to
27 come back into Freetown.

28 I mean, why do you continue to give Liberia all of this
29 hard time with accusations after accusations when you know who

1 these people are, for God's sake? I don't understand it. So,
2 yes, these accusations are out there and everybody is just
3 tightlipped about it. We are not going to say anything.
4 Finally, after everything, Kabbah goes the truth commission and
09:39:34 5 says: Oh, yes, we knew about Liberians. But, you know, come on,
6 let's be serious about this. If they had said this many years
7 ago, Liberia would not have gone through all of these problems
8 and Taylor would not be probably sitting before this Court
9 talking about Liberians that he sent to Sierra Leone to fight,
09:39:51 10 and one little feller what they talk about, he sends somebody
11 called Senegalese. Charles Taylor wants to wage a war against a
12 country, he is going to send two or three persons to do it?
13 Let's be serious.

14 So yes, there are accusations, in direct answer to your
09:40:11 15 question, but it is about the presence of Liberians in Sierra
16 Leone and fighting and carrying on.

17 JUDGE DOHERTY: Mr Griffiths, before you move on. In the
18 last two answers the witness referred to "we". "We" sent our
19 foreign ministers. "We" were explaining. "We" went to Burkina
09:40:28 20 Faso. Now is that "we" the diplomatic royal "we", or is it
21 persons other than Mr Taylor?

22 THE WITNESS: No, by "we", your Honour, I am referring to
23 my government. We speak of it as "we". I am speaking as a
24 government.

09:40:44 25 JUDGE DOHERTY: Thank you.

26 MR GRIFFITHS:

27 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, just to tie up a loose end, given that you
28 mentioned it, you mentioned again the polio immunisation
29 campaign, yes?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Let's have a look, please, at the presidential papers at
3 page 178. Do you have it, Mr Taylor?

4 A. Yes.

09:41:46 5 Q. What do we see in the second photograph on that page?

6 A. I am going through - I am helping here to immunise a young
7 baby with the polio. It is called vaccination, but really it is
8 not a needle. You open - they open a little vial and you put it
9 in the baby's mouth. They were saying vaccination, but it is not
10 a needle used here. It is a little vial. You open it and just
11 drip it into the baby's mouth.

09:42:17 12 Q. Yes, I am primarily interested in the date. We see that
13 that is dated 28 December 1998, yes?

14 A. Yes, it is an ongoing process. This is one position on
09:42:37 15 this date, but it is a campaign that runs several weeks.

16 Q. Okay, so that is the 28th. Yes, now can we go, please, to
17 page 292. Do you have it, Mr Taylor?

18 A. Yes, I do.

19 Q. Now, this is entitled "A policy statement made by the
09:43:27 20 Government of the Republic of Liberia on allegations against
21 Liberia for involvement in the Sierra Leone crisis". Do you see
22 that?

23 A. Yes, I do.

24 Q. And it is dated 29 December, so the day after the
09:43:42 25 photograph we have just looked at?

26 A. Yes.

27 Q. Now first of all, Mr Taylor, why was it felt necessary to
28 make this statement?

29 A. There are ongoing barrages of accusations about Liberia.

1 Because there are Liberians over there, so it has got to be
2 Liberia. So again we come forth trying to be as open as we can
3 and make this, yet again, public pronouncement about what the
4 policies are, what we have been doing, what we will continue to
09:44:30 5 do in order to be good neighbours and follow all agreements and
6 treaties signed by not just the Mano River Union countries, but
7 also by ECOWAS. We are totally, totally seized by this matter.
8 Q. Now, let's look at this policy statement, shall we? Now,
9 before we come to that, where was this statement published,
09:45:00 10 Mr Taylor?
11 A. It was published in Monrovia, but it was widely circulated.
12 Q. "The Government of Liberia views with disappointment and
13 indignation suggestions and allegations by the Government of
14 Sierra Leone that Liberia is supporting former junta/RUF forces
09:45:23 15 in Sierra Leone".
16 Just pause there. So the allegations were being made by
17 the Government of Sierra Leone, were they, Mr Taylor?
18 A. That is correct.
19 Q. So help me. Did you speak to Tejan Kabbah about it?
09:45:37 20 A. Yes.
21 Q. And what did you say to him?
22 A. "Well, you know this is not true. What is the problem?"
23 He is saying, "Well, based on our intelligence we are seeing
24 Liberians. Liberians are fighting. Our intelligence have
09:45:54 25 verified the presence of Liberia fighting." By this time, quite
26 frankly, I didn't really - I knew of the vast numbers of
27 Liberians that were in Sierra Leone fighting. I did not at this
28 time know that they had given them a title called Special Task
29 Force. So all I kept telling him, I said, "Well, look, the AFL

1 people are there. We know they are there. You know they are
2 there", but I did not know that they had - actually, at this time
3 I did not know they were actually hired by the Sierra Leonean
4 government until sometime later. And he said, "Well, you know,
09:46:35 5 this is what we have here, and so it is being reported." And for
6 us, when it comes to government, whether it is the President or
7 not, every time a senior official in a government, for example,
8 if the minister of Defence, or let's say the press secretary to
9 the President, whenever a senior official of government makes a
09:46:56 10 statement, we attribute it to the government. We always leave
11 that, and as long as the President does not follow up with a
12 denial, it is a government position.

13 So this was not like Tejani on the radio - President Kabbah
14 saying, "We have got this information", no. But once it is
09:47:18 15 coming from government sources that the senior government
16 officials like the President is not issuing an immediate denial,
17 it is the government.

18 Q. Now, apart from the Government of Sierra Leone, was anybody
19 else making these suggestions about Liberia at the time,
09:47:36 20 Mr Taylor?

21 A. We also had - at one point in time Maxwell Khobe had made a
22 similar suggestion when he became commander of the Sierra Leone
23 forces.

24 Q. Right:
09:47:56 25 "The Government of Liberia reiterates unequivocally that it
26 is not supporting in any form the forces of the AFRC or RUF in
27 Sierra Leone."

28 Let's pause again, please. Mr Taylor, had you ever had any
29 dealings or relationship with members of the Sierra Leonean army

1 during the junta period?

2 A. Never before, never then. No, no.

3 Q. You accept, however, don't you, that there had been a
4 relationship between you and the RUF?

09:48:34 5 A. That is correct.

6 Q. And you date that relationship back to a few months in
7 1991/1992?

8 A. That is correct.

9 Q. Had you had any relationship with them since?

09:48:48 10 A. No.

11 Q. "It is the policy of the Liberian government to welcome the
12 restoration of constitutional rule in Sierra Leone under the
13 leadership of the democratically elected government of President
14 Tejan Kabbah."

09:49:07 15 Pause again. Mr Taylor, throughout the year 1998, had you
16 done anything in opposition to the ECOWAS policy to have Tejan
17 Kabbah reinstated as the democratically elected President of
18 Sierra Leone?

19 A. I had done nothing in opposition to that process. In fact,
09:49:31 20 I had aided the process all along from the inception - by
21 inception I am referring to from the movement of the intervention
22 through the different meetings, through the different phone
23 calls, through the exchange of information between President
24 Kabbah and myself - I had done everything to aid and nothing to
09:49:54 25 the contrary.

26 Q. And had you done anything to aid and abet or support the
27 junta regime before its removal?

28 A. Nothing whatsoever. In fact, let's be reminded that the
29 two attempts made by the junta to contact me were rebuffed by me.

1 And in reference I am referring what? I am referring to a letter
2 written by Johnny Paul Koroma to me that I did not respond to and
3 the second was a delegation led by the gentleman whose name I
4 wrote on the confidential paper here that I refused to see. In
09:50:33 5 fact, I rebuffed every attempt on the part of the junta to get to
6 me because we did not recognise the junta. My government did
7 not.

8 Q. "The government categorically denies and takes exception to
9 these unfounded allegations by the Government of Sierra Leone and
09:50:54 10 the ECOMOG high command at the current Committee of Five meeting
11 on Sierra Leone in Abidjan, La Cote d'Ivoire, and demands
12 concrete proof of these allegations."

13 Let's pause again. What meeting of the Committee of Five
14 are we talking about there, Mr Taylor?

09:51:16 15 A. At a foreign ministers meeting in La Cote d'Ivoire, General
16 Shelpidi was invited by the foreign ministers to that meeting and
17 he raised this issue of the presence of Liberians fighting in
18 Sierra Leone and the Liberians were involved in it. That's at
19 the foreign ministers' level and we objected - my foreign
09:51:45 20 minister vehemently objected to his suggestion that by virtue of
21 Liberians being present and fighting in Sierra Leone that they
22 had been sent by the government.

23 Q. And this meeting of the foreign ministers in Cote d'Ivoire,
24 when had that taken place?

09:52:01 25 A. That is a little - I didn't follow the foreign ministers
26 meeting very well. That could have been somewhere in I think
27 December or thereabouts, but by this time Shelpidi had left
28 Liberia, so this had to be somewhere in December.

29 Q. "The government wishes to inform the international

1 community as a matter of fact and record, that successive regimes
2 in Sierra Leone, from that of President Joseph Momoh to the
3 elected government of President Tejan Kabbah, have used Liberian
4 mercenaries, usually associated with former warring factions in
09:52:46 5 Liberia, to augment their national security capacity. Even now,
6 the Kamajor militia are using Liberian mercenaries to assist in
7 their fight against the junta/RUF forces. We view the constant
8 arming and use of these mercenaries as a threat to our national
9 security and to the stability of the sub-region."

09:53:12 10 Pause again.

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Mr Taylor, what are you talking about there?

13 A. Well, let's go back to my coming into office in July of
14 1997. We find that the Kamajors are being trained just

09:53:30 15 practically in Monrovia at a Baptist campus I have referred to
16 here in my evidence called Ricks Institute. They are recruiting
17 some of the combatants, the demobilised, disarmed combatants,
18 from ULIMO-J and K and are using them to fight alongside the
19 Kamajors. In fact, some of these combatants are being flown out
09:54:00 20 of Roberts International Airport.

21 Q. By whom?

22 A. By ECOMOG on ECOMOG military planes straight into Lungi
23 airport and joining the combat. So they had two entry points:
24 One from Robertsfield that Liberians were being flown in to fight
09:54:18 25 and the second was from Ricks Institute driven to the Bo
26 Waterside, okay.

27 So what I am referring to here is that these are the people
28 that's on the ECOMOG side and we have already spoken about
29 beginning with Momoh coming all the way to Valentine Strasser and

1 coming all the way to President Kabbah where Liberians are there
2 in their thousands. And this is no secret. It is no secret now.
3 Even some of those Liberians that fought during that time and
4 trained are presently members of the Sierra Leone armed forces
09:54:56 5 today. They are officers in that army today. We will at a later
6 time come up with some of their names. Some of the same
7 Liberians that they used. It has never been a secret. But they
8 persisted on tying it to Taylor.

9 So these are the mercenaries that I am talking about that
09:55:12 10 had been recruited by ECOMOG and used to fight alongside the
11 Kamajors and some of them that voluntarily had been in Sierra
12 Leone for a long time that fought alongside the SLA that became
13 part of the junta. So you have two different groups of Liberians
14 in Sierra Leone fighting on the two different sides.

09:55:34 15 Q. "The Government of Liberia considers this situation as
16 grave and reiterates its call on the Kabbah government to enter
17 meaningful dialogue with all parties to the conflict as a way of
18 finding a peaceful and lasting solution to the Sierra Leonean
19 crisis.

09:55:55 20 The Liberian government further calls upon the United
21 Nations to establish a commission of inquiry with immediate
22 effect to investigate the circumstances leading to the
23 involvement of all foreign nationals, including Liberians, in the
24 Sierra Leonean civil war."

09:56:15 25 Pause there again.

26 A. Yes.

27 Q. Mr Taylor, that reference to "all foreign nationals", was
28 it only Liberians who were fighting along with Sierra Leoneans in
29 Sierra Leone?

1 A. Well, for a short time there were accusations that, quote
2 unquote, there were Burkinabes. We have never heard anything
3 about that since. There were supposed to be Liberians,
4 Burkinabes and others fighting. I used to hear and get reports
09:56:49 5 where it was said Burkinabes were fighting in Sierra Leone. All
6 of a sudden that just disappeared into thin air. We heard
7 nothing about Burkinabes, because there were none.

8 But what I was really trying to force to head here was a
9 formal investigation to finally get to the bottom of these
09:57:10 10 Liberians that are fighting in Sierra Leone. I know - I am
11 positive - that I have not sent them, but they are there.

12 How do - look, your Honours, you have no idea of what it's
13 like to be telling the truth over and over again and someone just
14 ignore it and just say, "Well, listen, we hear you, but that's
09:57:35 15 it". They know I am not responsible, but they keep talking about
16 it. So I am trying to force an international investigation that
17 we will get to the bottom of it. That never takes place because
18 everybody I guess knows what's going on. That's what I am
19 referring to here, to investigate so we can really find out who
09:57:54 20 is in Sierra Leone, who has sent them there and for what reasons
21 or purposes.

22 Q. "The Liberian government recalls its decision to permit the
23 deployment of ECOMOG forces at its border with Sierra Leone and
24 the subsequent deployment of said forces. The government also
09:58:14 25 recalls its request to the Secretary-General of the United
26 Nations for the deployment of UN observers at the Liberian-Sierra
27 Leonean border.

28 The Liberian government further recalls its invitation to
29 the Sierra Leone government for a joint patrol of the

1 Liberian-Sierra Leonean border together with Liberian security
2 forces and ECOMOG forces.

3 The Government of Liberia desires to note that in spite of
4 all these efforts and overtures, no concrete response has been
09:58:51 5 forthcoming.

6 The government also recalls the accusation made by Colonel
7 Bukari Musa of ECOMOG, that over 3,000 fighters of the defunct
8 NPFL were being trained at Camp Naama in Liberia to assist
9 remnants of the deposed AFRC junta fight ECOMOG. This allegation
09:59:17 10 was proven to be false and baseless following an investigation
11 carried out jointly by ECOMOG, the Liberian press and the US
12 embassy near Monrovia. "

13 Mr Taylor, pause there again. Now, I recall a discussion
14 we had about 5,000 Liberian soldiers being addressed by you prior
09:59:44 15 to sallying forth and invading Sierra Leone. What's the story
16 about this 3,000?

17 A. This is a different 3,000. This is a new accusation.
18 Colonel, as we see here, Bukari Musa alleged that 3,000 men are
19 being trained at Camp Naama to carry out military operations in
10:00:13 20 Sierra Leone. We are again shocked and stunned by this and we go
21 into emergency mode right away.

22 So immediately I asked the special representative of the
23 Secretary-General to get in touch with the Secretary-General and
24 inform him that we want to conduct - since this is in Liberia,
10:00:33 25 let's conduct an investigation. We get the United States
26 government involved, okay, through the embassy near Monrovia, and
27 we get ECOMOG involved almost immediately. So the United States
28 embassy near Monrovia sends its military attache.

29 Q. Who is that?

1 A. He is Colonel Dempsey and I am glad that even documents of
2 that investigation have been presented by the Prosecution at a
3 limited level, but at least it covers the substance of Colonel
4 Dempsey's own investigation where he states in fact there is no
10:01:13 5 such training going on there. But we go there with the press,
6 Colonel Dempsey is there, the special representative of the
7 Secretary-General is there, my defence minister. Everyone goes
8 there on the spot, searched the entire base. There is no
9 evidence of any action or military activities going on at that
10:01:34 10 base in terms of training for years. They leave and come, hold a
11 press conference and make a full statement that it is totally
12 false. But we are lucky in this instance because it is in
13 Liberia and we can press immediately to investigate and that's
14 the end of this 3,000 situation. After that investigation it
10:01:55 15 ends.

16 Q. Can you help us with a detail in relation to that; a
17 possible month when that occurred?

18 A. This accusation must be round about the middle of '98 or
19 thereabouts. That's about in that area when everything is being
10:02:13 20 whipped up about what Liberia is supposed to be doing. The 5,000
21 you know that comes on a little later and then there is the
22 3,000. So it is just about in that - you know, these accusations
23 come in waves and you just have sleepless nights trying to
24 straighten them out.

10:02:33 25 Q. And Dempsey is spelt D-E-M-P-S-E-Y, yes?

26 A. That is correct.

27 Q. Colonel Dempsey, military attache at the US embassy in
28 Monrovia?

29 A. That is correct.

1 Q. "The Liberian government wishes to draw attention to the
2 statement of the United States Deputy Assistant Secretary of
3 State For Africa, Ambassador Vicky Huddleston, that there is no
4 evidence that the Liberian government is involved in aiding the
10:03:05 5 war in Sierra Leone."

6 Pause there. When had the United States Deputy Assistant
7 Secretary of State for Africa made that statement, Mr Taylor?

8 A. I would say that had to be somewhere by - I would put it to
9 the last quarter of '98. In one of her statements she had said
10:03:35 10 that there is no evidence that the United States government has
11 physically to prove that Liberia is involved in Sierra Leone.

12 Q. Now, when you as the President of Liberia hear the phrase
13 "no evidence", what do you as a President take that to include?

14 A. They don't have any proof. They don't have anything
10:04:02 15 substantial to stand on. That is my interpretation.

16 Q. Well, Mr Taylor, as the President of Liberia, what did you
17 understand to be the evidence gathering capability of the world's
18 then only superpower, the United States of America? What were
19 they capable of having in terms of proof?

10:04:28 20 A. Well, let me just put it this way and remind the Court. If
21 you remember the Roosevelt Johnson Monrovia situation, it is
22 mentioned that the USS Chinook is off the Liberian coast. Now, I
23 am not a military person, but from my little knowledge you would
24 know that when - and that, according to the statement of
10:04:57 25 President Clinton, was part of a sister ship in the area.

26 Now, the United States has massive intelligence gathering
27 capabilities, intercepts of radio, telephone messages and even,
28 at that particular time from my own experience in dealing with
29 intelligence operations - because our own people are very well

1 trained - during the crisis in Liberia at that time it was our
2 understanding that the United States government at that time had
3 dedicated - this is what the intelligence community called it -
4 had dedicated a satellite look on into that particular region.

10:05:48

5 So from an intelligence perspective, wherever you have crisis
6 going on, satellites can be directed and can be focused on
7 particular areas for the gathering of intelligence.

8 Now, this is - I don't know. I mean, this is just general
9 intelligence information. There is nothing specific, but it is
10 done. So Liberia, Sierra Leone, that region at that time was a
11 point of interest, it is called. That was a point of interest,
12 and so a satellite was dedicated - or at least a time of the day
13 was dedicated to looking into that particular area. So I gave
14 this explanation.

10:06:32

15 Now to answer your question directly: If the United States
16 with that capacity that was there - it was not coming; it was
17 there - and the purpose there was to pick up this kind of
18 information. Had anything, then they would have said it. Even
19 now that I am before this Court, they would still make it
20 available. Even if they had to declassify it, I think they
21 should do it in the interests of justice. If they have any
22 intercepts, I think they should bring them. Do you understand
23 me? Because we have heard about radio. There is no way any
24 human on this earth would believe there is radio traffic or
25 telephone traffic in that area that the United States military
26 presence in that area would not pick up. They would pick up.

10:07:13

27 So when she said this, for me it is a type of vindication.
28 In other words, she was saying that, "We do not have anything
29 physically in hand to prove this." And we stated it here - it is

1 factual. Because if it was not factual, if I had, as President,
2 quoted the Assistant Secretary of State of United States as
3 saying something that was not true, the United States government
4 would have come out immediately and said that it was not true.

10:07:51 5 Now, we can go and search for the statement, but the way
6 that governments operate: If any country or anyone says
7 something that was not stated by an official of a government, it
8 is denied immediately. So this is factual, and what she is
9 referring to, I am sure, is that they had no intelligence,
10:08:14 10 because they had the assets in the region and they would have
11 picked it up.

12 Q. Now you go on to say this:

13 "The government wishes to also point to the results of an
14 independent investigation conducted by Colonel Dempsey, military
10:08:33 15 attache at the US embassy in Monrovia, which found no evidence of
16 the alleged involvement of the Liberian government in the Sierra
17 Leonean conflict".

18 Did you see such a report, Mr Taylor?

19 A. There was a full report that I don't have. You know, I
10:08:56 20 don't know why it is not in my archives, because the government -
21 maybe it may still be in the Executive Mansion in Monrovia. But
22 a full report was done by the committee. Let me not lose point
23 of this. I said to you that it was a full delegation that went,
24 including the United Nations special representative, Colonel
10:09:15 25 Dempsey, my defence minister. So it was a delegation, and they
26 did a full report.

27 JUDGE DOHERTY: Sorry, Mr Griffiths, in an earlier answer
28 Mr Taylor referred to the entire base and he has just now said
29 "they" went there. Are we again referring to Camp Naama, which

1 was raised earlier?

2 THE WITNESS: Your Honour, that is correct.

3 JUDGE DOHERTY: Thank you.

4 THE WITNESS: They - by "they" I mean the delegation
10:09:41 5 comprising Colonel Dempsey, my defence minister, the special
6 representative of the Secretary-General Downes-Thomas. Also
7 present was senior officers from ECOMOG and the entire national
8 and international press corp went to Camp Naama to view what had
9 been alleged by Colonel Bukari Musa about the 3,000 troops. And
10:10:07 10 upon return, that delegation did a full written report for the
11 government. I do not have a copy. All we have - and we are very
12 lucky - is that the Prosecution has provided a brief statement
13 that they claim is not fully declassified by Colonel Dempsey, who
14 states that there was no evidence of military activities at that
10:10:30 15 particular base.

16 MR GRIFFITHS:

17 Q. Now --

18 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Mr Griffiths, is this a Prosecution
19 exhibit, or not?

10:10:44 20 MR GRIFFITHS: It is not a Prosecution exhibit. It is a
21 document which we have included in our bundle which - there are
22 still certain preliminaries to be sorted out in terms - prior to
23 its admission into evidence.

24 THE WITNESS: But it was provided by the Prosecution.

10:11:03 25 MR GRIFFITHS:

26 Q. Now, was - you specified Colonel Dempsey there in that
27 paragraph, Mr Taylor. Was his investigation limited merely to
28 the training of recruits at Camp Naama, or did it go further and
29 deal with any other issue?

1 A. Colonel Dempsey dealt with other issues.

2

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4

5 {Redacted}

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9

10 {Redacted}

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15 {Redacted}

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18

19 Q. And you have seen this in a report provided by the

10:12:45 20 Prosecution?

21 A. Yes, I have seen it, I have read it, I have copies of it.

22 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, Ms Hollis?

23 MS HOLLIS: It was my understanding that the witness had

24 said he had seen this in an investigative report that was carried

10:12:57 25 out. Now, if we are getting into issues relating to what was

26 disclosed to the defence, the Defence has been put on full notice

27 that we need to go into closed session, and that is based on a

28 ruling by this Trial Chamber, of which we have recently reminded

29 the Defence, and that ruling of the Trial Chamber was dated 2

1 November 2007 relating to disclosure of Rule 70 material.

2 PRESIDING JUDGE: I see. What do you say to that
3 objection, Mr Griffiths?

10:13:36

4 MR GRIFFITHS: I don't press the matter any further then in
5 the circumstances, Mr President.

6 MS HOLLIS: I think we need redactions, if indeed they are
7 talking about that disclosure based on the protective measures
8 order relating to the contents of that disclosure.

9 [Trial Chamber conferred]

10:14:10

10 PRESIDING JUDGE: Ms Hollis, perhaps you could assist us.
11 We don't have a copy of that order in front of us, but what would
12 you be seeking to redact from the record?

13 MS HOLLIS: If I can have just a moment to look at the
14 particular reference?

10:14:26

15 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes.

16 MS HOLLIS: I know these pages are different, but there is
17 a question from lead Defence counsel - on my record it is page 22
18 beginning at line 20 - where he asked about an investigation and
19 he says, "Was his investigation limited merely to the training of
20 recruits at Camp Naama, or did it go further and deal with any
21 other issue?" The answer is, "Colonel Dempsey dealt with other
22 issues. He said there was no training going on there".

10:15:09

23 Now, he indicates - they seem to indicate that it is not
24 coming from the investigative report, but rather from the
25 disclosure. Based on that, the Prosecution would ask that from
26 our line 23 on page 22 where the accused begins to deal with what
27 was in - what information Colonel Dempsey provided - and I don't
28 want to repeat it - but he says he dealt with other issues, and
29 then he talks about what those other issues are, and that goes on

10:15:28

1 in our LiveNote to page 23 just before the final sentence saying,
2 "These were his comments in that report." So it would be that
3 context that we are talking about.

4 MR GRIFFITHS: Well, we would --

10:16:11 5 PRESIDING JUDGE: I will just make that clear, what area of
6 the transcript we are talking about. What is the last line of
7 that passage?

8 MS HOLLIS: Mr President, the last for us is page 23 of our
9 - of my transcript and it is - the redaction would go up to this
10:16:32 10 sentence - this sentence would not necessarily have to be
11 redacted: "These were his comments in that report". So it would
12 be the information up to that point. And I know we have
13 different pages and lines, but --

14 PRESIDING JUDGE: I see. I think you have made that very
10:16:50 15 clear, but let's just put it beyond any doubt. You are seeking
16 redaction of the testimony of the witness that begins, "He said
17 that there was", et cetera, and ending in, "These were his
18 comments in that report"?

19 MS HOLLIS: That is correct.

10:17:13 20 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, thank you, Ms Hollis. Mr Griffiths,
21 you wanted to say something?

22 MR GRIFFITHS: We would object to that, Mr President, and
23 for this reason: We have here - this arises in the context of a
24 statement made by the witness as long ago as 29 December 1998 in
10:17:37 25 which he specifically refers to an independent investigation
26 conducted by Colonel Dempsey, military attache at the United
27 States embassy in Monrovia. Now it seems to me that he is
28 perfectly entitled to speak to the content of such an
29 investigation and it seems to us that this is not dependent on

1 any disclosure given to us by the Prosecution and one asks in the
2 circumstances, looking at the passage which my learned friend
3 suggests should be deleted from the public record, what is the
4 prejudice caused to the Prosecution by the inclusion of that
10:18:19 5 information? We find it difficult to see how in any sense the
6 Prosecution can be said to be prejudiced in any way.

7 Now it may well be that the United States government might
8 be prejudiced by the disclosure of certain information we have
9 received from the Prosecution, but in our submission the question
10:18:44 10 here for your Honours is what is the prejudice caused to the
11 Prosecution - to the parties to the litigation as opposed to a
12 third party? In our submission there is no prejudice whatsoever
13 to the Prosecution by that passage remaining on the record and
14 consequently we would object to any redaction in the terms
10:19:08 15 submitted by my learned friend.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE: I normally wouldn't give the objecting
17 party a right of reply to a reply, but in view of the nature of
18 Mr Griffiths's reply I will hear you, Ms Hollis.

19 MS HOLLIS: Thank you, Mr President. I appreciate the
10:19:27 20 opportunity. It is not an issue of prejudice to the Prosecution.
21 It is an issue of Rule 70 materials and what may be provided and
22 in what circumstances it may be provided. The order that was
23 issued, and I do have one copy, I am sorry I don't have more than
24 one, but I do have one copy, makes it very clear that there were
10:19:48 25 very limited circumstances for the use of the material that was
26 disclosed and that any additional use would have to be subject to
27 permission of the United States government.

28 So it is not a matter - this issue is not prejudice to the
29 Prosecution. It is fully within Rule 70 and what is permitted to

1 be disclosed under what circumstances and with what preceding
2 requirements met.

3 PRESIDING JUDGE: I see.

4 MS HOLLIS: As I say, I do have one copy of that decision.

10:20:20 5 We have reminded the Defence of this decision, so they should be
6 on notice of it, but if you would like this copy I am certainly
7 willing to provide it to you.

8 PRESIDING JUDGE: Well, thank you, Ms Hollis. Our legal
9 officer has solved the problem by getting us a copy on LiveNote.

10:20:37 10 MS HOLLIS: Thank you.

11 [Trial Chamber conferred]

12 PRESIDING JUDGE: Well, I don't think this is in issue, but
13 just to make it quite clear the order deals with certain Rule 68
14 material and the current dispute involves material that falls
10:21:46 15 within that definition covered by the order. Is that correct?

16 MS HOLLIS: That is correct, Mr President.

17 MR GRIFFITHS: I don't accept that, Mr President. I
18 suggest that this has nothing whatsoever to do with that order.

19 We are dealing with the testimony of the witness concerning a
10:22:11 20 speech he made in December 1998 in which he mentioned a report by
21 Colonel Dempsey. That should be looked at separately and
22 independently from any disclosure made by the Prosecution and
23 covered by the ruling of this Court on 2 November.

24 We cannot hide the fact that in this paragraph that we are
10:22:34 25 looking at the witness himself, before any indictment was issued
26 against him, made mention of this report by Colonel Dempsey.
27 This is quite separate.

28 [Trial Chamber conferred]

29 PRESIDING JUDGE: We see here that the material complained

1 about is a mixture of matters within the accused's own knowledge
2 and also matters that are covered by an order made by this Trial
3 Chamber on 2 November 2007 relating to Rule 70 material, so we
4 uphold the objection and grant the request for redaction, but we
10:26:13 5 think justice will be done to both parties if the passage that we
6 order to be redacted can be repeated in closed session if the
7 Defence wishes.

8 So what we are saying is - Madam Court Manager, did you get
9 the passage that needs to be redacted? What were saying is we
10:26:46 10 will redact that passage that has been objected to by the
11 Prosecution and then we are prepared to close the Court if
12 Defence counsel wishes to extract the same material from this
13 witness in closed session.

14 Ms Hollis, you have made it very clear the passage you want
10:28:07 15 redacted. If you go back to that passage there are three lines
16 under that that seem to relate to the passage that you want
17 redacted. Are you happy for those to stay on the public record?

18 MS HOLLIS: And we are talking about after "these were his
19 comments"?

10:28:26 20 PRESIDING JUDGE: The passage that you want redacted ends
21 in "these were comments in that report" and then if you read the
22 next three lines --

23 MS HOLLIS: The question?

24 PRESIDING JUDGE: It is a question, yes.

10:28:39 25 MS HOLLIS: Yes, that would also have to be, in our view,
26 not in the public record.

27 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, we share the same view.

28 MS HOLLIS: Thank you.

29 PRESIDING JUDGE: We will send this back, Madam Court

1 Manager. If you could add to the passage that you have already
2 highlighted, the next three lines as well starting --

3 MS HOLLIS: I beg your indulgence. This is very piecemeal,
4 I am sorry, but if we look beyond the question and then we look
10:29:24 5 to the answer, "but let's add on" something else that he said
6 would be redacted, so it would be the three line question, the
7 two line answer and then the three line question.

8 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: We need to hurry otherwise the redaction
9 won't happen.

10:29:59 10 PRESIDING JUDGE: The added material --

11 MS HOLLIS: If we go down to the line that says, "There
12 appeared not to be" because above that are restatements of that.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE: I see. It is an extra seven lines.
14 Madam Court Manager, you should extend the redaction down to the
10:30:17 15 answer which reads, "There appeared not to be". Is that clear?
16 All right, thank you. I have been told by the booth that the
17 time for the redaction is rapidly running out.

18 The Trial Chamber has signed an order redacting the passage
19 we have been discussing. Now, Mr Griffiths, at some stage do you
10:32:44 20 want us to close the Court so that you can adduce that evidence
21 again from the witness?

22 MR GRIFFITHS: Yes, please.

23 PRESIDING JUDGE: Now or --

24 MR GRIFFITHS: I would prefer that we do it now whilst the
10:32:55 25 matter is still fresh in mind.

26 PRESIDING JUDGE: Are we talking about a closed session or
27 a private session?

28 MR GRIFFITHS: Well, whichever is easiest to accomplish,
29 Mr President.

1 PRESIDING JUDGE: I think a private session will meet the
2 bill. What do you say?

3 MS HOLLIS: Mr President, I would suggest that what has
4 happened now is that this has been redacted from the public
10:33:17 5 record. But it would still be a part of the confidential record,
6 would it not? Or has it been --

7 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes.

8 MS HOLLIS: It has completely gone from the record?

9 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: It has completely gone in the same way a
10:33:34 10 mistake would go off the record.

11 MS HOLLIS: But that stays as part of the confidential
12 record, does it not?

13 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: We can find out from Madam Court Manager.

14 PRESIDING JUDGE: Madam Court Manager, the enquiry is now
10:33:52 15 that that passage has been redacted, does that appear on the
16 confidential court record, or has it been completely expunged
17 altogether?

18 MS IRURA: Your Honour, it would appear on the confidential
19 court record.

10:34:08 20 MS HOLLIS: Given that, it would appear the information is
21 already on the record before your Honours in a confidential
22 matter, so perhaps you don't need to have it repeated.

23 PRESIDING JUDGE: There would be some sense in that,
24 Mr Griffiths. After all, we are not seeking to protect any
10:34:25 25 individual person's identity. It deals specifically with Rule 70
26 information. It is on the record anyway - on the confidential
27 record.

28 MR GRIFFITHS: Can I just enquire this, because I would
29 like to be able to proceed with my examination of the witness

1 without any risk of overstepping any boundaries. Is it the case
2 now that I cannot ask him anything at all about this paragraph in
3 the statement he made in December 1998?

4 PRESIDING JUDGE: You mean in public?

10:35:03 5 MR GRIFFITHS: In public.

6 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes. Because, as we said, it touches on
7 the order we have made as well.

8 MR GRIFFITHS: So if I want to ask any further questions on
9 this paragraph, it has to be done in closed session?

10:35:16 10 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes.

11 MR GRIFFITHS: Very well.

12 PRESIDING JUDGE: We will make it a private session.

13 MR GRIFFITHS: Well, I would like to ask the witness
14 further questions about this.

10:35:27 15 PRESIDING JUDGE: All right. Well, you have got no
16 objection to going into private session for this, Ms Hollis?

17 MS HOLLIS: Our position on it is quite simply if the
18 witness is talking about his recollection of the report that was
19 made back in - during this time period in Liberia, the report
20 that was made and he read, we have no objection to that.

10:35:47 21 If the witness is testifying based on what he has read that
22 has been provided under Rule 68, we have an objection to that.
23 The objection is twofold: First of all, it must be in closed
24 session pursuant to the protective measures order; but secondly,
10:36:10 25 he has no right to refer to that unless there is further
26 permission given by the United States government for its use
27 beyond the Rule 68 disclosure.

28 So it is really a twofold issue: If it is based on his
29 recollection of the report, we see that as a separate matter; if

1 it is based on the materials that were disclosed pursuant to Rule
2 68, that is covered by the protective measures order. That is
3 the Prosecution's position on that.

10:36:41 4 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Ms Hollis, if his testimony is based on
5 his recollection of what he read as then President, would you
6 object to that being held in open session?

7 MS HOLLIS: No.

8 PRESIDING JUDGE: Well, what do you say to that,
9 Mr Griffiths?

10:36:56 10 MR GRIFFITHS: I am happy to limit my questions to the
11 witness's knowledge at the time in December 1998 and not trespass
12 into any area touched by the decision made by this Court in
13 November 2007. I am happy for that - to adopt that course.

14 PRESIDING JUDGE: All right. Well, I don't see why we need
10:37:21 15 to go into private session at all if you limit your questions as
16 you have just indicated.

17 MR GRIFFITHS: I will limit my questions to that.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE: All right. Well go ahead, Mr Griffiths.

19 MR GRIFFITHS:

10:37:31 20 Q. Mr Taylor, you appreciate I am only interested in your
21 knowledge in December 1998, okay?

22 A. Yes, I do.

23 Q. In December of 1998, were you aware of a statement made by
24 the Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, Ambassador Vicky
10:37:58 25 Huddleston?

26 A. Yes, I was aware and I quote it.

27 Q. And what was that statement made by the Assistant Secretary
28 of State?

29 A. The Assistant Secretary of State said that there was no

1 evidence of Liberia's involvement in the war in Sierra Leone, and
2 I quote her.

3 Q. And help us, please, Mr Taylor. When was that statement
4 made by the Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, roughly?

10:38:27 5 A. Roughly I would say that is about the - I would say the
6 third quarter. Around about the third quarter of 1998.

7 Q. Now help us, Mr Taylor. When you made this statement on 29
8 December 1998, were you telling the truth when you said that such
9 a statement had been made by the Assistant Secretary of State for
10 Africa?

11 A. Yes, I was telling the truth. And if I was not telling the
12 truth at the time, I can assure you the United States government
13 would have spoken out immediately, stating that that was not a
14 correct statement, as they normally do - as all governments do.

10:39:16 15 Q. Now, you go on to say in this policy statement:

16 "The government wishes to also point to the results of an
17 independent investigation conducted by Colonel Dempsey, military
18 attache at the US embassy in Monrovia."

19 Now, help us. Had you seen such a report attributed to
10:39:41 20 Colonel Dempsey?

21 A. Yes. Let me just clarify this whole thing. When this
22 delegation of Colonel Dempsey, the special representative of the
23 Secretary-General, at that particular time in Liberia, Ambassador
24 Downes-Thomas, the ECOMOG officers, my defence minister, they -
10:40:07 25 by "they", this delegation, went to Camp Naama. But at this
26 particular time there are numerous accusations: One includes the
27 training of people; one includes the movement of arms across the
28 border; and the third includes diamonds traffic that I am
29 supposed to be involved in.

1 This particular delegation go, but they investigate the
2 entire situation and in these reports, as was done, each person
3 on that delegation representing the entity that he is coming from
4 make their comments. They have individual comments, but there is
10:40:50 5 a final conclusion on the report. What I am quoting here are the
6 comments that were made by Colonel Dempsey in that report and I
7 am adding - I say, well, I don't have a copy of that report here,
8 and then blah, blah, blah. Before I mentioned a reference that I
9 don't want to mention again. But the fact of the matter is I am
10:41:11 10 referring to comments made in that report by Colonel Dempsey at
11 the time of the investigation by all of the parties, just as the
12 special representative of the United Nations Secretary-General
13 made comments, my defence minister made comments. So each of
14 their own observation is a part of the report. There is one
10:41:31 15 report with different observations and a conclusion made. I am
16 referring to his observations in that report.

17 Q. And what were his observations in that report, Mr Taylor?

18 A. What Colonel Dempsey has said in that report was that there
19 was no evidence of training activities at Camp Naama for several
10:41:52 20 years.

21 Q. Yes?

22 A. He also said that there was some indication - he said that
23 there are indications that small arms have been going across the
24 border into Sierra Leone.

10:42:02 25 Q. Small arms?

26 A. Small quantity of arms in small amounts that did not appear
27 to be at any official level.

28 Q. Yes?

29 A. And thirdly, he said that because diamonds are so small, it

1 is possible that there is diamond movement between Liberia and
2 Sierra Leone and that the President of Liberia could be involved.
3 These were the three areas of his comments.

4 Q. And these were comments made by him when?

10:42:32 5 A. These were comments made by him upon return in 1998 on that
6 delegation to Camp Naama.

7 Q. Now, Mr Taylor --

8 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Mr Griffiths, were these the findings of
9 the whole committee, or just Colonel Dempsey's own comments?

10:42:53 10 MR GRIFFITHS:

11 Q. You have heard the question, Mr Taylor.

12 A. These were Colonel Dempsey's own comments. There were
13 other comments, your Honour. Each member of that delegation in
14 his own assessment were contained as an attachment, and there was
10:43:10 15 a full report at that particular time which mentioned - mostly
16 they were dealing with Colonel Bukari's accusation. But each
17 person - Downes-Thomas made his own observation; my defence
18 minister made his own observation.

19 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Did you say Colonel Bukari's accusations?

10:43:40 20 MR GRIFFITHS: If we look at Colonel Bukari Musa in the
21 second paragraph.

22 Q. Mr Taylor, what were the conclusions reached by the other
23 persons who conducted that investigation?

24 A. They also concluded that there was no evidence of any
10:44:00 25 training. They concurred that there was evidence of small arms
26 moving across the border. There was a difference of opinion on
27 diamonds because nobody knew for real, but the general opinion
28 was that there was no training and that there were some small
29 arms movement across the border that appeared not to be at an

1 official level.

2 Q. Now, the small quantities of arms that were moving across
3 the border, Mr Taylor, was that attributed to anyone?

10:44:47

4 A. Yes. They did recognise that it was in part caused by and
5 through ex-combatants that were in the Lofa area at the
6 particular time. And don't let's forget Camp Naama - Camp Naama
7 that we have talked about, while it is right on the tip end of
8 Bong County as we enter Lofa County, they did recognise that it
9 had to be by and through combatants, and I think they interviewed
10 combatants, and maybe this has slipped us.

10:45:11

11 This is not just one snapshot. They conducted a full
12 investigation. This whole process took about a week or two. It
13 was not just - we jumped on the issue immediately to get it
14 going, but they did not just run up to Naama and come back and
15 say "finished". No, they questioned a lot of people and came up,
16 you know, with a report.

10:45:31

17 Q. And help us, Mr Taylor. Which - the ex-combatants in Lofa
18 County, did they belong to any particular faction?

19 A. Yes, they were members of ULIMO-K.

10:45:50

20 Q. ULIMO-K?

21 A. That is correct.

22 Q. And we will recall, of course, that salute report
23 mentioning a trade between Sam Bockarie and ULIMO for arms?

24 A. Yes.

10:46:05

25 Q. Do you recall that?

26 A. Yes, I do.

27 Q. And so the general conclusion was small quantities going
28 over the border originating from ex-combatants, yes?

29 A. That is correct.

1 Q. Let's go back to this document, shall we:

2 "The Government of Liberia has demonstrated a great deal of
3 patience and employed the highest form of diplomacy in the face
4 of these unwarranted accusations through the following actions
10:46:39 5 and activities: (1) Maintained an open line of contact and
6 direct dialogue with President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah aimed at
7 building confidence between Liberia and Sierra Leone".

8 Pause. Had you done that?

9 A. Oh, yes.

10:46:59 10 Q. Mr Taylor, help us. Just remind us, please, how regularly
11 were you in touch with President Kabbah of Sierra Leone during
12 1998?

13 A. I would put it - well, let's just say not just how
14 regularly I was in contact. I think how regularly were we in
10:47:23 15 contact, because Tejan Kabbah also called me on many occasions.
16 There was a need to call type of situation of course, if there
17 was something we would call. We did not have a regular schedule
18 to say well, we will call each other every week or every day, but
19 on an average if we had crisis we would intensify the number of
10:47:50 20 calls. If we didn't have any crisis there would not be any real
21 need except we just wanted to chat and say, "How are you doing?"
22 I would put it to crisis maybe we may talk about maybe once every
23 day, or no crisis maybe a week, after every week or two we might
24 communicate, but it was not a regular situation. It depended on
10:48:13 25 the situation at hand.

26 Q. And just remind us, in the second half of 1998 from about
27 July on how many occasions had you actually sat down physically
28 in the presence of Ahmad Tejan Kabbah and talked?

29 A. Well, we will have to look at the number of meetings,

1 because at each of those meetings there were side bars between he
2 and myself. So the ECOWAS meetings we would talk, the Mano River
3 Union meetings we would talk. So depending upon the number of
4 meetings held within that period we would be - don't forget he
10:48:55 5 came to Liberia and we talked. So I would say side bar talks
6 would be around three to four times that we actually sat face to
7 face. That's in Monrovia, we sat in Abuja, we sat together again
8 in Conakry. So I would say that's three, it could be as many as
9 four times face to face discussions.

10:49:20 10 Q. Secondly:

11 "Dispatched at least four high level presidential
12 delegations to Freetown to hold talks with President Kabbah and
13 Sierra Leonean officials within the past year."

14 Are you in a position to help us with those delegations,

10:49:38 15 Mr Taylor?

16 A. Well, I will help a little bit. I will help a little bit,
17 because these are low level delegates, security people going in
18 and talking. I remember my minister of national security Philip
19 Kamah went in. I sent a former foreign minister

10:50:01 20 D Musuleng-Cooper I think in once. If I am not mistaken the
21 foreign minister. But these are at the ministerial level. I
22 can't help with the exact times, but as I am stating here I am
23 sorry I don't have the physical record before me, but I think the
24 last one that is referred to in recent days that we talked about
10:50:22 25 was the dispatching of the minister of national security, General
26 Philip Kamah, but there are these ongoing talks all of the time.

27 Q. "Hosted President Kabbah in Monrovia for a one day summit
28 with US President Bill Clinton's special envoy for Africa
29 Reverend Jesse Jackson in attendance."

1 When had that taken place, Mr Taylor?

2 A. That is around July. Around July '98.

3 Q. "President Taylor visited Conakry, Guinea, twice in the
4 past six months and on both occasions held a one day summit with
10:51:20 5 President Tejan Kabbah and Lansana Conte at the second summit
6 last November Reverend Jesse Jackson was again in attendance."

7 Again, Mr Taylor, is that true?

8 A. Oh, yes, yes, that is true.

9 Q. So, Mr Taylor, let us just remind ourselves. We are in
10:51:40 10 1998, a key year so far as this indictment is concerned. You
11 appreciate that, don't you?

12 A. I do.

13 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, during that key year were you first of all
14 in constant contact with President Kabbah?

10:51:59 15 A. Constant contact. Constant contact.

16 Q. Secondly, when did the accusations of Liberian involvement
17 in Sierra Leone start?

18 A. That would be all the way back to 1991, if you look at it.

19 Q. But in 1998 was there a watershed point when such
10:52:32 20 accusations began in earnest?

21 A. Oh, '98, I would say after the - after the intervention by
22 ECOMOG and the so-called Liberians that were captured and killed,
23 and/or killed, I think that's when there was a massive escalation
24 in the accusations. I would put it to that level as a high point
10:53:14 25 in '98.

26 Q. And within those overall accusations, first of all the
27 accusation of 3,000 individuals being trained at Camp Naama, that
28 was investigated and dismissed, is that right?

29 A. That is correct.

1 Q. The accusation that there were 5,000 Liberians being
2 addressed by you, ready to go over the border, again that was
3 investigated and dismissed?

4 A. That is correct.

10:53:43 5 Q. The accusation that arms were going over the border into
6 Sierra Leone, that was investigated and some evidence was
7 forthcoming that small quantities were indeed going over the
8 border from ex-combatants?

9 A. That is correct.

10:54:02 10 Q. And that investigation had been conducted in part by the
11 United States embassy themselves?

12 A. That is correct.

13 Q. Accusations were also forthcoming about diamonds, yes?

14 A. Yes.

10:54:18 15 Q. And it was suggested that there was some evidence that such
16 a trade was going on?

17 A. That is correct.

18 Q. So that by the back end of 1998, that particularly
19 important year when you were making this statement, you were able
10:54:39 20 to state quite categorically what the United States' position was
21 and what steps you had taken over that year to remedy the
22 situation. Is that right, Mr Taylor?

23 A. That is correct.

24 Q. Let's go on:

10:54:56 25 "In conclusion the Government of Liberia recognises that
26 its security and stability are inextricably bound together with
27 those of the brotherly state of Sierra Leone. The government has
28 accordingly been most anxious for durable peace to be restored to
29 the Republic of Sierra Leone. Towards this goal, the following

1 national security policy measures are being pursued:

2 (1) The containment or limitation of the fighting to Sierra
3 Leone through the non-support of belligerent forces and the
4 stationing of Liberian security forces along the Sierra Leonean
10:55:45 5 border to prevent any spill over of the conflict onto our
6 territory."

7 Is that right, Mr Taylor?

8 A. That is right.

9 Q. Secondly:

10:55:59 10 "The advocacy of a peaceful approach to the resolution of
11 the conflict and the discouragement of the use of military force
12 against dissident forces."

13 Is that right, Mr Taylor?

14 A. That is correct.

10:56:10 15 Q. And what did you mean by that?

16 A. Well, what we were trying to do was to make sure we did not
17 take dialogue off the table and to discourage the view that this
18 had to be a purely military situation as opposed to what ECOWAS
19 had recommended.

10:56:37 20 Q. "The closure of our border with Sierra Leone and the
21 deployment of military and paramilitary forces to work with
22 ECOMOG to prevent spill over of the conflict.

23 (4) The appeal to the United Nations High Commission for
24 Refugees and the International Committee of the Red Cross to
10:57:02 25 prepare for emergency humanitarian service to Sierra Leoneans who
26 may come across the border into Liberia.

27 Liberia is cognisant of the role it is called upon to play
28 as an honest broker in the Sierra Leonean conflict and feels
29 confident that it can effectively perform this onerous task.

1 However, a crisis of confidence is being created by these
2 uncorroborated allegations thereby making this task more
3 difficult to achieve.

4 As a result of this situation, Liberia may be prepared to
10:57:44 5 recuse itself from the process until such time when the crisis of
6 confidence is resolved."

7 What did you mean by that, Mr Taylor?

8 A. By this time we are annoyed, we are frustrated and all I
9 said was, "Well, fine". Since we are working for peace, we are
10:58:14 10 on this now, it is the Committee of Six, and let me tell you what
11 I mean. After President Eyadema takes over at the last meeting
12 in November, Togo now becomes number six. It becomes the
13 Committee of Six.

14 I've said, "Look, I am doing my best. There are no
10:58:38 15 Liberians involved in Sierra Leone that I have sent. These
16 accusations just continue to abound, so what I'm going to do, I
17 am going to withdraw from the committee. Liberia will have
18 nothing else to do with this committee. We will just withdraw
19 from it and sit down. We will try as best as we can, lock our
10:58:58 20 borders and forget about it".

21 Of course ECOWAS, the OAU, everybody objected and they had
22 a special meeting and said, "No, we can't let you go, we need
23 you", but we are just frustrated, okay. This now has occurred to
24 us, you know, I just have to use this example, it is almost like
10:59:21 25 a cruise missile when you programme it, you give all the
26 coordinates and you launch it and it is flying 500 or a thousand
27 miles and it's going to go and hit the target, you can't call it
28 back and say please come back.

29 Apparently the goal had been set for Liberia and Taylor and

1 nothing mattered. We were just - I am being very honest. We
2 were just frustrated, we were tired, we had had enough of it. No
3 matter what we were doing we were meeting up with these
4 difficulties. We were at every meeting, we were making
11:00:00 5 proposals, we were doing our best and we just could not
6 understand and we said we are going to recuse ourselves, we are
7 going to withdraw and sit down and watch you. Of course they did
8 not let us do that, but it just shows our frustration.

9 Q. "Meanwhile the Committee of Five on Sierra Leone has
11:00:26 10 mandated Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso to establish the
11 key points of the communique. According to sources in the
12 Abidjan, this new development came about following a closed door
13 meeting of the committee, immediately after the joint communique
14 was issued."

11:00:43 15 Mr Taylor, when had that occurred?

16 A. Well, this is following that - I think it was a foreign
17 ministers' meeting when they met after hearing our decision to
18 recuse ourselves. You can say they jump right up and say, "No,
19 no, no, you Liberia, go and do that" and started mandating us.

11:01:12 20 All the members here now, for the information of the Court, La
21 Cote d'Ivoire is a member of that Committee of Five, Burkina Faso
22 now is on - it is not a member of the committee, but Burkina Faso
23 is now holding the chairmanship of the OAU and so right away an
24 official from that government is also now a part of the
11:01:37 25 delegation, but not an official member of the committee.

26 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, sometimes it is necessary to make obvious
27 points. Now, help us. In December of 1998, did you foresee that
28 you would be facing trial years later on these allegations?

29 A. Not in my wildest dream, no.

1 Q. So, help us. When you were saying way back then that you
2 had been mandated to establish contact with the junta/RUF forces
3 which you have told us about in evidence yesterday, who had
4 mandated you to do that, Mr Taylor?

11:02:29 5 A. Again, it is ECOWAS. ECOWAS through the Committee of Five,
6 and here we are. Here are the individuals that have been -
7 they've said it here.

8 Q. Yes. So, Mr Taylor, when you were meeting with
9 Sam Bockarie and representatives of the RUF in the last quarter
10 of 1998, why were you doing it?

11 A. I was doing it based on the mandate given to me by ECOWAS.

12 Q. And, Mr Taylor, during those contacts with Bockarie, were
13 you, as the President of Liberia, providing him with arms and
14 ammunition or any other kind of war-like support?

11:03:16 15 A. None whatsoever. None.

16 Q. Now, at or about this time in December 1998, Mr Taylor, did
17 you have cause to communicate with the American President?

18 A. Yes, I did. I wrote to him.

19 Q. What about?

11:04:00 20 A. I wrote a letter to then President Clinton.

21 Q. Why?

22 A. Again talking about the Sierra Leonean problem and the role
23 that we had played and the role that we would continue to play,
24 and also telling him that we would work with his special envoy,
11:04:20 25 Reverend Jackson, in line with what he has sent him to the region
26 to do.

27 Q. Now, we have noted that the policy statement you made was
28 dated 29 December 1998?

29 A. Yes.

1 Q. Let us now, please, look behind our divider 28? What do we
2 see behind that divider, Mr Taylor?

3 A. That is the letter dated December 30 that I wrote to
4 President Clinton.

11:05:19 5 Q. Help us: Why did you write this letter?

6 A. Again, we are dealing with Sierra Leone. In this letter we
7 talk about, in fact, some ideas that I have and that - some of
8 the things that are lodged in our minds as we go through these
9 discussions, and we speak to them about the presence of Reverend
10 Jackson and our determination to working along with our Mano
11 River Union colleagues.

12 Q. Let's have a look at the letter, shall we?

13 "Dear Mr President, I cannot fully emphasise the utility,
14 role and performance of your Excellency's Special Envoy, the
11:06:01 15 Reverend Jesse Lee Jackson, at our recent gathering in Conakry,
16 Guinea, of the Heads of State of the Mano River Union" - now, we
17 have looked at that meeting, haven't we?

18 A. Yes, we have.

19 Q. "...for consideration of the Sierra Leone crisis. That
11:06:18 20 meeting was characterised by frankness in our exchanges of views.
21 I seized the opportunity to offer my fellow colleagues and the
22 Honourable Jesse Jackson my sincere assurances that I would do
23 all I can in furtherance of our decision. I wish to extend those
24 assurances to you, Mr President.

11:06:40 25 My analysis and deep instinct, as regard the continuing
26 crisis of Sierra Leone, lead me in the direction of viewing this
27 national problem as a struggle for our consolidation of power -
28 its use, its emphasis, who exercises it and how that power is
29 used - by those associated with President Kabbah."

1 What do you mean by that, Mr Taylor?

2 A. Well, President Kabbah is in a very tight spot. You have
3 got competing interests and, you know, Presidents have this
4 problem all the time. You have this interest, you've got this
11:07:29 5 advice and this other person telling you what is proper. Here is
6 a man that was thrown out of the country through a coup d'etat.
7 He has been brought back to the country. His army is in
8 shambles. There is a part of the army that is loyal to him;
9 there is a part of the army now that is the junta, and you
11:07:52 10 wouldn't have to buy advice at this time. They come in all
11 shapes, all sizes and all colours.

12 And so I am trying to say here that there are these
13 competing interests around President Kabbah now that have him in
14 a position where he - it appears to be more about them and how
11:08:15 15 they exercise power than what they want, I mean, as he as
16 President. So I am just drawing this attention.

17 Q. "Doubtless you are aware that he is considered by all his
18 neighbouring colleagues of our sub-region as the legitimately
19 elected leader who has been pledged their categorical support.
11:08:42 20 Thus, I am of the view that President Kabbah can demonstrate
21 sagacity by entering into a firm and constructive partnership,
22 or, should he choose or otherwise, to negate the judgment, as
23 they relate to certain realities, and in the process, isolate and
24 endanger his government."

11:09:04 25 What do you mean by that?

26 A. Well, there are people telling him that, "Well, we are
27 going to have to fight it to the end". He has agreed with ECOWAS
28 that we should negotiate. There is the committee negotiating, we
29 are mandated to do certain things. We are on that side. The OAU

1 supports the view. But he is also getting advice that, "No,
2 don't worry about it. If you see some documents just pass
3 through a couple of days ago, let's build the CDF. Let's get
4 more people. Let's fight. Let's fight". So we are trying to
11:09:43 5 get him to dialogue and trying to get together a government of
6 national unity to unify the people, in a way, to keep his
7 government from being destroyed. Because this fight seemed to be
8 an ongoing fight, and using our own experience, we probably would
9 have still been fighting in Liberia if we did not sit down and
11:10:00 10 come to some agreement.

11 So I am just pushing here that he needs to demonstrate this
12 desire and ability to being able to call in these people and
13 begin a process of talking, as we have been mandated to do. We
14 have already been asked to begin to contact the junta and RUF
11:10:26 15 forces. The committee is about to work, so we just think that he
16 should help this particular process.

17 Q. Now, over the page, please:

18 "My worry, Mr President, is the consequences that could
19 follow if the adopted course of action is continued: There could
11:10:49 20 be substantial deflexion from his army to that of the RUF, a
21 development that may, in part, be the unwelcome intrusion of the
22 Nigerian army under the leadership of Mr Hinga Norman, the deputy
23 minister of defence of Sierra Leone, who is the de facto head of
24 that ministry."

11:11:10 25 What does all that mean?

26 A. Well, President Kabbah is minister of defence and
27 President. He holds those two portfolios. We all know that.
28 Now you have the Nigerian army. The commander of Nigerian forces
29 in Sierra Leone now becomes the commander of the Sierra Leone

1 army. That is a strange mixture. Some of us in the background
2 are calling for Khobe to sever his command of these ECOMOG forces
3 and really stay with the Sierra Leonean government. But in the
4 background, some heads are beginning to shake. Diplomatically -
11:11:58 5 I am not sure how many governments went through this pressure,
6 but diplomatically some of our big western friends are concerned
7 now about a Nigerian officer commanding the Sierra Leonean army.

8 So I am trying to really hint here that this strange fusing
9 of - fusion between the armed forces of Sierra Leone and the
11:12:25 10 armed forces of Nigeria under the command of General Khobe,
11 taking instructions through the minister of defence in Sierra
12 Leone, is just too complex and I am trying to suggest that there
13 could be a problem coming here.

14 Q. Why do you say there could be substantial deflexion from
11:12:45 15 his army to that of the RUF?

16 A. Well, you are talking about people that are nationalistic
17 and they now - remember, there has been fighting. Some of these
18 guys have been fighting the ECOMOG Nigerian forces, and all of a
19 sudden there is a Nigerian now coming to command them. Some of
11:13:08 20 them would not take it.

21 Q. "I am inclined to use my good offices as has been proposed,
22 but I would advance the first suggestion: A suspension of the
23 trials; that a solution be sought outside the reprisal of
24 killing; and that negotiations be commenced without further
11:13:30 25 delay".

26 Pause. "I am inclined to use my good offices as has been
27 proposed". What did you mean by that?

28 A. Well, let's go back to the Committee of Five. Remember, we
29 have been asked specifically to contact the RUF and the junta.

1 This is an authorisation from ECOWAS, so that is our good
2 offices, that it had been proposed that we do that. While going
3 about to enter these very crucial negotiations, don't forget we
4 are at a time that - what has happened? Foday Sankoh has been
11:14:10 5 found guilty and he has been sentenced to death by hanging, okay?
6 So we are now asked to go into these very intensive negotiations
7 with the junta and the RUF by ECOWAS and the OAU. We are
8 beginning to make these contacts.

9 Don't forget, we are lucky because Sam Bockarie has already
11:14:34 10 - we have already established contact with Bockarie. We have
11 given, okay, a residence, you know, a house in Monrovia. So that
12 contact is a very good start for everybody to move in, and all of
13 a sudden we look at a situation where we are about to have
14 hangings. So I am saying that, "Look, you cannot be talking
11:14:58 15 peace in the middle of the peace process where there is serious
16 combat going on, and at the same time you are trying people and
17 executing people. It doesn't make sense. There is a time for
18 everything under the heavens, and my whole idea is there will be
19 time for that. But let's get this particular process going,
11:15:21 20 let's get back to the negotiation table. Let's get the
21 disarmament going on. Let's get the demobilisation. How do you
22 tell a guy, "Put your gun down, come to the peace table," when
23 you are still killing them by trying and hanging? So this what I
24 am talking about here.

11:15:38 25 Q. Mr Taylor, again let me ask the obvious question. When you
26 were writing to President Clinton at the back end of December
27 1998, did you know that you would be facing trial a few years
28 later?

29 A. Not in my wildest dreams, no, no, no.

1 Q. Now, had you contacted Sam Bockarie as alleged because you
2 had your own devious intentions in Sierra Leone, or had you been
3 proposed as someone to use his good offices to make such contact?
4 Which is right?

11:16:18 5 A. I am already on the committee. I am already authorised.
6 It is even extended here, so the latter is correct. It is
7 already extended here, because first we are dealing with the - on
8 the Committee of Five we are dealing with what? The RUF. If you
9 look at this ECOWAS thing now, we have the junta RUF; so in other
11:16:41 10 words, they have expanded the scope of this particular
11 participation now to include the junta. So I am doing nothing
12 outside of that which I have been asked and mandated to do.
13 Nothing more; nothing less.

14 Q. And is this why you are writing to the President of the
11:17:02 15 United States in these terms on 30 December 1998, Mr Taylor?

16 A. That is perfectly correct.

17 Q. "It will please me immensely, Mr President, if an early
18 response from you is registered. With sentiments and my highest
19 consideration and esteem."

11:17:28 20 Now, did you get a response to that letter, Mr Taylor?

21 A. I got a response through Reverend Jackson, because he was
22 in and out. Some of these letters, once they go in, they are
23 seen and reviewed, and I spoke to Reverend Jackson afterward
24 about it.

11:17:50 25 MR GRIFFITHS: Now before I forget, can I ask, please, that
26 this letter be marked for identification. Letter from President
27 Taylor, as he then was, to President Bill Clinton dated 30
28 December 1998, MFI-64, please.

29 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked MFI-64 for

1 i d e n t i f i c a t i o n .

2 MR GRIFFITHS:

3 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, you have told us about accusations being
4 made about your involvement in Sierra Leone by, amongst others,
11:18:34 5 the Sierra Leonean government?

6 A. That is correct.

7 Q. Now, what about ECOMOG? Did ECOMOG make any such
8 accusations about you?

9 A. Well, the commander - the forces commander - and we don't
11:18:55 10 want to speak about it in terms of ECOMOG, because ECOMOG is a
11 West African force and for any formal accusation to come out, it
12 would have to be approved by the Heads of State. The forces
13 commander who had just left Liberia, General Timothy Shelpidi, in
14 a report to the foreign ministers' Committee of Five meeting,
11:19:23 15 mentioned the presence of Liberian fighters in Sierra Leone that
16 had been fighting alongside the junta forces.

17 Q. And you are saying it was General Shelpidi who made such a
18 comment, Mr Taylor?

19 A. That is correct.

11:19:39 20 Q. Have you seen a copy of that comment?

21 A. Yes, General Shelpidi - there is a compilation of ECOMOG
22 information. It is an information gathering publication that
23 they do similar to one that was done by the embassy of Nigeria
24 that we saw earlier, something similar to this. There was an
11:20:12 25 ECOMOG publication on a quarterly basis, and this was contained
26 in the last quarter report as they met the foreign ministers. I
27 have seen that report. It includes not just his - all of the
28 press releases from ECOMOG about the activities in Sierra Leone.
29 It is a compilation, as I say, about three months' work of the

1 Last quarter of 1998.

2 MR GRIFFITHS: Could the witness please be shown the
3 document behind divider 30:

4 Q. Is there the document you are talking about, Mr Taylor?

11:21:13 5 A. Yes, this is the compilation, yes.

6 Q. Let's go over to the second page and look at the contents

7 page. Item number 1 we see is, "ECOMOG gets new chief press

8 information Officer." Then 2, "ECOMOG force commander inspects

9 troops in Sierra Leone." Then we see, "Force commander ends

11:21:46 10 marathon appraisal tour of operation." Then 5, "Alleged airlift

11 of over 2,100 Liberians by ECOMOG." "ECOMOG and the Camp Johnson

12 Road incident." Going a bit further down: "14, block arms flow

13 to restore peace; 15, enforce embargo on Liberia to block arms

14 flow to rebels: General Shelpidi".

11:22:27 15 Do you see that, Mr Taylor?

16 A. Yes, I do.

17 Q. "SAJ Musa fatally wounded: May have died", yes?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Now, let's start, please, at page 8. Yes, Mr Taylor?

11:22:49 20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Now, this is a press release which goes back to October of

22 1998. Do you see that?

23 A. Yes, I do.

24 Q. Let's have a look at this document, please:

11:23:03 25 "The attention of the ECOMOG high command has been drawn to

26 reports in some Liberia media alleging the airlift of over a

27 hundred Liberians in a military aircraft to an unknown

28 destination. The high command wishes to say categorically that

29 there is no truth whatsoever in that story."

1 Pause there. Do you recall this media reporting of this
2 alleged event, Mr Taylor?

3 A. Yes, it was reported. In fact it was true.

4 Q. And did you have any intelligence reports to that effect?

11:23:39 5 A. Not just intelligence. This happened right out of the
6 airport. These are Liberians that were being flown in under the
7 Kamajor programme that were assisting the Kamajors. They were
8 those that could not - that they wanted people in, they flew
9 straight into Lungi airport.

11:24:03 10 Q. And who knew them in?

11 A. ECOMOG. ECOMOG.

12 Q. Now, you see that here is a denial that that took place.

13 What do you say about that, Mr Taylor?

14 A. Well, this is what you would find in military operations.
11:24:22 15 Denials by military people don't mean that it never happened;
16 they just don't want it published, that is all. So what he is
17 saying here is a typical - this is typical military denial.

18 Q. "Indeed, ECOMOG, being very conscious of the security and
19 immigration requirements in respect of movements of persons to
11:24:47 20 and from the country's airports, have never done anything to
21 contravene these laws, rules and regulations. We are therefore
22 baffled that an orchestrated campaign is being arranged to
23 blackmail ECOMOG in the course of carrying out legitimate duties
24 and exercise in assistance to countries in the sub-region.

11:25:08 25 Actually, what happened at the Roberts International
26 Airport on Wednesday, 1 October 1998, was that a military
27 aircraft airlifted a number of military equipment and troops of
28 ECOMOG to Sierra Leone.

29 A total of 12 civilians who were confirmed to be Sierra

1 Leonean refugees were, however, offered transportation assistance
2 in the aircraft. This was after verifying the papers confirming
3 that the civilians were duly cleared by the Ministry of National
4 Defence of Liberia as well as the Sierra Leonean government.

11:25:46 5 They were all subsequently referred to the airport immigration
6 and security personnel for further clearance before being allowed
7 into the aircraft, after they were cleared by Liberian security
8 led by one lady known as Martina."

9 Pause there. Is that true, Mr Taylor?

11:26:06 10 A. That is not true. If you look at that statement very
11 carefully, he says here in the little paragraph, number 3, he
12 says that "A number of military equipment and troops of ECOMOG".
13 Well, these are troops of ECOMOG. They have recruited them.
14 These are troops. These people are just playing games, and the
11:26:28 15 security personnel he is talking about here, I know very well, is
16 Martina Johnson, and she is the chief of security at the airport.
17 But she is a military personnel, and this type of information,
18 they were not authorised to publish it. This is just a press
19 report, which is true.

11:26:50 20 But no security personnel or security official of
21 government would have publicly spoken about this. We raise it in
22 private, but we would not talk about it publicly. Because don't
23 forget, I had complained about this type of behaviour before with
24 the late Abacha. We had talked about it, about these things
11:27:12 25 stopping, and remember the letter I wrote to him telling him that
26 I cannot assist in this thing because it would only exacerbate
27 the problem. So this is not something we would comment on
28 officially. The press picked it up, but it is true. They were
29 evacuating people from Robertsfield; Liberians that they had

1 recruited, okay, ex-combatants of ULIMO, and were flying them
2 straight into Lungi airport to join the combat from that
3 position.

11:27:44 4 Q. "It, however, became obvious that a mischievous plot was
5 in the making when the same woman who had cleared the civilians
6 brought out a camera and began to take photographs of the
7 aircraft prior to its final take-off. Indeed, such an action
8 constitutes a gross hostile action against any force and should
9 attract maximum action in retaliation or deterrence. But when
11:28:07 10 the soldiers who spotted Martina attempted to stop her, she
11 reacted violently. It took the intervention of officers around
12 to prevent her from being called to order as appropriate. This
13 was a necessary action of restraint on the part of ECOMOG to
14 maintain peace."

11:28:25 15 Was this incident reported to you, Mr Taylor?

16 A. Yes, I was fully aware. General Johnson was a very trained
17 officer, and she knew exactly that something was going on wrong.
18 And you can see here she took pictures that this particular
19 information reached us. But from a government perspective, we
11:28:48 20 did not go public with it.

21 Q. "It is, therefore, most unfortunate that responsible
22 organisations and respected media outlets allowed their fora to
23 be used for a desperate campaign to discredit ECOMOG, despite our
24 tolerance and sacrifice for the overall security of Liberia.
11:29:15 25 This" - I am missing a few words.

26 A. "Is unfair."

27 Q. "This is unfair. For instance, if the reporters in
28 question had endeavoured to be sincere and professional, they
29 would have discovered that the claim of the aircraft in question

1 carrying over 100 civilians, in addition to vehicles, hardware,
2 and military personnel on board, were simply impossible. It is
3 noteworthy" --

11:29:46 4 PRESIDING JUDGE: I am sorry to interrupt. It may not be a
5 good time to knock off, but we have run - completely run out of
6 tape, Mr Griffiths.

7 MR GRIFFITHS: Not at all.

8 PRESIDING JUDGE: So we will take the short adjournment and
9 resume at 12 o'clock.

11:29:59 10 [Break taken at 11.30 a.m.]

11 [Upon resuming at 12.00 p.m.]

12 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, continue, please, Mr Griffiths.

13 MR GRIFFITHS: May it please your Honours:

14 Q. Mr Taylor, before the short adjournment we were looking at
12:02:49 15 a press release issued by ECOMOG headquarters in Monrovia on 2
16 October 1998, yes?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And we were at page 9 in that document, yes?

19 A. Yes.

12:03:16 20 Q. Let's pick it up, please, at the second paragraph on that
21 page:

22 "It is noteworthy, for instance, that the assistance to
23 Sierra Leonean refugees is not unusual. It will be recalled that
24 the Nigerian government under the auspices of ECOWAS had
12:03:33 25 similarly financed the shipment of Liberian refugees back home on
26 a number of occasions after the civil war. One then wonders the
27 motive of the current blackmail if is not simply mischief.

28 It will therefore be most unfortunate for organisations and
29 media outfits otherwise well respected to allow their platform to

1 be used for playing the Liberian authorities against ECOMOG or
2 ECOWAS initiatives. So far we in ECOMOG have exercised due
3 restraint and would like our Liberian brothers and sisters to be
4 equally discerning as to shun desperate mischief makers who are
12:04:14 5 opposed to peace. We are peace makers in every sense of the
6 word.

7 We will remain available for clarifications to genuine and
8 well intentioned peace lovers in this society."

9 And it's signed by Major AC Okukolade, the chief military
12:04:35 10 press information officer.

11 Now, Mr Taylor, was there evidence that ECOMOG were
12 involved in airlifting Liberians into Sierra Leone?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. So when later reports came that you had sent Liberians to
12:04:55 15 Sierra Leone, how did you feel about that accusation?

16 A. Terrible. I knew that it was not true, but amongst the
17 leadership we knew what was going on because as I remembered - as
18 you remember we had already dealt with this before with the late
19 President. So we just - we did not comment officially on what
12:05:24 20 this major had said, because I figured that for the general
21 public he was trying to deal with the reaction of the general
22 public as opposed to trying to get a reaction from the government
23 because we would not have responded to this because the
24 accusation did not come from government. It came from the press.

12:05:45 25 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, help us with this. Underlying this letter
26 there appears to be some kind of animus between ECOMOG and the
27 media and people of Liberia. Was that the case?

28 A. Yes, yes. During the crisis there became a point where
29 ECOMOG had to be firm and they were firm on many occasions. The

1 general public had grown tired with ECOMOG, quite frankly, and
2 the behaviour of some of the personnel during the period leading
3 into the elections. Like I said, they had to be rough and firm
4 on so many occasions and quite frankly they did a good job, but
12:06:49 5 there were some people that really, really felt that in so many
6 instances they were heavy handed. One can say, well, they had to
7 do that to bring about the type of stability that they brought
8 about, but the civilians did not like it and reacted from time to
9 time.

12:07:13 10 Q. Now let us look at another document within this divider,
11 Mr Taylor. Can we go back to page 10, please.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Now this is an account of ECOMOG's role in the Camp Johnson
14 Road incident which we discussed earlier, yes?

12:07:36 15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And we're still looking at that tension which I just asked
17 you about between ECOMOG and the Liberian government and
18 community. Now, let us look at this document:

19 "Gentlemen of the press, you may recall that the Liberian
12:07:58 20 government security forces had a clash with some residents of
21 Camp Johnson Road from the evening of 18 September 1998 to Sunday
22 19 September 1998. This incident has attracted a lot of reports,
23 comments and analysis by various media organisations and
24 individuals. While the episode lasted the ECOMOG high command
12:08:21 25 carefully ensured that the force did not play any role that could
26 jeopardise its credibility as a peacekeeping mission. We are
27 satisfied that our objective of strict adherence to the
28 principles of neutrality and non-involvement in the conflict
29 which lasted several hours was achieved.

1 It is however unfortunate that in spite of our dignified
2 stance in the whole issue, certain officials and media reports
3 have constantly sought to drag ECOMOG into the controversy
4 surrounding the shooting incident. It is for this reason that we
12:09:02 5 find it necessary to clear the air once and for all. We believe
6 that this gesture will afford sincere observers of the Liberian
7 situation an opportunity to be objectively informed.
8 Subsequently we shall be trusting on your good sense of judgment
9 and fairness as responsible partners in the search for peace to
12:09:23 10 properly utilise this forum to ensure the best dissemination of
11 correct information on the situation of events as it relates to
12 ECOMOG and the Camp Johnson Road incident.

13 The high command wishes to state that ECOMOG took no part
14 whatsoever in the fighting that ensued at Camp Johnson Road on 18
12:09:46 15 September 1998 or thereafter. Actually, all the ECOMOG troops
16 deployed at security checkpoints in Camp Johnson Road area were
17 withdrawn immediately the fighting broke out around 6 p.m. on 18
18 September."

19 Let's pause there, Mr Taylor. Did ECOMOG forces in
12:10:09 20 Monrovia at this time have security responsibilities?

21 A. Yes. They had security responsibilities, yes.

22 Q. So help us, when they withdrew immediately as suggested
23 here, what consequence did it have?

24 A. Well, at the time of the withdrawal by ECOMOG, in actual
12:10:42 25 consequence it just provided an avenue for the government forces
26 to carry on their operation really. For us it didn't really mean
27 anything negative for us.

28 Q. "This withdrawal took place as soon as the source, purpose,
29 and possible outcome of the clash became clear. Since then

1 ECOMOG has restricted its operation to the traditional role of
2 manning established checkpoints and protecting certain vital and
3 vulnerable points known to government. Obvious as this approach
4 by ECOMOG is, it is curious that certain officials and media
12:11:26 5 representatives have ignored this noble stance. Rather they have
6 continuously sought, in a calculated manner, to create the
7 impression that ECOMOG was involved in the complications that
8 greeted the whole episode. The high command would like to cite
9 instances of this unfair campaign of calumny.

12:11:54 10 One instance was the accusation leveled against the force
11 in an article captioned 'The Camp Johnson Road saga, chronology
12 of events of the Roosevelt Johnson crisis with the Constitutional
13 Government of Liberia', written by one Jackson Jones in the
14 September 28, 1998 issue of the Daily Times newspaper. Under the
12:12:16 15 subtitle 'Government's Swift Response,' the writer gave the
16 impression that some sort of connections existed between
17 Roosevelt Johnson, ECOMOG and the American embassy, and that the
18 three maintained communication during the shoot-out."

19 Mr Taylor, did you have any intelligence to suggest a
12:12:37 20 connection between Roosevelt Johnson, ECOMOG and the American
21 embassy?

22 A. Yes, they were in contact.

23 Q. "The writer also asserted that an ECOMOG Mowag" - I don't
24 know what that is. Do you know what that is, Mr Taylor?

12:12:59 25 A. Yes.

26 Q. What is it?

27 A. It's something like an armed personnel vehicle.

28 Q. Right. "...was seen delivering a consignment of arms and
29 ammunition to Roosevelt Johnson in exchange for four Nigerian

1 ECOMOG bodyguards whom Johnson had disarmed and taken hostage
2 when his forces ran out of ammunition."

3 Did you learn about that, Mr Taylor?

4 A. Yes, we learned about - look, this is a whole episode of
12:13:27 5 activities. Don't forget, who brings Johnson back into the
6 capital? The very - the United States government does not have
7 any helicopters in Liberia, okay? ECOMOG helicopters
8 surreptitiously flew him back into the capital. As far as
9 communication is concerned, the walkie-talkies, these are small
12:13:52 10 hand-held radios being used by Johnson at the time were also
11 being used by embassy officials that were outside of the embassy.
12 Remember we explained that certain embassy officials were outside
13 and got caught up in this exchange of fire. They were in
14 communication.

12:14:13 15 But what ECOMOG did at this particular time, it was a
16 carefully crafted move. The withdrawal of ECOMOG from these city
17 points were intended to give Johnson forces a free move. And at
18 the end of the day had he succeeded they would have said: Well,
19 we were not a part of it, we withdrew off the streets. It was
12:14:37 20 just a ploy. It was a mere ploy. They were a part of it, you
21 understand me? And we had said at that particular time that if
22 ECOMOG had gotten herself involved, she would have had to deal
23 with our forces too. So let's remind the Court at this time
24 there's a reduction of ECOMOG forces now. There is that gradual
12:15:05 25 movement into Sierra Leone. So they are not in full strength in
26 Monrovia, so they are not also prepared to take any serious
27 chances with the rest of the government forces, because in actual
28 fact - let's be very frank. There are arms hidden in Monrovia,
29 we talked about, in some of these areas. Government forces have

1 also, in line with ECOMOG in some of the cordon and search
2 operations, found arms - you know, some caches of arms at homes.
3 There were constant cordon and search operations in Monrovia. So
4 in that area security forces have a few arms that they can use
12:15:53 5 themselves.

6 Q. Going back: "In the first place, Roosevelt Johnson did not
7 have any ECOMOG bodyguards assigned to him since his return to
8 Monrovia. The only ECOMOG troops present in Camp Johnson Road
9 area were those deployed at security checkpoints. Liberians,
12:16:07 10 and, indeed, all knowledgeable observers of the situation in
11 Monrovia, would appreciate why such a deployment was necessary.

12 Besides, it is noteworthy that the ECOMOG force in Liberia
13 is composed of highly professional Nigerian and Ghanaian military
14 officers who appreciate the importance of decency in the
12:16:31 15 maintenance of law and order. If the attempt to give a
16 chronology of events of the night of 18/19 September had
17 endeavoured to apply some rational reasoning in analysis, the
18 writers would have realised that the easy picture painted of
19 ECOMOG resupplying Roosevelt Johnson with arms and ammunition on
12:16:55 20 the night of 18 September could not have gone without casualties
21 to ECOMOG in the face of the heavy weapons used by the government
22 security forces at Camp Johnson Road. The possibility of the
23 claim as presented in that report is therefore clearly
24 unthinkable. It is all false.

12:17:17 25 Another instance of the smear campaign embarked upon in the
26 aftermath of the Camp Johnson Road shoot-out was the report aired
27 by a number of media organisations on 2 October 1998 accusing
28 ECOMOG of airlifting out of the country over 100 Liberian
29 citizens to an unknown destination. ECOMOG has already

1 unequivocally refuted this misinformation, and it is hoped that
2 our point is clear. There was no airlift of Liberian citizens as
3 claimed. Only 12 Sierra Leonean refugees, duly cleared by
4 appropriate government agencies, were offered humanitarian
12:18:05 5 transportation assistance on 1 October 1998 from the Roberts
6 International Airport to Freetown."

7 Now, we've dealt with that in the previous article,
8 Mr Taylor.

9 A. Yes, we have.

12:18:16 10 Q. "The third issue is the calculated twist of fact on Friday,
11 2 October 1998, when a number of Liberian media organisations
12 carried a story alleging the disappearance of a number of people
13 who were taken to ECOMOG base after a joint operation to arrest
14 some suspected loyalists of Roosevelt Johnson. Indeed, the
12:18:43 15 falsehood contained in that story has stunned not only the ECOMOG
16 high command, but also the Liberian defence ministry officials
17 who are aware of the true situation of things.

18 Having agreed with the defence ministry officials on the
19 need to put the record straight in the interest of proper public
12:19:06 20 information, the ECOMOG high command is constrained to reaffirm
21 that the story in question is indeed not true. The explanation
22 is deemed necessary more so as no refusal seem to be forthcoming
23 from other official sources as agreed. Indeed, it is most
24 unfortunate that such information was attributed to a highly
12:19:30 25 placed government official, Mr Philipbert Brown, a defence
26 spokesman."

27 Mr Taylor, was there such a spokesman?

28 A. Yes, there was.

29 Q. "The defence minister Mr Daniel Chea, who directed the

1 search and the Deputy Defence Minister For Operations, Major
2 General Austin D Clark, who coordinated the operation, are the
3 most relevant personalities who can confirm what actually took
4 place. To say the least, it is most unfortunate that a well
12:20:05 5 intentioned and duly coordinated ECOMOG assistance in
6 facilitating peace in Monrovia after the recent Camp Johnson Road
7 fighting is being misrepresented. The truth therefore has to be
8 narrated in detail."

9 Before we go on to this account, Mr Taylor, what's this
12:20:24 10 incident they're talking about here?

11 A. I'm not sure what Shelpidi is talking about really in the
12 press reports, because there were many, and the press were
13 thinking that in fact Philbert Johnson - Philbert I know very
14 well. He's a journalist - Philbert Brown, I mean. He's a
12:20:49 15 journalist. So I'm not too sure about this specific thing, but
16 it has to be around this movement of people.

17 Q. Let's read on and see:

18 "On Monday, 21 September 1998, Liberian defence ministry
19 officials informed ECOMOG that a number of armed men, alleged to
12:21:06 20 be supporters of Roosevelt Johnson, were hiding in a cave behind
21 the American embassy. They requested ECOMOG assistance to arrest
22 the suspects or flush them out. A team of senior ECOMOG and
23 Liberian security personnel were subsequently constituted to
24 carry out the exercise. At the end of the operation, it was
12:21:29 25 discovered that the information was false after all; no single
26 individual was found at the location after a thorough search.

27 It is therefore amazing to read in the media after a few
28 days that some people were arrested and taken to ECOMOG base
29 after the operation and that whatever happened to the suspects or

1 arrested persons thereafter was unknown. Really one should
2 wonder which operation the reporters are referring to."

3 Does this ring a bell now, Mr Taylor?

4 A. Yes, it does. They did arrest people, but they were not
12:22:06 5 military people. These were just individuals that were just
6 seeking a place to sleep and what we call the regular boys around
7 town, and the description here of the cave behind the American
8 embassy, that is just a general expression. But this is far
9 away, because the American embassy is secured with fences. So
12:22:36 10 there is no cave there, but some great distance.

11 Q. "Really one should wonder which operation the reporters are
12 referring to. Certainly it has absolutely nothing to do with
13 ECOMOG. The force ECOMOG was not party to any arrest as claimed,
14 neither was any suspect taken to ECOMOG base as insinuated.

12:22:59 15 Indeed, we consider this report as another feature of the
16 media campaign apparently intended to drag ECOMOG and its
17 reputation as a peacekeeper into the slanted analysis or report
18 on the unfortunate Camp Johnson Road incident and killings. We
19 would, however, advise those who are desperate to offer
12:23:18 20 explanation or seek scapegoats for the happenings during and
21 after the incident in Monrovia to look elsewhere for their alibi
22 and leave ECOMOG out of it all. This counsel is necessary to
23 save them from being embarrassed by the wrong assumption that
24 ECOMOG is ignorant of actual happenings around.

12:23:41 25 ECOMOG high command wishes to state that as a peacekeeping
26 force, it is well aware of, and always guided by, the need for
27 neutrality and straightforwardness in all its dealings. ECOMOG
28 has done everything possible over the years to carry out its role
29 in the interest of the government and the people of Liberia and

1 will continue to maintain peace and security in line with
2 ECOWAS's mandate. While it is sad that despite all the careful
3 efforts of this high command ECOMOG is becoming a target of
4 slander and orchestrated defamation, we can still assure all
12:24:19 5 peace lovers that we are undaunted. Indeed, we are not bothered
6 because the truth is in our favour.

7 The forgoing situation notwithstanding, ECOMOG wishes to
8 reiterate our partnership with sincere peace lovers in Liberia.
9 The media should please save this society from rumour and
12:24:41 10 mischief makers in order to maintain the hard earned peace in
11 Liberia."

12 And it's signed, "Shelpidi, Major General Force Commander,"
13 and dated October 1998.

14 Now, Mr Taylor, we've mentioned your relationship with this
12:24:55 15 general before, haven't we?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. This is the general who you threw out of your office?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And complained about to the Nigerian President?

12:25:04 20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And he was later moved, you told us?

22 A. That is correct.

23 Q. To where?

24 A. Sierra Leone.

12:25:10 25 Q. So this is October 1998, yes?

26 A. Yes.

27 Q. Let's move on, please, to page 23. Now, on page 23 we see
28 a further press release dated 9 December 1998, don't we,

29 Mr Taylor?

1 A. That's correct.

2 Q. And we see it's the Military Press Information Office
3 Headquarters, ECOMOG, Cockerill North, Wilkinson Road, in
4 Freetown, Sierra Leone, yes?

12:25:56 5 A. Yes.

6 Q. And it's dated 9 December 1998. Now let's look at this
7 document:

8 "The ECOMOG high command has been advised to do anything
9 possible to block the flow of arms into the hands of rebels as a
10 way of restoring total peace and security to Sierra Leone.

11 This charge was given by an official of the United Nations
12 Security Council, and Sweden's permanent representative in the
13 United Nations. Ambassador Hans Dahlgren" - now remember us
14 mentioning this visit yesterday, Mr Taylor?

12:26:38 15 A. Yes, I do.

16 Q. And the Swedish ambassador came in due course to Monrovia,
17 did he not?

18 A. Yes, he did.

19 Q. "...when exchanging views with the ECOMOG force commander,
12:26:47 20 Major General Timothy Shelpidi, during a courtesy visit to ECOMOG
21 headquarters at Cockerill, Freetown, yesterday."

22 So by December Shelpidi's in Freetown?

23 A. Oh, yes.

24 Q. "Ambassador Dahlgren said by virtue of his experience on
12:27:08 25 his assignment as chairman of the Security Council's sanctions
26 committee on Sierra Leone, particularly while overseeing the
27 sanctions imposed on the junta regime, he vividly recalls the
28 efficiency of ECOMOG by the professional way it enforced the
29 embargoes imposed on the illegal regime. He declared that the

1 subsequent success of ECOMOG in Sierra Leone was therefore not
2 surprising considering its high rating in competence.

3 The ambassador said the United Nations was particularly
4 anxious to see total peace restored in Sierra Leone, hence his
12:27:43 5 visit to access the situation.

6 Responding, General Shelpidi thanked the envoy for his
7 interest in the activities of ECOMOG and the need for peace in
8 Sierra Leone. He assured him that as far as ECOMOG was concerned
9 it has done everything within its powers to block arms reaching
12:28:02 10 the rebels.

11 He however enjoined the envoy to ensure the international
12 community prevails on neighbouring countries who continue to aid
13 the rebels with weapons and logistics as has been proved by
14 ECOMOG discoveries in several occasions. He said the borders
12:28:27 15 remain the only possible channel of illegal weapons and the
16 situation is compounded by the peculiar porous nature of African
17 borders and ineffective enforcement of arms embargo on certain
18 countries in the said region.

19 We therefore urge the envoy to ensure that the
12:28:44 20 international communities are encouraged to be more decisive in
21 sanctioning suspected arms trafficking governments.

22 ECOMOG on its part would continue to ensure that any known
23 access of arms into Sierra Leone is effectively blocked.

24 He went on to brief the envoy on the activities of ECOMOG
12:29:04 25 and its constraints as well as plans for monitoring and
26 implementing peace agreements in the sub-region.

27 The United Nations's envoy who was received by officers of
28 the ECOMOG high command also paid a courtesy call on the chief of
29 defence staff, Brigadier General Maxwell Mitikishe Khobe. He was

1 accompanied by UN officials in Sierra Leone".

2 And we see it's signed by Major AC Okukolade, chief
3 military press information officer, yes, Mr Taylor?

4 A. Yes.

12:29:48 5 Q. Now on the same date, going to the next page, we see
6 another press release, do we not?

7 A. Yes, we do.

8 Q. The same date on the same topic, yes?

9 A. Yes.

12:30:18 10 Q. Now, let's have a look at this document:

11 "The United Nations have been called upon to ensure a
12 stricter enforcement of existing arms embargo and possibly impose
13 fresh sanctions on Liberia as a way of stopping the flow of
14 illegal arms to the rebel forces in Sierra Leone."

12:30:49 15 Now, Mr Taylor, pausing there, were you aware of such a
16 request in December 1998?

17 A. No, not directly. If you see here, we see who is making
18 the request. It's an ECOMOG general. This is not anything that
19 diplomatically would be considered serious in a discussion.

12:31:18 20 Shelpidi is saying this and this is a part I guess of their own
21 propaganda machinery, but at an official level this would not be
22 taken seriously.

23 Q. And we see it continues:

24 "This call was made in Freetown recently by the ECOMOG
12:31:33 25 force commander, Major General Timothy Shelpidi, while exchanging
26 views with an official of the Security Council and Swedish
27 representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Hans Dahlgren,
28 who was at the ECOMOG headquarters on a courtesy call.

29 General Shelpidi wondered why it was possible, in spite of

1 the existing United Nations arms embargo on Liberia, for
2 President Charles Taylor's forces to possess the new weapons they
3 now use and also supply the rebels fighting in Sierra Leone."

4 Mr Taylor, pause there. Did you have access to new weapons
12:32:15 5 in 1998?

6 A. None. Well, let's go back. Where is Shelpidi coming from?
7 He's coming from Monrovia. Shelpidi is there as forces commander
8 for most of 1998. Did Shelpidi, who occupied the airport, see
9 any weapons coming in? No. Shelpidi's knows very, very well.

12:32:40 10 This is why I'm saying from his level I can see where he's
11 getting from - this Shelpidi I know he's annoyed, but where - if
12 Shelpidi, knowing that ECOMOG is in Liberia where he was forces
13 commander, he should have been able to say, "Well, weapons are
14 coming into Liberia. We saw this shipment", or, "We saw that
12:33:01 15 shipment."

16 You know, I wouldn't pay too much attention to this press
17 officer and what he is saying here to Ambassador Dahlgren,
18 because if Shelpidi had any concrete information and he calls
19 himself a trained soldier and he's the commander of ECOMOG, this
12:33:20 20 information would have gone not even to the President of Nigeria.

21 As ECOMOG forces commander you are directly under the
22 command at the time of the chairman. Whoever is the chairman of
23 ECOWAS is your commander-in-chief, not your host government, and
24 so at this particular time the new President of ECOWAS is already
12:33:47 25 President Gnassingbe Eyadema and such information would have gone
26 to Eyadema. But if you read from the last document you just went
27 through, where Shelpidi's own press release and the conclusion
28 that he made, you can see that Shelpidi really doesn't understand
29 his mission and quite frankly he doesn't stay in Sierra Leone

1 very long either.

2 This is a problem. When forces are in your country and
3 speaking in the language that Shelpidi is speaking about, this
4 was all improper. There was no way a forces commander, or a
12:34:26 5 military general, has any authority to issue any statement
6 against a nation, especially another nation that is a part of the
7 authority. I really question his own discipline at the time.
8 That's why he didn't even stay in Sierra Leone very long. He had
9 no right to make such pronouncements that had not been sanctioned
12:34:51 10 by ECOWAS.

11 Q. But it goes on:

12 "He declared that unless the international community deals
13 decisively with President Charles Taylor, the rebels will
14 continue to get more arms to commit mayhem and encouragement to
12:35:10 15 prolong the war in Sierra Leone for some time to come."

16 There he is naming you directly, Mr Taylor.

17 A. That's what I'm saying. This is a very undisciplined
18 general, so to speak, and he is talking pure nonsense here
19 because this was nothing that - what, a press release from a
12:35:29 20 major saying what Shelpidi is saying. I can see why he didn't
21 stay in either of those positions very long.

22 Q. "General Shelpidi said it has been proved beyond all doubt
23 in several instances that Liberia remains the only possible
24 supply route and source of all illegal arms in Sierra Leone,
12:35:48 25 urging the United Nations not to take President Charles Taylor's
26 denials seriously. He said that it is evident that the ordinary
27 Liberians are not pleased with the belligerent posture of their
28 government but are helpless in checking their leaders because of
29 the peculiar temperament they often display in dealing with any

1 dissenting opinion."

2 Mr Taylor, had you adopted a belligerent posture towards
3 Sierra Leone?

12:36:30

4 A. No, not at all, but I think he may be referring to a
5 belligerent posturing internally in Liberia, which is not the
6 case in either circumstances. And he, Shelpidi, is supposed to
7 know better, that's why in most cases a good general is almost a
8 good politician, but I don't think he's either of them.

12:36:49

9 Q. "On the possibility of deploying ECOMOG troops for direct
10 policing of Liberia-Sierra Leone border, General Shelpidi said
11 the human and material resources required for realistic and
12 effective monitoring could be very enormous, more so in view of
13 the porosity of borders in Africa. He said the international
14 community could still do a lot to help the situation by
15 prevailing on Liberian authorities.

12:37:09

16 Briefing the United Nations envoy on the activities of
17 ECOMOG generally, the force commander informed him that three of
18 the participating country's contingents, namely Nigeria, Ghana
19 and Guinea, are currently deployed in Liberia and Sierra Leone.
12:37:32 20 He said the force is also preparing for Guinea-Bissau as they are
21 only awaiting the outcome of the report he has already submitted
22 to ECOWAS secretariat on the plans for operations in that
23 country.

12:37:54

24 The major problem now facing ECOMOG according to General
25 Shelpidi is the issue of insufficient troops as many countries
26 that promised contributing forces are yet to fulfil despite
27 repeated assurances from them. This situation is being
28 compounded by the inadequacy of logistics which is one of the
29 problems discouraging some of the willing countries from

1 performing.

2 Although there have been encouraging promises of support
3 from the international community, not such has been forthcoming
4 despite repeated reminders especially within the last five
12:38:31 5 months. He noted that since logistics is very crucial for any
6 meaningful operation, the pledges made by donor countries has
7 become indispensable and needs to be redeemed in order to enhance
8 the performance of ECOMOG.

9 Continuing, General Shelpidi said ECOMOG has been
12:38:53 10 cooperating with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees
11 and occasionally contributing its ideas and experience in support
12 of the activities of the organisation.

13 He however observed that there is a need to foster better
14 spirit of understanding between the non-government organisations,
12:39:15 15 especially the International Committee of the Red Cross and
16 ECOMOG, saying they could do better by being more transparent and
17 removing the grounds for suspicion on activities in relation to
18 the rebels."

19 Now, Mr Taylor, what do you say about this allegation being
12:39:53 20 made in December by General Shelpidi?

21 A. Well, I'm not even sure if this is - it sounds like an
22 allegation. I'd just say this is pure nonsense that Shelpidi is
23 talking about. He's just coming from Liberia. If anybody wants
24 to make an allegation in his position as forces commander, it
12:40:15 25 would not be done through a press release. What the general
26 would do would state specifically that it may be recalled on this
27 date and this time arms came into Liberia, or we saw it, we
28 registered it, we did - this general, he's talking about arms
29 going on - going across the border, which no one is prepared to

1 say that small amount of arms did not go across that border. But
2 the official nature of those arms is what my government is saying
3 we didn't have the arms to even go after, I mean, the Roosevelt
4 Johnson forces.

12:40:56 5 In fact what happened, some of the arms we used to go after
6 Roosevelt Johnson forces were the very arms that had been given
7 to the security unit assigned with government after my election
8 as President. ECOMOG gave us a certain amount of arms for some
9 internal security purposes. We didn't even have the full means
12:41:16 10 to - if Roosevelt Johnson forces had really been strong, they
11 would have overrun the government because here is ECOMOG pulling
12 out. So where the frustration really is is this: There are arms
13 going across the border. ULIMO is selling arms, people that bury
14 their arms during the disarmament process, and so on. So there
12:41:39 15 is that frustration, and it sticks in everybody's mind, and I
16 guess if I were in his position or in Kabbah's position, I
17 probably would believe the same thing.

18 The arms coming across the border, even though they know we
19 do not have arms - and he doesn't say here that we are importing
12:41:54 20 arms that he is seeing. But how are these arms getting across
21 there? Of course people are selling little amounts that they're
22 digging up and selling across the border. And it's frustrating
23 for everybody, and I guess this is more like what he's referring
24 to.

12:42:08 25 And then again, there is another part of this that I see.
26 There is a purpose also behind this. You have the United Nations
27 sending Ambassador Dahlgren down. They need logistical and other
28 support. You have to try to pep it up a little bit to talk about
29 the problems. But let me just make it clear. These matters, if

1 there was anything that was substantial - or that had been
2 substantiated, I am sure that it would have been discussed at the
3 Heads of State level and I would have been confronted. But this
4 press release, quite frankly, I would just say this is good old
12:42:56 5 Timothy Shelpidi with some of his arrogance that got him thrown
6 out of my office, got him thrown out of Liberia, and got him out
7 of Sierra Leone in the shortest possible time. That's all I can
8 say about this.

9 Q. So let's just summarise the situation then, shall we. We
12:43:16 10 have you making a speech on 29 December in which you make
11 reference to the Assistant Secretary of State Huddleston's
12 comments and also Colonel Dempsey's comments, and you have at the
13 beginning of the month this comment by General Shelpidi. Is that
14 right, Mr Taylor?

12:43:40 15 A. That is right.

16 Q. Now, did any of your colleagues on ECOWAS bring you to task
17 following this statement by General Shelpidi?

18 A. None whatsoever. Nobody asked me whatsoever. Remember,
19 these had come before, and let me just remind the Court the
12:43:59 20 statement that - the speech that I made on 29 December, is it,
21 where I suggested I'm prepared to recuse myself. You have to
22 remember that's a speech at the end of the month, but that is
23 something that has occurred before that I'm just reporting on.
24 If there had been any of these - these things were just going on
12:44:26 25 day by day, week by week, and this is part of the frustration
26 where - I can remember in that meeting, I think it's either in
27 October or - late October or early November - I think late
28 October at the last meeting at ECOWAS, actually, that's where I
29 said, "Look, this is it, guys. I'm out of it. I don't want to

1 have anything to do with this any more. I want to get off this
2 committee." And everybody said, "No, we cannot let you do this."
3 That's what I'm talking about in my speech. But what Shelpidi is
4 talking about never reached the level of the Heads of State, no.

12:45:04 5 Q. Now, there are two other documents I'd like us to look at
6 within this tab. The next document is over the page, and it's
7 dated 24 December 1998?

8 A. Excuse me, Mr President?

9 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, Mr Taylor. I think Mr Taylor wants
12:45:24 10 to say something.

11 THE WITNESS: Excuse me, but I'm sorry, I made a little
12 error. I'd like to go to the bathroom, please.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE: That's quite all right. Can Mr Taylor be
14 escorted out of the Court, please.

12:45:47 15 THE WITNESS: I drank too much tea.

16 I apologise for the break, your Honour.

17 PRESIDING JUDGE: That's quite all right, Mr Taylor. Go
18 ahead, please, Mr Griffiths.

19 MR GRIFFITHS:

12:47:50 20 Q. Mr Taylor, can we go over the page and have a look just at
21 two more documents behind this divider, please. Just for
22 information purposes, overleaf at page 28 we see a news flash
23 regarding the death of SAJ Musa, don't we?

24 A. Yes, we do.

12:48:08 25 Q. And we see it's dated 24 December '98, so Christmas Eve?

26 A. Yes.

27 Q. "Dependable sources have given indication that RUF
28 commander SAJ Musa was fatally wounded yesterday and may have
29 died in the early hours of today.

1 This followed a fierce battle between ECOMOG and AFRC/RUF
2 rebel forces under his command in the course of desperate attempt
3 to attack Benguema military training centre near Freetown.

4 It is indicated that he might have died in the early hours
12:48:43 5 of today, 24 December 1998, from the head wounds he sustained in
6 the attack.

7 In another development, ECOMOG has averted an attempt by
8 rebel forces to infiltrate Freetown with weapons.

9 This was achieved yesterday night when, acting on a tip-off
12:49:04 10 from some patriotic citizens, ECOMOG soldiers succeeded in
11 intercepting that was discharging arms and ammunitions near Cape
12 Sierra Hotel, Freetown.

13 The arms have been seized by ECOMOG, and the captain of the
14 boat is currently being interrogated."

12:49:30 15 So in intercepting a boat that was discharging arms and
16 ammunition near Freetown.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And the final document --

19 A. But there is something wrong with this document. You see,
12:49:41 20 we have evidence led in this Court that it's also different from
21 his account, okay, about the so-called death of SAJ Musa.
22 Totally different from his account.

23 Q. Now, the final document before we move on from this
24 divider, Mr Taylor, is page 33, please. It's the penultimate
12:50:03 25 page. Because we're getting closer now to the Freetown invasion,
26 yes?

27 A. Yes.

28 Q. And we have here a press statement made by the ECOMOG force
29 commander Major General Timothy Shelpidi on Wednesday, 22

1 December 1998.

2 "Ladies and gentlemen, this is Major General Timothy
3 Shelpidi, ECOMOG force commander, speaking. Over the few days
4 there have been certain developments in the security situation of
12:50:41 5 this country which have created panic among you. It is now
6 necessary for me as ECOMOG force commander to make this
7 statement.

8 As you are by now aware, there has been rebel activity in
9 certain parts of the country, including the outskirts of
12:50:56 10 Freetown. There have been rebel attacks at Masiaka, Kono, and in
11 the Freetown area at Waterloo. I wish to assure you that ECOMOG
12 is in control of the situation and is presently engaged in
13 seeking and destroying the rebels, wherever they are. We,
14 however, need the full cooperation of you, the civilians. It is
12:51:18 15 clear that the rebels thrive on creating panic amongst the
16 civilian population, causing mass movement of people. This makes
17 it difficult for the security forces to act decisively, and many
18 times our forces have had cause to withdraw from an area in order
19 to avoid civilian casualties.

12:51:41 20 You need to be aware that the rebels are using your fear to
21 achieve their objectives. Do not panic and abandon your homes at
22 the sound of gunfire. This is what the rebels want. Stay in
23 your homes. Organise yourselves into a neighbourhood watch.
24 Report any suspicious movements or strange characters to the
12:52:04 25 nearest ECOMOG or police position. Even if you have had to move
26 from your homes, be on the alert. The rebels may have mingled
27 among you, pretending to be displaced people. Keep a lookout for
28 strange looking people among you and give information to the
29 security forces.

1 Once more let me assure you that the security situation is
2 under control. We need your support to enable us to deal
3 decisively with the rebels and end this menace once and for all.
4 We cannot do that if you panic and flood onto the streets, thus
12:52:41 5 providing cover for rebel activity. Cooperate with ECOMOG,
6 listen to the radio for accurate information and instructions,
7 and please stop spreading false rumours."

8 Now, Mr Taylor, I bring this to your attention for this
9 reason: Note the date, 22 December.

12:52:59 10 A. Yes.

11 Q. At that stage - and remember, we're talking about seven
12 days before you made that speech that we referred to earlier?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Were you at this stage in December, before Christmas, aware
12:53:12 15 of this rebel activity in the vicinity of Freetown?

16 A. Not exactly, no. We knew that they were fighting in Sierra
17 Leone, but not to specific locations.

18 Q. By the time you made your speech on 29 December, were you
19 aware of an impending attack on Freetown?

12:53:31 20 A. No, no, no. Not at all, no. No.

21 MR GRIFFITHS: Now could I ask, Mr Taylor, for that
22 document to be marked collectively the media communique, a
23 compilation of news and press releases of ECOMOG, September to
24 December 1998, be marked for identification MFI-65.

12:54:00 25 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes. That document is marked for
26 identification MFI-65.

27 MR GRIFFITHS:

28 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, I'd like us to pause now for a moment,
29 please, to take stock. Because remember we agreed at the outset

1 that 1998 through to just after January 1999 is a critical period
2 in terms of the indictment you face, yes?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Can we just pause now at the end of 1998, please, and take
12:54:42 5 stock. In summary, Mr Taylor, what is the position so far as
6 1998 is concerned?

7 A. Well, let me see if I can just give the real principal
8 things that I think ought to be viewed here. Let's start with
9 the intervention in February, where the junta is removed from
12:55:18 10 Freetown and the succeeding - the crisis following thereafter the
11 removal from Freetown that goes through February, March, April.

12 We have different discussions going on. For me the most
13 important period second to this February 1998 movement of the
14 junta from Freetown is for me dealing with the meeting in June
12:55:56 15 where the president of the Security Council informed our
16 ambassador of the fact that there are reports before the Security
17 Council that the majority of the people supporting the junta are
18 Liberians. This for me becomes extremely significant, because we
19 are asked again in that report to - and by report I mean the
12:56:27 20 report coming from my minister counsellor to respond. We develop
21 a response to the accusations and we outline how and why it is
22 not possible.

23 The next set of circumstances I think will be substantial
24 will be July. I invite President Kabbah to Liberia, 1998, and
12:56:59 25 also present there you have Reverend Jesse Jackson. There is a
26 meeting and we begin to forge even additional cooperation between
27 Sierra Leone and ourselves. We are encouraged to begin some
28 progress with the Mano River Union. That is also put on the
29 front agenda for our three states.

1 In August it becomes even a little more serious where we
2 receive a note from our ambassador accredited near Conakry of a
3 visit, or a proposed visit, by Mr Bockarie and Eddie Kanneh. We
4 consult our colleagues. We see an opportunity. The invitation
12:58:06 5 is extended in September. Bockarie comes, he returns, he comes
6 back and I've briefed my colleagues and we see the possibility of
7 opening this channel.

8 And let me state very clearly that between all of these
9 meetings there are Heads of State meetings of ECOWAS, you also
12:58:31 10 have the OAU meeting also of foreign ministers at the time, there
11 are meetings with the Security Council and you have Mano River
12 Union meetings. We are cooperating at all levels, giving it our
13 best.

14 But it's important to note that coming around the end of
12:58:54 15 this period in question very, very sadly we do not - we are not
16 able to get in touch with the junta side of this equation of this
17 mandate that has been given us. While we are talking to the RUF,
18 we do not get an opportunity to speak to the junta. I did not
19 speak to Johnny Paul or any of his officials during this period,
12:59:24 20 because we were just not able to get them.

21 I asked Bockarie and what he said to me, if I recall
22 correctly, was that there were some problems between themselves
23 and the junta and he didn't know how we could get in contact with
24 them because Johnny Paul was in a different location from where
12:59:47 25 he was and so we could not make that contact I would say
26 unsuccessfully. Probably if we had made that contact - by "we"
27 I'm referring to myself - I a Cote d'Ivoire that had been charged
28 with that mandate, maybe we could have averted the 6 January
29 situation.

1 But during this particular period we have a lot of fighting
2 and we are doing everything to - now this "we" I'm referring to
3 my government and the committee doing everything to try to get a
4 cessation of hostilities to get back to the peace negotiations
13:00:34 5 and, of course, we see all these envoys coming and going.

6 So for my part in 1998 I see the final speech that I made
7 on the 29th and maybe one other statement that I made - I think a
8 letter that I wrote to the Security Council through the
9 Secretary-General as the sum total of what we were doing in 1998.

13:01:03 10 Yes, there were accusations around. We had dealt with, of
11 course, the Roosevelt Johnson situation back in September and the
12 hairy - the very hairy situation in dealing with the United
13 States government.

14 We were appearing to be getting back on some track, because
13:01:24 15 from the days I spent in university in the United States to the
16 best of my knowledge I do not know of any instance where during
17 this period it was anything personal. It was not personal. The
18 fact of the matter is I made it very clear to Reverend Jackson
19 that there was nothing personal. It's not that I dislike the
13:01:51 20 United States. I went to school there, I have family members
21 spread through the south from Georgia on down that are relatives
22 of mine and we were also - we migrated from the United States to
23 Liberia, my grandmother, so - but it was something that we felt
24 very strongly about that and that truth should prevail.

13:02:13 25 So for me it was a very tough year for Liberia and, like I
26 said, we could not - whatever we did we could not - and I guess
27 until now, and this is the problem this Court is going to have to
28 deal with, okay, we could not shake off what these people had put
29 on us about arms movement. Even though everyone was saying,

1 "Where is the evidence?" They just kept repeating it. They were
2 repeating it throughout '98. We were fighting, trying to say,
3 "It's not happening." They knew that we did not have arms.

4 They also got into the presence of Liberians in Sierra
13:02:54 5 Leone. We are until today still trying to shake it off, "You
6 know who they are. They are not our people."

7 So these are the problems. I would just sum it up as a
8 very tough year for me as President and the country, where I
9 would just say I'm not sure if it's public sentiment, but

13:03:18 10 sometimes this rumour mill that spread was just so
11 unsubstantiated but it stuck. It just stuck there. You hear
12 people talking about Liberians and Liberian fighters. "Yes, they
13 are there." "Who sent them?" "Well Taylor didn't send them, but
14 they are Liberians."

13:03:36 15 So I can remember at one point - I'm not sure if this came
16 up in the testimony here. I had threatened those - in trying to
17 find solutions with the presidency of Sierra Leone we had
18 threatened that, "Those that are fighting in Sierra Leone, if you
19 don't leave there we're going to prosecute you", but that didn't
13:03:58 20 work and so we had to backtrack and try to - because of the law
21 on mercenaryism in Liberia we had threatened them. That scared
22 them further and so we had to end up reversing the threat of
23 prosecuting them - of prosecuting them under the mercenaryism law
24 and grant them amnesty. Oh, they took that amnesty and said,
13:04:23 25 "Oh, you are granting them amnesty because you sent them." It
26 had nothing to do with that.

27 So a frustrating year, a year that finally some officials
28 like the official from the United States government comes on and
29 says that, "We don't have any actual proof on this." They had an

1 opportunity and I think if they had proof they would have brought
2 it then. If they have proof, I'm sure it will be available now.
3 It is still not here and I guess I'm here now, so that's as much
4 as I can summarise it, counsel.

13:04:55 5 Q. And help us, Mr Taylor, before I come to put certain
6 specific allegations to you regarding 1998, you describe to us,
7 please, in your own words what the extent of your contact with
8 the RUF was in 1998.

9 A. As of September 1998, the extent of the contact was the
13:05:28 10 invitation to Sam Bockarie which he visited twice. On the third
11 occasion was to meet the chairman of the OAU. All of those
12 contacts were geared toward peace with the advice, consent and
13 authorisation of ECOWAS. I did it and to the best of my own
14 ability. It had nothing to do with supplying arms. It had
13:05:56 15 nothing to do with receiving diamonds. It was only for the
16 purpose of peace and, while I was doing that, other members of
17 the committee too were dealing with him. That is they were
18 calling, they were in communication --

19 Q. Calling who?

13:06:13 20 A. Sam Bockarie, because when Sam Bockarie came to Liberia I
21 have heard testimony here about a satellite telephone. Sam
22 Bockarie had a satellite telephone. When he came to Liberia he
23 already had a satellite telephone that Sankoh apparently had
24 given him at the time of his return on one trip from Ivory Coast.
13:06:40 25 So he had a satellite telephone. So that link by getting his
26 numbers and giving it to the other Heads of State in the region,
27 he had access to all the members of the Committee of Six now at
28 the end of the day.

29 Q. So in 1998, Mr Taylor, were you the only ECOWAS leader who

1 was in contact with Sam Bockarie?

2 A. No, no, I was not.

3 Q. And what had prompted your invitation - what had prompted
4 you to extend an invitation to Sam Bockarie to come to Monrovia?

13:07:17 5 A. Well we get this letter, as I stated, from the ambassador
6 of the intent of Bockarie - and in fact this is Eddie Kanneh that
7 goes to the embassy to look into this. We get this information
8 and it sounds good, but I then contact other members of the
9 committee, my colleagues, and say, "Well, look, here is what's
13:07:40 10 going on. We just got a message from our embassy in Guinea that
11 the RUF leader across the border would like to come to see me.
12 What do you think?" They think it's a good idea. We extend the
13 invitation.

14 Q. Now I have a number of specific allegations to put to you,
13:08:06 15 Mr Taylor, so that you can have an opportunity of dealing with
16 them directly. On 11 March 2008, to which transcript reference
17 5745 to 5746 relates, Isaac Mongor, TF1-352, said that in
18 February or March of 1998 Superman came back with ammunition that
19 he received via Daniel Tamba, Jungle, from you, Charles Taylor,
13:08:52 20 for Operation Fitti-Fatta to reclaim Koidu. Did you do that?

21 A. No, I did not. No, I did not. How would that be possible?
22 How would that be possible? I don't have arms in Liberia.
23 ECOWAS is still there in the very large numbers. We are just
24 through with an operation - and I can almost say "we" because I
13:09:21 25 didn't go public about my being against the recruitment of
26 Liberians to go and fight in Sierra Leone by ECOMOG. But how is
27 that possible? Isaac Mongor is telling a blatant lie.

28 Q. Mr Taylor, in February or March of 1998 had you yet made
29 any contact with the RUF?

1 A. None whatsoever, no. And if you look at the ambassador's
2 letter, you will see that there is no contact. You can just read
3 from the language contained in the letter there is no contact.

13:10:09 4 Q. Now, the second suggestion. On 4 June 2008, to which
5 transcript page reference 11003 to 11005 relates, Albert Saidu,
6 TF1-577, a radio operator, said that in March 1998 you promoted
7 Sam Bockarie. Did you do that, Mr Taylor?

8 A. Well, it's as if I did it through remote control. I had
9 never Bockarie in my life until September. I had never met Sam
13:10:52 10 Bockarie in my life, but let's go back a little bit. Let's go
11 back to the arrest of Foday Sankoh. Let's go to the arrest of
12 Foday Sankoh and the instructions that Foday Sankoh sent back to
13 his people. Let's see if that promotion is not there.

14 I don't know Sam Bockarie. It is none of my business. I
13:11:25 15 have never met him, like I said before. All of the time in 1991
16 and 1992 that we had a short cooperation with the RUF, even
17 Sankoh never brought Sam Bockarie to Gbarnga. I didn't know the
18 man. I was not in control of the organisation. How could I
19 promote a person and how did I do it? I called on the radio and
13:11:53 20 promoted him? Or I called on the telephone and said, "You are
21 general" to someone that I don't know and had never met before?

22 Q. Can I correct something. Albert Saidu was not a radio
23 operator. A radio operator told Albert Saidu that Charles Taylor
24 had promoted Sam Bockarie, so I correct myself.

13:12:21 25 That same witness Albert Saidu, Mr Taylor, said on 5 June
26 2008, to which transcript pages 11054 to 11057 relate, he said
27 that in October or November of 1998 at a secret meeting in Buedu
28 and Dawa, attended by Jungle and Ibrahim Bah, Jungle said that
29 you, Charles Taylor, recognised the relationship between the RUF

1 and the AFRC and you, Charles Taylor, advised that they should
2 hold Kono because that's where they would get their resources.
3 Did you do that?

13:13:15 4 A. I did not. I did not do that. Let's look at the period
5 involved. What are you saying, October?

6 Q. October, November 1998.

7 A. Well, let's go. Let's look at October. We've already said
8 here in evidence that Sam Bockarie has already made the first
9 trip in September. Why should there be a secret meeting again,
10 when I've already met Bockarie for the second time in October?

11 So why would there have to be a secret meeting to go and tell
12 them to hold something? If it's true, all Sam Bockarie had to do
13 was to go back. So what was Jungle supposed to be doing? Jungle
14 was supposed to be sent? It was simple to tell Sam Bockarie go

13:13:53 15 and do this, if that's the case, and Sam Bockarie will just say,
16 "I have my instruction, I will do it." Why there must be a
17 Jungle and an Ibrahim Bah to do could have just been said to Sam
18 Bockarie? Nonsense. Total nonsense, okay? And I don't know who
19 put them up to this kind of thing, but that's total nonsense. It
13:14:13 20 just did not happen.

21 Q. That same witness on 4 June 2008, to which pages 11005 to
22 11006 refers, said that he read in a radio message that you
23 advised Sam Bockarie that the AFRC and the RUF should work
24 together and that you did that in May 1998. Did you do that,
13:14:47 25 Mr Taylor?

26 A. I did not. I did not do that. Why would I advise that
27 they should work together? What is it, my business? I did not
28 do that. Now, I hear a radio operator. Maybe what - how did I
29 advise Sam Bockarie; on the radio?

1 Q. Well, he said he read in a radio message that you advised
2 Sam Bockarie.

3 A. Well, you know, that's one of these cases where I'm sure
4 the Court will appreciate - I would beg the - if it's possible
13:15:24 5 for the - maybe through the Court administration or maybe through
6 the Prosecutor's office, can we ask Britain and the United States
7 to declassify some of their radio intercepts in the region during
8 this particular time? This will clear up the whole issue. So
9 somebody comes to this Court and says: Oh, there was a radio
13:15:50 10 message. Who is silly enough to get on the radio - if there's
11 something going on - to get on the open radio to talk this? But
12 if there is such communication, it must be in the log of either
13 the British or American intelligence, because that's their
14 business. That's what they were doing off the coast: Listening.
13:16:17 15 So I'm not going to keep suffering, okay, in prison because of
16 speculation and all these kind of things. So anybody - you get
17 up, "Oh, there was a radio call."

18 Well, look, there are ways. This trial, I'm here backed by
19 Chapter 6 United Nations resolution. Chapter 6. And in all
13:16:44 20 fairness to me when it comes to justice, the United Nations
21 should ask all its member states that have pertinent information
22 and evidence to bring it forward. You can't hold me in jail, I
23 mean, for years just on this type of nonsense that has come here.
24 It's got to be - the United States has the capacity to unravel
13:17:05 25 this case if they choose to - if they choose to come forward.
26 This is not a very - what is so classified - okay, if it's
27 classified. Let's bring it in a private session. But you cannot
28 continue - okay, you come to Africa, you see one little African
29 leader. Maybe at that point in time they wanted to make a point.

1 Oh impunity. If we grab one little African leader, lock him up
2 for the rest of his life, destroy him, then you have done
3 something. Well, look, you want justice, bring the information.
4 I mean, how do I defend myself against this person said that
13:17:44 5 somebody said. It never happened, counsel. It never happened,
6 and I hope in the interests of justice they will bring some of
7 the - they've got the information if it's there. It has to be
8 there. It has to be there. Release the radio transcript. We
9 heard this. Here it says the US has this capture or the British
13:18:07 10 military. They were out there. But, I mean, I cannot just
11 continue to suffer in jail on this nonsense. That's all it is.
12 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, another direct allegation that I want to
13 give you an opportunity to deal with. On 24 April 2008, another
14 Prosecution witness, Alimamy Bobson Sesay, TF1-334, to which
13:18:39 15 pages 8515 of the transcript refers, said that you,
16 Charles Taylor, gave \$15,000 and said it was support for Johnny
17 Paul Koroma's men whilst they wait for Foday Sankoh to arrive,
18 and you did that in May 1998. What do you say about that?
19 A. I think he made a mistake. I think he made a great, great
13:19:13 20 mistake. Because the incident that he's referring to, if it's
21 anything, it must be May of 1999. If he said 1998, it's a
22 blatant lie. He must be - maybe he made a mistake, but that's
23 for him for correct. Because the period in question in dealing
24 with Johnny Paul, we have already brought Johnny Paul Koroma to
13:19:37 25 Liberia and he is waiting for Foday Sankoh to - no, no, no, no.
26 May of - no, no, no, no, no. I thought that was in 1999. No.
27 That is not true.
28 But let's look at the information there. Let's look at the
29 information. What is happening in Liberia in April of 1998

1 according to the evidence before this Court? 6 April or
2 thereabouts, are we not fighting in Monrovia?

3 Q. '98?

4 A. 1998? When are we involved in this fight with Johnson?

13:20:20 5 That's about this time.

6 Q. I thought that was September/October 1998, the Camp Johnson
7 Road incident?

8 A. The Camp Johnson Road, yes, September. Okay.

9 Q. What's happening in April 1998, Mr Taylor? Think about it,
10 '98.

13:20:33

11 A. April 1998. Oh, February we have the intervention. March,
12 April. There is just really the crisis. I think we are putting
13 people - we're trying to get ECOMOG to work along with us on the
14 border. That's as much as I know about April 1998.

13:21:01

15 Q. But help me: Did you in May 1998 give \$15,000, saying it
16 was support for Johnny Paul Koroma's men whilst they wait for
17 Foday Sankoh to arrive?

18 A. No, that's what I'm saying. That's not - he got it all
19 mixed up. That's not true, no. He's got it mixed up.

13:21:25

20 Q. Did you at some stage give money to Johnny Paul Koroma?

21 A. That \$15,000 is in evidence in August - in August/September
22 1999, that 15 dollars comes out in the same Bobson Sesay - that's
23 why I'm saying, he's making the year. So that \$15,000 that he's
24 talking about refers to evidence before this Court of money that
25 were given to Johnny Paul Koroma and his men in my office where
26 it's described that I pulled this briefcase and gave the money.
27 So I'm sure that he got that whole thing mixed up. And that's
28 what you do when you're lying; you get things mixed up.

13:21:57

29 Q. We'll come to August 1999 in due course. Now another

1 specific allegation, Mr Taylor. On 8 May 2008, to which
2 transcript pages 9394 to 9395 refers, Karmoh Kanneh, TF1-571,
3 said that in May 1998, at a meeting at Waterworks, Sam Bockarie
4 informed the group that you had promoted him to general. Had you
13:22:47 5 done any such thing?

6 A. No such thing. I didn't know the man. I had no contact
7 with him. None whatsoever. No.

8 Q. Now note in passing that another Prosecution witness,
9 Albert Saidu, as I put to you, said that he had been told by a
13:23:08 10 radio operator in March that you had promoted Bockarie. Now we
11 have this other witness saying in May Bockarie informs them that
12 you had promoted him. Had you promoted Bockarie in either March
13 or May, Mr Taylor?

14 A. I had not promoted Bockarie in either of those two months.
13:23:34 15 That shows you how these witnesses in putting together these
16 lies, that's why they're mixed up on it. Never happened.

17 Q. Now another Prosecution witness on 23 January 2008, to
18 which pages 1968 to 1972 refer, a witness called Abu Keita,
19 TF1-276, said that he was told by Benjamin Yeaten to go to Sierra
13:24:17 20 Leone to head up a new unit called the Scorpion unit under
21 Bockarie and Yeaten told him that you had planned it and this
22 took place in 1998 after September. Did you do any such thing,
23 Mr Taylor?

24 A. Never did any such thing, but let's look at the logic of
13:24:41 25 it. If I recall, I don't know how many persons were supposed to
26 be on this major unit. One person? Abu Keita? But it's
27 important to know who Abu Keita is. Abu Keita is one of those
28 individuals that were released after the Roosevelt Johnson
29 fiasco, because of our desire to building very good relationship

1 with the Mandingos in Liberia and Musa Cisse and other Mandingo
2 elders that were working very close with me asked for his
3 release. He's a very close buddy of the other one, Varmuyan
4 Sheriff.

13:25:28 5 Q. Who is?

6 A. Abu Keita is a very close - one of Varmuyan's boys, because
7 Varmuyan was his senior commander at the time of ULIMO-K. For
8 Abu to say that Benjamin - I don't know if he had such
9 discussions with Benjamin, I have no knowledge of it, but if it's

13:25:55 10 to the extent that Benjamin said that I said that is not true
11 because you don't send one man - well, we have a same example. I
12 sent one man called Isaac Mongor to go and train a whole army,
13 who he himself had just come from training in the presence of
14 Special Forces, and this one Isaac Mongor trained the whole army
15 that invaded Sierra Leone. So we always have these one man
16 armies that are being sent by Charles Taylor and I don't know how
17 they make it up. So now I'm sending this Abu Keita now to go and
18 head Scorpion and who does he carry? Just his hands and his
19 feet. It never happened. It never happened.

13:26:47 20 Q. Did you send a group of Liberians to Sierra Leone called
21 the Scorpion unit?

22 A. Never did. Never did. Never did. Never.

23 Q. Was there ever such a unit bearing that name in Liberia?

24 A. No. Not in the NPFL, no.

13:27:05 25 Q. Now you had mentioned earlier in your testimony, Mr Taylor,
26 that Abu Keita had been arrested during the Camp Johnson Road
27 incident?

28 A. Yes, that fiasco. Yes.

29 Q. Were they kept in custody?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Where?

3 A. At the BTC. The Barclay Training Centre.

4 Q. For how long did they remain in custody?

13:27:33 5 A. Abu Keita was not in jail very long. I would put it to no
6 more than a couple of weeks, because we were trying to reconcile.
7 After we had successfully brought the Johnson fiasco under
8 control, we just wanted to reconcile it as quickly as we could
9 internally so it just could not continue to fester.

13:27:54 10 Q. Now, can you help us as to when those arrests took place?

11 A. During the fighting. During the fighting.

12 Q. Now the fighting, remind us, 18/19 September?

13 A. Yes, about that. Yes. And it lasted for almost - it
14 lasted for a couple of days in actual combat, but the operation

13:28:16 15 took about a week.

16 Q. And he remains in custody for a couple of weeks after that?

17 A. That is correct.

18 Q. Now I ask for this reason, because the witness says that it
19 was some time after September 1998 that he was told this by

13:28:33 20 Benjamin Yeaten.

21 A. Uh-huh.

22 Q. But on what you're telling us he would have been in custody
23 at the end of September, wouldn't he?

24 A. He would have been, but besides let's stretch it out a
13:28:49 25 little more. Here is a man that was involved in combat against
26 the government, you understand me? He's arrested.

27 Now if I'm planning a covert operation in Sierra Leone to
28 establish a unit, I'm going to send an enemy force to go and do
29 it? Does it make any sense? He's already an enemy soldier.

1 He's supposed to be the one to go and lead up a unit? How is
2 that possible?

3 He is an enemy soldier to the government. He's being
4 released because we are trying to reconcile, but if you want to
13:29:25 5 send someone on operation to do who would you send? You want to
6 send an enemy soldier, because I'm looking at him at that way at
7 this particular time, okay?

8 As President I was not thinking enemy, not enemy, but I
9 mean how do you take somebody that just fought the government out
13:29:43 10 of prison, reconcile him and tell him say, "Go to another country
11 to head up something called Scorpion." It doesn't hold. Keita
12 is lying.

13 And Keita - Abu Keita - from even additional information
14 that we received subsequently even ended up in Ivory Coast, so
13:30:07 15 Keita is a mercenary. That's what Keita is. And he's going
16 around, digging and he ends up in the Ivorian crisis also. No.

17 MR GRIFFITHS: Would that be a convenient point?

18 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that's a convenient point. We'll
19 adjourn for lunch and resume at 2.30.

13:30:25 20 [Lunch break taken at 1.30 p.m.]

21 [Upon resuming at 2.30 p.m.]

22 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, please continue, Mr Griffiths.

23 MR GRIFFITHS: May it please your Honours:

24 Q. Mr Taylor, before we adjourned for lunch, I was dealing
14:31:45 25 with certain specific allegations made against you by various
26 Prosecution witnesses, things which you are said to have done in
27 the year 1998. Do you recall that?

28 A. Yes, I do.

29 Q. And the last person we dealt with was an allegation made by

1 that witness Abu Keita, yes?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Now, moving on. On 11 March 2008, to which pages 5793 to
4 5798 of the transcript refers, Isaac Mongor, TF1-532, said that
14:32:33 5 in November 1998 you and Sam Bockarie planned attacks on Kono,
6 Makeni, Freetown and Joru. Did you do that, Mr Taylor?

7 A. No, I did not. Never planned any such attack with
8 Sam Bockarie, never.

9 Q. Another witness, TF1-362, says that in an unspecified month
14:33:15 10 in 1998 the witness was asked by Issa Sesay to train 62 Sierra
11 Leonean army personnel at the request of Charles Taylor so that
12 the trainees could go and open the border between Sierra Leone
13 and Gbarnga, Liberia. That was said on 28 January 2008 at pages
14 4895 of the transcript. Mr Taylor, did you do such a thing?

14:33:54 15 A. Now, he said that at an unspecified time?

16 Q. Some time in 1998, but a month is not given, the witness
17 was asked by Issa Sesay to train 62 SLAs at your request?

18 A. But what is happening in 1998 that somebody has to open the
19 border with Gbarnga? What is happening in 1998? I mean, in 1998
14:34:32 20 a border between Gbarnga and Sierra Leone is being opened? What
21 is going on in 1998? There's nothing. I mean maybe that's just
22 a part of their whole fabrication, but what is going on? There's
23 no problem in closing or opening a border in 1998 between Gbarnga
24 and Liberia - and Sierra Leone, so he's got to be talking
14:34:54 25 nonsense. What could be happening?

26 Q. Now that same witness on 27 February 2008, at pages 4867 to
27 4868 of the transcript, said that in 1998 the witness was
28 informed by Sam Bockarie that you had said - you had said - that
29 a training base at Camp Lion should be set up in Bunumbu in

1 Kailahun District. Did you do that?

2 A. Never did that. Never did that. Don't even know Bunumbu
3 what? Never did that. Never. Never. Never.

14:35:52 4 Q. Now another witness, TF1-516, says that at an unspecified
5 time in 1998 Sam Bockarie said he was promoted to a general by
6 you. Now, we've already had two people say that.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Did you, Mr Taylor?

9 A. Never promoted Sam Bockarie to anything. Never.

14:36:08 10 Q. Now, that was said on 27 February 2008 at page 6854 of the
11 transcript.

12 A. But if you listen to that, that's even before the other two
13 claim that I promoted him.

14 Q. Well, this particular witness did not give a month in 1998.
14:36:34 15 Now, another allegation. This allegation was made on 8 April
16 2008, to which page 3163 of the transcript refers. The witness,
17 Perry Kamara, TF1-360, said that in 1998 Sam Bockarie said that
18 you had created a plan of how to take over Sierra Leone and told
19 Sam Bockarie how to implement it. Did you?

14:37:07 20 A. Never did. Never did. I had planned to take over
21 Sierra Leone and - but I thought - I thought I planned to take
22 over Sierra Leone from the invasion in 19, what was it? 1991. I
23 thought that was the time I actually planned to take over,
24 terrorise the country and take all the resources. I thought it
14:37:30 25 was earlier than that.

26 Q. No, Mr Taylor, even you have got it wrong. As I understand
27 it, you planned as far back as Libya to do that.

28 A. Oh, Libya to do that. So is this a new plan, or I
29 abandoned that plan?

1 Q. Mr Taylor, that same witness, Perry Kamara, on 21 February
2 2008 at page 3102 of the transcript said that at some time in
3 1998 you stated that as long as the RUF had Kono they would not
4 fail to take over the rest of Sierra Leone. Did you?

14:38:16 5 A. Never said that. And in fact, I don't know the full
6 context of that, but through what means did I say that? Was that
7 a radio message again? Or is it - what is this? I mean, I don't
8 know the full context. But, I mean, maybe it's another one of
9 those radio messages. And in any case if we know the period, we
14:38:38 10 probably could ask for some of these intercepted transcripts to
11 be made available. But no such thing happened.

12 Q. That same witness, Mr Taylor, also said on 5 February 2008
13 at page 3105 of the transcript that Sam Bockarie, in 1998,
14 transmitted a radio message that he had some arrangement with
14:39:10 15 you. Did you have any arrangement with Sam Bockarie?

16 A. Never had any arrangement with Sam Bockarie. But what
17 could have been interesting for this, even though I know it's
18 very difficult over these years to get periods, exact months, but
19 we've tried to stick with periods, probably we would have
14:39:30 20 untangled this lie because my meeting with Sam Bockarie in 1998
21 occurs all the way in September. So he could be talking about
22 something that is impossible.

23 So I mean, that type of wide open stuff that he is talking
24 about is just - is just the nature of how, you know, they ask
14:39:55 25 these questions and these boys just want to say things and just
26 say, "Oh, in 1998 this happened". Never. Never. What
27 arrangement? Never had any arrangement with Sam Bockarie.

28 My discussions with Sam Bockarie were straight to the peace
29 process and if I had had any inclination or any idea that

1 Sam Bockarie and his people intended to perpetuate the conflict I
2 would have told my colleagues in ECOWAS and we would have tried
3 to deal with it. I never had any separate arrangements with
4 Sam Bockarie outside of the mandates that were given to us. That
14:40:34 5 was the extent of my discussions.

6 Q. That same witness, Mr Taylor, on 5 February 2008, at page
7 3163 to 3167 of the transcript said that in 1998 - sorry, let me
8 change the page reference. I'm looking at the wrong line. That
9 same witness on 5 February 2008, at page 3159 to 3160 of the

14:41:09 10 transcript, said that in 1998 Sam Bockarie was ordered to Liberia
11 to receive a plan from you. Is that the case, Mr Taylor?

12 A. It was never the case he was ordered to Liberia to receive
13 a plan from me. Never. Never happened.

14 Q. And the same witness, on 5 February 2008, at page 3163 to
14:41:44 15 3167 of the transcript, said that in 1998 at a meeting at
16 Sam Bockarie's house, Sam Bockarie said that you and he,
17 Sam Bockarie, had a very big plan to take over the whole of
18 Sierra Leone. Any truth in that, Mr Taylor?

19 A. Well, then he missed the plan. The plan was back in Libya
14:42:10 20 from what I'm hearing. So he missed the plan, except maybe it's
21 no - lies. Look, it never, ever happened. A plan to take over
22 Sierra Leone? For what? What do I want in Sierra Leone that I
23 don't have in Liberia?

24 1998, I'm President of the Republic of Liberia trying to
14:42:30 25 make peace. What do I want from Sierra Leone? What do I want
26 that I don't have? Sierra Leone has diamonds. We have diamonds.
27 We have gold. I'm sure they have gold. We have other - we have
28 oil, we have natural gas, we have bauxite, we have uranium. What
29 do I want from Sierra Leone?

1 These little boys that have been brought here to tell these
2 kinds of stories and just open up a wide gate. In 1998 maybe if
3 we had been more specific maybe we would have tied up these
4 little boys in some of the lies because they would have fallen
14:43:07 5 into a period that I had not even met Bockarie.

6 I, Charles Ghankay Taylor, as President of Liberia sent for
7 Sam Bockarie in September. He came in September. October he
8 came through again. He went to Burkina Faso in 1999. There were
9 several trips. Every trip that I invited Sam Bockarie to Liberia
14:43:27 10 I would tell this Court and the world because I did it with the
11 consent of my colleagues and I would not hide it. So there is
12 nothing - no other reason why I needed to be in touch with
13 Sam Bockarie except for the peace process and through God's grace
14 I worked hard to get that peace. As hard or harder than almost
14:43:50 15 any single person in ECOWAS and I challenge any one of them that
16 are still in office to come here and say that Mr Taylor did not
17 work.

18 So this thing about little plans here and - it's all a
19 blatant lie, a part of this fabrication to make it look as if
14:44:06 20 Taylor had some separate agenda in Sierra Leone. I had no agenda
21 in Sierra Leone outside of what ECOWAS and our OAU colleagues
22 decided. None whatsoever. And everything that I did in
23 Sierra Leone they knew. I kept them informed, we worked together
24 all the way into Lome, all the way in Issa Sesay in 2000,
14:44:34 25 everything they were part of it. So all this thing here about
26 separate, there was no separate plan. None.

27 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, another witness, TF1-567, on 5 February
28 2008, at page 12913 to 12917 of the transcript, alleged that you,
29 Charles Taylor, supplied arms and ammunition for the attack on

1 Koidu Town on condition that nine diamond mining areas were
2 captured. Did you?

3 A. I did not. Diamond mining areas in Liberia are not being
4 worked by the government. This Court has heard evidence of the
14:45:19 5 diamondiferous region even near the Sierra Leonean border in Lofa
6 Bridge in Lofa. I'm not working diamonds in Liberia. That's not
7 my business. I'm busy trying to bring peace first to the
8 country. Peace first before we get into all of this. So I'm
9 going to leave all of that and go to someplace called Koidu. And
14:45:38 10 what he did he say that happened? Did he say?

11 Q. 1998.

12 A. Oh, well.

13 Q. And the final allegation I want to put to you at this
14 stage, Mr Taylor, is this: On 28 January 2008 an individual
14:45:55 15 whose name you wrote on a piece of paper - do you recall?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. He said that you gave instructions to Sam Bockarie over the
18 phone for operation No Living Thing, including an order to
19 capture Freetown. Did you?

14:46:15 20 A. In 1998?

21 Q. Yes.

22 A. Total foolishness. Total, total lie.

23 Q. Let's take them one at a time. Did you order Sam Bockarie
24 over the phone to announce and launch Operation No Living Thing?

14:46:36 25 A. When did Operation No Living Thing take place? I don't
26 even know the Operation No Living Thing. Maybe the Court could
27 help me, because we could then tie in - here is me ordering an
28 operation probably with a man that I have never known or met. So
29 I don't know if the Court can help with some time for this

1 operation --

2 Q. For now, Mr Taylor, let's just deal with it in broad terms.

3 Did you give Bockarie such an order?

4 A. Never did. Never did.

14:47:07 5 Q. Did you order Bockarie to capture Freetown?

6 A. Never. Never. Never ordered Bockarie to capture any
7 Freetown. As a matter of fact, Freetown - the attack on Freetown
8 annoyed every one of us in ECOWAS and maybe when we get to that
9 point we'll know all of the anger expressed and what we were

14:47:30 10 trying to do when the news broke on 6 January. Total

11 foolishness. Never happened.

12 Q. Very well. Mr Taylor, I want to leave the year 1998 now,

13 please, and embark on 1999, okay? Now, early January 1999,

14 Mr Taylor, what was your knowledge of events in Sierra Leone?

14:47:57 15 A. As of late December going into that last week of the year,
16 all of us knew that there was heavy fighting in different parts
17 of Sierra Leone. That's as much as we knew.

18 Q. Now, when did you first learn of the Freetown invasion?

19 A. When I got up on the morning of the 6th my national
14:48:29 20 security adviser informed me that they were fighting in Freetown.

21 That's the news that he had received on the radio.

22 Q. Now Mr Taylor, by this stage, as you've told us --

23 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: 6 January, presumably?

24 THE WITNESS: Yes, 6 January.

14:48:51 25 MR GRIFFITHS:

26 Q. By this stage, Mr Taylor, you've told us that you were in
27 telephone contact with Sam Bockarie who had a satellite phone?

28 A. On 6 January?

29 Q. No, no, no, we'll come to that, but prior to that you told

1 us that you and other leaders in ECOWAS --

2 A. Oh, yes.

3 Q. -- had a telephone number for Bockarie on a satellite phone
4 on which he was contactable?

14:49:17 5 A. Oh, yes, definitely, yes.

6 Q. Now moving to 6 January. When you learnt this from your
7 national security adviser, did you attempt to get in touch with
8 Bockarie?

9 A. Yes, I instructed them to try to contact him immediately to
14:49:36 10 find out what was really going on.

11 Q. Was he contactable?

12 A. He was contactable.

13 Q. Did you speak to him?

14 A. No, I did not speak to him personally. The national
14:49:52 15 security adviser spoke to him and his first thing was that he did
16 not know what was going on himself in Freetown. That was his
17 first reaction and the report brought to me on that morning; that
18 he could not account because he didn't know what was going on.

19 Q. Now, who was your national security adviser?

14:50:12 20 A. At that time I had - there was Lewis Brown was then
21 national security adviser.

22 Q. And who was it who contacted Bockarie?

23 A. The national security adviser, Brown.

24 Q. And can you help us, Mr Taylor, with a time of day when
14:50:34 25 this contact was made?

26 A. That had to be about 10 - about 10 a.m. Between 9 and 10
27 I'm sure in the morning, because they don't wake me up. I had
28 come out and I got this information about 8, 8.30. So right
29 thereafter I will put his contact to about 9, 10.

1 Q. And how many times was he contacted on that day?

2 A. He was contacted twice to the best of my knowledge; that
3 morning and then later on in the evening. I think it was that
4 day if I'm not mistaken. One of the security personnel informed
14:51:34 5 me that they had heard Sam Bockarie on the radio stating that
6 Freetown was under attack, and I said - and that Sam Bockarie was
7 saying that his boys - or something to that extent - were in
8 Freetown. I said but this cannot be possible. We just contacted
9 his boys this morning. He said that he knew nothing about it.

14:51:58 10 How can he be saying something that - get back to Bockarie and
11 find out what is going on that he could say this morning he knew
12 nothing about it, but somebody is telling me that they hear him
13 on I think it was the BBC saying that his boys are in Freetown.
14 I want to know what's going on.

14:52:12 15 So that day I would say at least twice he was contacted, in
16 the morning hour and after this so-called - I didn't listen to
17 the radio report, but it was reported to me that he was on the
18 radio.

19 Q. Now, what was the upshot of the second telephone call?

14:52:27 20 A. Really it was one of annoyance that what is going on, that
21 in the morning you are saying that you do not know anything about
22 this but in the evening we hear you on the radio. Are you
23 involved in this attack on Freetown? That's what we want to find
24 out.

14:52:43 25 Q. And what did he say?

26 A. Again he said that oh - if I recollect what he said to the
27 security personnel was that, "Oh, that's morale. The boys enter
28 and it looks like they are doing well and so, you know, I'm a big
29 man too so I'm taking some claim for it." This is what he told

1 the security but in effect, I mean one could - our own analysis
2 was that he was trying to get - if things had worked good he
3 would benefit from it, but he didn't sound like he was in control
4 of the situation.

14:53:20 5 Q. All right. Now, Mr Taylor, on any occasion that day did
6 you, Charles Taylor, speak personally to Sam Bockarie?

7 A. No, I did not speak to him personally on that day, no.

8 Q. Now, on the following day were you aware of a report by the
9 Secretary-General of the United Nations to the Security Council?

14:53:50 10 A. Well, there were several things that happened on that day.
11 While that was going on, I also got reports that were circulating
12 on the wires that this attack on Freetown had been launched with
13 Liberian assistance and that there were Liberians that were
14 fighting in Sierra Leone and causing all this trouble in the
14:54:15 15 city.

16 Q. Where did you hear that from?

17 A. It was on the news wires. My security advisors came in to
18 brief me and I said, "But this is impossible. These people are
19 saying that Liberia is involved?" I convened a national security
14:54:29 20 council immediately with the foreign minister, defence minister
21 and other people to put together a document immediately, because
22 when these things come on the wires like this - these accusations
23 - you have to act immediately.

24 I convened a national security council immediately. We
14:54:45 25 drafted a letter immediately to the Secretary-General for the
26 Security Council to explain that we knew nothing about this
27 thing, that Liberia was not a part of it and we were as shocked
28 as everybody else about what had happened in Freetown. And that
29 document was sent immediately.

1 Now on the 7th of January, or thereabouts, the
2 Secretary-General did a special - a special report. Not one of
3 the regular reports, but he did a special report for the Security
4 Council dealing with the Sierra Leonean crisis.

14:55:20 5 Q. And have you seen that report, Mr Taylor?

6 A. Yes, it so happened that the letter - the letter that I
7 wrote to the Security Council - is an annex to that report on 7
8 January.

9 MR GRIFFITHS: Right. Now, do your Honours have disclosure
14:55:39 10 for week 32? It should be two volumes. Can we have a look at
11 the first volume, please, behind divider 1. Do we all have it?
12 I would like us to look at this document with some care:

13 Q. Firstly, we see it's dated 7 January 1999. Is that right,
14 Mr Taylor?

14:56:52 15 PRESIDING JUDGE: I'm sorry, I missed the tab number. What
16 tab was it?

17 MR GRIFFITHS: Behind tab 1, your Honour.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE: Thank you. Go ahead, Mr Griffiths.

19 MR GRIFFITHS: Very well:

14:57:13 20 Q. Now we see it's dated 7 January 1999, Mr Taylor, yes?

21 A. That is correct.

22 Q. And this is the document you were referring to?

23 A. Exactly, yes.

24 Q. Let's pick it up in the third sentence:

14:57:24 25 "In view of the serious developments in the country since
26 that time, I have decided to submit the present report which
27 contains updated information and revised observations and
28 recommendations.

29 Military and security developments: On 17 December 1998,

1 the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
2 opened an attack aimed at Kailahun District in the eastern
3 province, an important rebel base and supply point. However, the
4 ECOMOG attack achieved only limited progress. The south of the
14:58:06 5 country, including Bo, the second largest city, remained calm.

6 Starting on 18 December 1998, the military and security
7 situation in Sierra Leone took a sharply unfavourable turn. A
8 strong rebel attack on Koidu in the eastern province obliged
9 ECOMOG to fall back, eventually as far as Magburaka in the centre
14:58:38 10 of the country, while sustaining heavy casualties from ambushes
11 along the route.

12 On 22 December, a third group of rebels in the Western Area
13 attacked Waterloo, about 20 miles from Freetown on the road
14 connecting the capital with the rest of the country. The attack
14:59:02 15 resulted in heavy casualties among civilians and the looting and
16 destruction of property and sent thousands of people fleeing
17 towards Freetown.

18 In response to these developments, on 23 December 1998,
19 United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone withdrew the
14:59:27 20 seven United Nations military observers who had been deployed
21 there since August from Makeni to Lungi along with some of their
22 equipment. National staff of the World Food Programme were also
23 relocated from Makeni to Freetown on the same day. Three United
24 Nations military observers who had been sent to Daru in
14:59:58 25 connection with the ECOMOG advance against Kailahun were also
26 withdrawn to Kenema.

27 Tension continued to rise in Freetown in anticipation of a
28 possible rebel attack. A rebel leader, Sam Bockarie, threatened
29 to launch an assault on the capital around the New Year unless

1 the government released the leader of the Revolutionary United
2 Front, Corporal Foday Sankoh."

3 Pause there. Mr Taylor, were you aware of such an
4 announcement by Sam Bockarie?

15:00:34 5 A. No, I was not.

6 Q. "And rebels advancing in the countryside announced that
7 they were fighting ECOMOG and the United Nations. On 24
8 December, as a precautionary measure, UNOMSIL began relocating
9 non-essential civilian staff from Freetown and withdrew the
10 military observer teams deployed at Bo and Kenema to Lungi.
11 United Nations agencies, the International Committee of the Red
12 Cross and international non-governmental organisations also began
13 to withdraw their personnel from the country. Governments with
14 diplomatic representation in Freetown began reducing their
15 embassy staff and subsequently withdrew all their personnel. The
16 Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern
17 Ireland also sent two aircraft to evacuate British and other
18 nationals from Sierra Leone.

19 On 27 December 1998, Makeni fell to the rebels, who seized
15:01:53 20 a number of vehicles in the town, greatly enhancing their
21 mobility and speed of movement. The fall of Makeni removed an
22 important obstacle to the rebels' ability to combine their forces
23 and placed them in a position to attack Freetown and the airport
24 at Lungi. The following day, UNOMSIL withdrew most of its
15:02:21 25 personnel from Freetown to Conakry, leaving a small core team led
26 by my special representative for Sierra Leone, Francis Okello, and
27 comprising the chief military observer, Brigadier General Subhash
28 Joshi, and other senior staff, as well as a few military
29 observers.

1 In the closing days of December, the rebels advanced
2 further westward, moving into Lunsar, engaging ECOMOG at Port
3 Loko, and attacking Waterloo and Hastings. ECOMOG continued to
4 bring in further reinforcements, including three fresh battalions
15:03:09 5 over the New Year.

6 On 4 January 1999, President Kabbah paid a one-day visit to
7 Bamako concerning the early deployment of a contingent of Malian
8 troops to reinforce ECOMOG in Sierra Leone. The troops are being
9 financed by a contribution from the Netherlands and their
15:03:35 10 transportation to Lungi is being arranged through the logistics
11 supply company PAE, with funding to be provided by the
12 United Kingdom. A similar arrangement is being put in place to
13 transport Gambian troops. The Government of the United Kingdom
14 has also announced the provision of a further one million pounds
15:04:00 15 to the government and to ECOMOG.

16 In the early hours of 6 January, rebels attacking from the
17 east of the city penetrated to the centre of Freetown, where they
18 opened Pademba Road Prison, freeing hundreds of prisoners
19 detained for offences relating to the period of junta rule, as
15:04:24 20 well as former soldiers of the Republic of Sierra Leone military
21 forces. The rebels also set fire to some buildings, including
22 the Nigerian High Commission. By nightfall of that day, the city
23 was quiet, with rebels apparently in control of the centre around
24 the State House. On the same day, UNOMSIL completed its
15:04:48 25 evacuation from Freetown."

26 Then this:

27 "On 20 December 1998, President Charles Taylor of Liberia a
28 announced the closure of the border between Liberia and
29 Sierra Leone."

1 We dealt with that, did we not, Mr Taylor?

2 A. Yes, we did.

3 Q. "And stated that he had ordered Armed Forces of Liberia
4 personnel to deploy at the border. President Taylor informed the
15:05:18 5 representative of the Secretary-General in Liberia, Felix
6 Downes-Thomas, that he had received intelligence reports
7 concerning an impending attack against the territory of Liberia
8 to take place in the latter part of December."

9 Again you had mentioned that in that speech, had you not,
15:05:40 10 Mr Taylor?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. "President Taylor said he believed that the attack to be
13 mounted by elements of former Liberian warring factions based in
14 Zimmi, southern Sierra Leone, would take place in the context of
15:05:55 15 a planned offensive by ECOMOG and the Sierra Leonean Civil
16 Defence Force against the rebels at Kailahun. President Taylor
17 proposed that ECOMOG troops in Liberia should mount joint patrols
18 with Liberian personnel along the border and called for an
19 investigation into the attack reportedly planned by ECOMOG
15:06:20 20 against the rebels in Sierra Leone.

21 Mr Downes-Thomas and Mr Okelo have urged President Taylor
22 and President Kabbah to discuss the situation directly and will,
23 if requested, offer their good offices accordingly."

24 Did you have such a discussion?

15:06:39 25 A. Oh, I'm not - we had talked before about joint patrols. On
26 this particular occasion I don't think we had re-opened it, but
27 we had discussed at some point in time - President Kabbah and
28 myself I mean - the issue of this joint patrol, because I was
29 expecting this attack from Sierra Leone and I'm not too - I'm not

1 too certain if we had raised it again at this time.

2 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, speaking of President Kabbah, when you
3 heard news of the Freetown invasion on the morning of the 6th,
4 did you call President Kabbah?

15:07:25 5 A. I don't recall calling him. I very much - I could have. I
6 do remember the first person that I called was the chairman. I
7 called the chairman of ECOWAS, President Eyadema, that morning to
8 tell him what was going on and I'm sure I probably spoke to a
9 couple more presidents. I'm not too sure. If I didn't talk to
15:07:53 10 him early that morning I'm sure some time during the day I could
11 have spoken to him, but I can remember very clearly talking to
12 Eyadema and I could have also spoken to President Abdul salami
13 Abubakar, I could have, and probably Alpha Konare, but I spoke to
14 three or four of the leaders in West Africa at that time and told
15:08:19 15 them about what had been said to me when my government enquired
16 in the morning what we had heard that morning and so by that
17 afternoon they had this information.

18 Q. "On 28 December my special representative attended an
19 extraordinary ministerial level meeting of the ECOWAS Committee
15:08:48 20 of Five on Sierra Leone in Abidjan, chaired by the minister for
21 foreign affairs of Togo. The committee which comprises Cote
22 d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia and Nigeria, was expanded to
23 include Togo, the current chairman of the Economic Community of
24 West African States. A representative of Burkina Faso, the
15:09:16 25 chairman of the Organisation of African Unity also attended, as
26 well as representatives of the United Kingdom and the
27 United States of America.

28 According to the final communique issued by the committee,
29 both the force commander of ECOMOG and the minister for foreign

1 affairs of Sierra Leone implicated Liberia in providing military
2 support to the rebels."

3 Pause.

4 A. Yes.

15:09:48 5 Q. First of all, let's fill in some detail. The force
6 commander of ECOMOG is who?

7 A. Timothy Shelpidi.

8 Q. The same general whose various comments we noted in other
9 documents this morning?

15:10:12 10 A. That is correct.

11 Q. And do you recall now who was the minister for foreign
12 affairs of Sierra Leone?

13 A. No, I don't recall. I don't recall who he - who he was,
14 no.

15:10:28 15 Q. Now, it goes on to say that:

16 "The minister for foreign affairs of Liberia denied any
17 involvement by his country in Sierra Leone and called for an
18 international investigation. The meeting was also informed by
19 the Government of Sierra Leone and ECOMOG that mercenaries were
15:10:49 20 fighting alongside the rebels".

21 Do you know anything about such mercenaries, Mr Taylor?

22 A. No, but I mean if ECOMOG is making this kind of accusation
23 they should be able to say who these mercenaries are. But we
24 know who they end up referring to. They are referring to
15:11:10 25 Liberians and they are pretending that they do not know who they
26 are.

27 Q. "...were fighting alongside the rebels in contravention of
28 international law. The Government of Liberia subsequently issued
29 a statement expressing disappointment and indignation at the

1 allegations against it, reiterating that it was not providing
2 support to the rebels and demanding concrete proof of the
3 allegations. The Government of Liberia further asserted that the
4 current and former governments of Sierra Leone had employed
15:11:49 5 Liberian mercenaries, which tended to destabilise the
6 sub-region."

7 And again, Mr Taylor, we know from that statement made by
8 President Kabbah to the TRC in Sierra Leone that that was in fact
9 the case.

15:12:11 10 A. That is correct.

11 Q. "In a letter addressed to the president of the Security
12 Council dated 6 January, 1999, President Taylor reiterated that
13 the Government of Liberia was in no way supporting the Armed
14 Forces Revolutionary Council or the Revolutionary United Front
15:12:37 15 forces in Sierra Leone and that it continued to abide by all
16 existing council resolutions and embargoes. Citing the lack of
17 evidence or proof produced by those who had accused his
18 government of doing so, President Taylor called on the Security
19 Council to investigate the allegation and again proposed that the
15:13:03 20 United Nations establish a mechanism to monitor the border
21 between the two countries.

22 The committee, now known as the Committee of Six on
23 Sierra Leone, appealed to the rebels to cease fighting
24 immediately, to lay down their arms and to recognise the
15:13:24 25 government of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah as the legitimate
26 government in Sierra Leone, to participate in dialogue and to
27 accept the government's offer of amnesty. The committee inter
28 alia also urged the international community to leave the rebels
29 in no doubt that they would never be accorded recognition as the

1 legitimate government.

2 The communique which has been circulated called for an
3 expedited provision of logistical support to ECOMOG. It
4 expressed grave concern at the aggression being perpetrated
15:14:05 5 against Sierra Leone and strongly condemned the activities of the
6 countries providing support to the rebels. The communique
7 condemned the presence of mercenaries in Sierra Leone.

8 The Committee of Six called on the chairman of ECOWAS to
9 embark on initiatives to develop true and genuine rapprochement
15:14:30 10 between the Heads of State of Sierra Leone and Liberia and
11 resolved to deploy all measures necessary to re-establish
12 dialogue between the government and the rebels, as prescribed in
13 the Abidjan and Conakry Peace Agreements."

14 You note that, Mr Taylor, "to re-establish dialogue between
15:14:52 15 the government and the rebels as prescribed in the Abidjan and
16 Conakry Peace Agreements", yes?

17 A. Yes, that's the whole point and by the Abidjan they are
18 talking about - we are talking here about the November 1996
19 Abidjan Accord. That's the Abidjan referred to here, yes.

15:15:10 20 Q. "On 7 January 1999, the presidency of Togo, the current
21 chairman of ECOWAS, launched an urgent appeal to the President of
22 Sierra Leone and the leader of the rebel forces to order a halt
23 to the fighting. In his statement, President Gnassingbe Eyadema
24 stressed that as the forces of the ECOWAS monitoring group were
15:15:41 25 forces of peace their mission in Sierra Leone was to help the
26 Sierra Leonean brothers put an end to the fratricidal war and
27 find a political solution to the conflict between them.

28 President Eyadema urged the President of Sierra Leone and
29 the head of the rebel forces to order their troops to lay down

1 their arms in order to permit the opening of a political dialogue
2 between the Sierra Leonean brothers with a view to definitive
3 settlement of the crisis."

4 Let us pause there for a minute, Mr Taylor. Now, in that
15:16:22 5 December period had your brother President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah
6 made any direct allegation to you of complicity with the rebel
7 attacks which were mounting in Sierra Leone?

8 A. No. No, he did not. He had not, no.

9 Q. Now, we see in the passage we've read, Mr Taylor, reference
15:16:47 10 to a meeting of Committee of Five foreign ministers on 28
11 December.

12 A. Uh-huh.

13 Q. Prior to that meeting had you been directly accused by
14 Sierra Leone of complicity with the rebels?

15:17:08 15 A. Directly, no. As a government, no.

16 Q. When your foreign minister reported that such accusations
17 had been made by General Shelpidi and the Sierra Leonean foreign
18 minister at that meeting, what was your reaction?

19 A. I was very, very upset. Very upset that this could have
15:17:39 20 come from Shelpidi again. I was very, very upset and just
21 didn't, you know, know what was going on in Shelpidi's mind
22 because at this meeting if you look at it - the picture that we
23 have to look at here is this: Here is the ECOMOG forces
24 commander at a meeting. And just like you see in the
15:18:07 25 Secretary-General's document saying they are mercenaries, people
26 begin to quote mercenaries, mercenaries, mercenaries. The
27 foreign minister of Sierra Leone going at that particular meeting
28 would not say to the forces commander, "No, you shouldn't be
29 saying this", so I was very upset that Shelpidi had ended up at a

1 foreign ministers' meeting and made such accusations.

2 And may I say that meeting and that accusation did not even
3 reach to the Heads of State level. It stayed right at the
4 foreign ministers' level after we issued a very strong
15:18:42 5 condemnation of what they were saying.

6 Q. Going on:

7 "Recent rebel attacks in the east and west have involved
8 the killing of civilians, the destruction of homes and
9 abductions. Women and children have been deliberately targeted
15:19:06 10 with close-range gunfire and other civilians have been summarily
11 executed.

12 Following the withdrawal of military observers from Makeni,
13 Bo and Kenema, it has been difficult for UNOMSIL to gather
14 reliable information about the human rights situation in the
15:19:26 15 countryside, particularly in the areas recently overrun by the
16 rebels. However, the rebel attacks have certainly resulted in
17 population displacements and, it is feared, the killing of
18 civilians.

19 While much of the ECOMOG activity around Freetown was
15:19:46 20 militarily justified, UNOMSIL has received complaints of assault,
21 harassment and unnecessary detention, primarily of young men.
22 Members of the pro-government CDF have been accused of summarily
23 killing one person during a house raid on 26 December.

24 On 26 December, a number of prominent personalities
15:20:14 25 organised and addressed a large rally in the city centre. Many
26 of the speeches were highly inflammatory and called on people to
27 take the law into their own hands regarding alleged rebels or
28 rebel sympathisers. During the proceedings, some members of the
29 crowd seized two men and accused them of being rebels. UNOMSIL

1 personnel witnessed the murder of the two men by persons in the
2 crowd, with the clear support of onlookers. When the identities
3 of the two victims were later ascertained, there was no
4 indication that they harboured sympathies for the rebels.

15:20:59 5 Immediately after the incident, my special representative
6 expressed his grave concern to the President and requested
7 government intervention to restrain similar inflammatory
8 statements and acts of violence. The minister for information
9 then broadcast a message calling on people to desist from revenge
15:21:20 10 attacks and to hand all suspects over to the authorities. No
11 further such incidents were reported that day.

12 The humanitarian implications of the recent developments in
13 Sierra Leone are very troubling. Overland access to the interior
14 has been cut and the capacity to provide humanitarian assistance
15:21:48 15 has been sharply reduced as all expatriate staff of international
16 non-governmental organisations and most United Nations agency and
17 ICRC staff have been relocated outside of the country. While
18 sufficient food stocks are available in country to meet the
19 immediate needs, delivery much beyond Freetown is no longer
15:22:15 20 possible. The country might soon be facing a humanitarian crisis
21 of major proportions.

22 Rebel advances have been preceded by the displacement of
23 large numbers of civilians in an attempt to flee the violence.
24 It is estimated that as many as 40,000 internally displaced
15:22:41 25 persons were concentrated in Makeni prior to the attack on that
26 city. Closer to Freetown, in Waterloo, rebel attacks prompted
27 the flight of 12,000 internally displaced persons and Liberian
28 refugees residing in a camp to Freetown. Though some may now
29 have returned to the camp, lack of access prevents humanitarian

1 agencies from assessing their situation and distributing
2 assistance. The continued violence also raises the prospect of
3 refugee flows to neighbouring countries."

4 Pause there. Mr Taylor, speaking of refugee flows, did the
15:23:33 5 Freetown invasion result in refugees fleeing to Liberia?

6 A. Oh, yes. The refugees crossed the border into Liberia,
7 yes.

8 Q. Let's skip over to the observations and recommendations,
9 shall we:

15:24:04 10 "Sierra Leone has suffered a serious setback. I deplore
11 the recent intensification of hostilities and the rebel attacks
12 on Freetown. Nevertheless, the international community has not
13 abandoned Sierra Leone and should not do so.

14 The ECOWAS Committee of Six on Sierra Leone has shown
15:24:24 15 commendable initiative and resolve. I endorse its conclusions
16 and urge ECOWAS to meet at the summit level as soon as possible,
17 with the participation of all interested countries to consider
18 ways of dealing with the current situation. The summit should
19 consider how best to continue its support for the legitimate

15:24:54 20 Government of Sierra Leone, how to achieve a political settlement
21 of the conflict and how to relieve the humanitarian needs of the
22 Sierra Leonean people.

23 Nevertheless, ECOWAS and ECOMOG should not bear the burden
24 alone. I commend the Governments of the Netherlands, the
15:25:16 25 United Kingdom and the United States for their past and
26 continuing efforts to ensure the provision of the necessary
27 logistical support to ECOMOG, and encourage member states to be
28 prepared to make further contributions to the peace process as
29 may be required.

1 I also welcome the various efforts that have been made to
2 secure a peaceful solution to the conflict through dialogue,
3 including those by the President of the Gambia and the Reverend
4 Jesse Jackson.

15:25:51 5 Military successes will not win the rebels legitimacy or
6 recognition. I therefore call on them to open discussions with
7 the government on any legitimate political demands and grievances
8 they or their supporters may have.

9 The future of UNOMSIL now appears much less clear than it
15:26:14 10 did only a matter of weeks ago and the modest expansion of the
11 civilian staff that I envisaged in my report of 16 December is
12 untenable in the present circumstances."

13 I don't think - unless there is anything further you want
14 to direct our attention to, Mr Taylor, I don't know if there is
15:26:43 15 anything further that assists?

16 A. No, not really, except to mention that we did begin the
17 process by the - after this report, efforts were put into place
18 immediately to renew the mandate to contact these people to see
19 if we can get a ceasefire. So we begin working on a ceasefire
15:27:14 20 proposal immediately that we do not get into place until
21 somewhere about March/April, but we begin to intensify the
22 activities with Ivory Coast using her contacts. We are already
23 in contact with Bockarie in trying to begin the process of trying
24 to get a final ceasefire, which we do get later.

15:28:04 25 MR GRIFFITHS: Can I ask please, Mr President, for this
26 document to be marked for identification, "Special Report of the
27 Secretary-General on the United Nations Observer Mission to
28 Sierra Leone" dated 7 January 1999, MFI-66.

29 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked MFI-66.

1 MR GRIFFITHS:

2 Q. Now this report, Mr Taylor, speaks at paragraph 15 of a
3 letter annexed to the report written by you --

4 A. Yes.

15:28:41 5 Q. -- to the Security Council?

6 A. That is correct.

7 Q. Can we turn to behind divider 3, please. Is this the
8 letter, Mr Taylor?

9 A. Yes, this is the letter. We profited - because of the six
15:29:28 10 hour difference in time we profited in we were lucky in getting
11 this in the special report at the time, yes.

12 Q. Right. Now taking matters in stages, what was it that
13 prompted you to write the letter, Mr Taylor?

14 A. Within hours of that attack in Freetown there were reports
15:29:53 15 coming about that there are Liberians that are involved in this
16 attack on Freetown and that there are Liberians that are leading
17 this operation. This is the news all over the wires and we know
18 we have nothing to do with it and so we set out immediately not
19 only to just write the Secretary-General, but to contact our
15:30:15 20 colleagues. That is what prompted this letter immediately on
21 that day.

22 Q. "I am pleased to present my compliments and to refer to
23 recent accusations made against the Government of Liberia by the
24 force commander of the Monitoring Group of the Economic Community
15:30:37 25 of West African States and the foreign minister of Sierra Leone
26 at the recent meeting of the ECOWAS Committee of Five on
27 Sierra Leone held in Abidjan on 28 December 1998. The Government
28 of Liberia was accused of supporting the rebellion in
29 Sierra Leone.

1 The Government of Liberia wishes to inform the Security
2 Council that it is in no manner or form supporting the Armed
3 Forces Revolutionary Council or the Revolutionary United Front
4 forces in Sierra Leone and that it continues to abide by all
15:31:18 5 existing Security Council resolutions and embargoes. The failure
6 and inability of those parties accusing Liberia to produce any
7 evidence or proof is sufficient grounds to warrant such
8 accusations as not credible and speculative. The Government of
9 Liberia calls upon the Security Council to investigate freely
15:31:42 10 those malicious allegations, which are purely intended to cover
11 up the failure of the use of force as a policy to end the civil
12 war in Sierra Leone.

13 It is important to note that, whilst accusing Liberia of
14 supporting the rebels, both ECOMOG and the Government of
15:32:08 15 Sierra Leone have also accused white mercenaries and certain
16 senior military officers of the Sierra Leonean army in Freetown."

17 Pause there. Was there this accusation of white
18 mercenaries being involved, Mr Taylor?

19 A. Oh, yes. Yes, they said that there were white mercenaries
15:32:30 20 involved fighting alongside the rebels. Yes, they said that.

21 Q. "In fact there has been no consistency with regard to whom
22 is being accused. Political opposition leaders living in the
23 United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the
24 United States of America and certain non-Sierra Leonean
15:32:53 25 businessmen deported by the Kabbah government have also been
26 accused. What is quite interesting is the fact that Sierra Leone
27 is not only bordered by Liberia, but by two countries. The other
28 country has a border three times the length of the border with
29 Liberia. The strength of the rebels and their activities have

1 been confirmed to be concentrated in the northern region, which
2 is of geographical proximity not to Liberia, but to the other
3 neighbour. The eastern region, which is of geographical
4 proximity to Liberia, is calm. The accused white mercenaries
15:33:38 5 have been identified as Ukrainians. The only presence of
6 Ukrainians in the sub-region is to be found in the other
7 neighbouring country."

8 Pause there. What are you talking about there?

9 A. Well the pilots for the helicopters being used by the
15:34:00 10 Sierra Leonean government are Ukrainians, they are stationed in
11 Guinea and, like I said, the northern part of the country is not
12 contiguous with the borders of Liberia. Like we say, the eastern
13 part is - no, these are people living in Guinea and so if you're
14 talking about white mercenaries there are no Ukrainians in
15:34:23 15 Liberia.

16 Q. "The lack of proof against Liberia could very well be due
17 to the fact that the accusing fingers are being pointed at the
18 wrong person and that other possible sources of support for the
19 rebels have been ruled out. Circumstantial evidence and the
15:34:44 20 process of elimination are not tenable grounds upon which to make
21 such grave accusations against a state member of the United
22 Nations. We believe that the United Nations Observer Mission in
23 Sierra Leone should conduct its own independent analysis of the
24 situation, and that the international community should not be
15:35:09 25 compelled to make decisions based on speculation."

26 Did anyone carry out such an independent analysis of the
27 situation, Mr Taylor?

28 A. No, we never got this. This is one of those investigations
29 that has been called for many, many times before the Security

1 Council, but just never got off. I guess nobody was interested
2 in getting to the bottom of it. The little ones - remember, the
3 one about the 5,000 troops, we are able to get to it right away.
4 They go to the border, no 5,000 troops, finish. The other one
15:35:47 5 about this Bukari Musa with the 3,000 troops, we're lucky to get
6 people to go to Camp Naama immediately and look at it.

7 This general problem that we've asked for, if you watch it
8 here he will say the Government of Liberia. Again, the
9 Secretary-General of the United Nations is admitting that we've
15:36:08 10 asked more than once, "Listen, people. This is not true. Let's
11 launch an investigation." We never get to it. From that time,
12 going through 1999/2000, the United Nations never launches a
13 formal investigation to ascertain the authenticity of the
14 information that is just being put across the world press. Never
15:36:37 15 do.

16 Q. "The Government of Liberia renews its request to the United
17 Nations to put into place a mechanism to ensure transparency in
18 the monitoring of its border by the United Nations. Our
19 commitment to the restoration of peace and security in
15:36:59 20 Sierra Leone is evidenced by the following measures undertaken
21 with regard to the situation in Sierra Leone:

22 1. The government has publicly and unequivocally stated
23 its support for the elected government of President Kabbah and
24 condemned the atrocities perpetrated against the people of
15:37:22 25 Sierra Leone;

26 2. The government has requested, through the
27 Secretary-General of the United Nations, that the United Nations
28 deploy observers at the Liberian-Sierra Leonean border to monitor
29 the implementation of the United Nations embargo;

1 3. The government has requested ECOWAS, through its
2 executive secretary, to deploy an observer unit of ECOMOG at the
3 Liberian-Sierra Leonean border;

4 4. The government has offered to conduct joint border
15:38:01 5 security activities with the Government of Sierra Leone;

6 5. The government has undertaken to maintain regular
7 high-level contacts with the Government of Sierra Leone through
8 the exchange of envoys;

9 6. The government has voted for and supported sanctions
15:38:23 10 and embargoes against the AFRC/RUF and all ECOWAS initiatives for
11 Sierra Leone;

12 7. The government has offered to accept undercover
13 security personnel from Sierra Leone to operate in Liberia in
14 assisting to ensure that no activities against Sierra Leone are
15:38:45 15 carried out;

16 8. The government, through its President, has proposed an
17 initiative to assist the peace process in Sierra Leone and; the
18 government continues to provide safe refuge for tens of thousands
19 of Sierra Leonean refugees in Liberia."

15:39:06 20 Had you done all of that, Mr Taylor?

21 A. All of that. Every one of these we had done. And even
22 more important is the one that suggests the issue of undercover
23 agents when you look at item (g), "The government has offered to
24 accept undercover security personnel from Sierra Leone to operate
15:39:28 25 in Liberia in assisting to ensure that no activities against
26 Sierra Leone are carried out."

27 What we proposed: Look, send plain-clothes undercover
28 people. The government doesn't want to know who they are. Plant
29 them across the borders. If they observe anything, they inform

1 you, we will act on it. Plain-clothes people. I mean, we did
2 everything for God's sake on the Sierra Leonean problem. I don't
3 know. We did everything. Send your people.

4 Because the border area we're talking about, we went
15:40:06 5 through this on the map. There are Mendes, there are Temnes,
6 there are Kissies along the entire border. So if you send a
7 security personnel from Sierra Leone that is for example a Mende
8 and he mixes in the population it's impossible for anyone to know
9 that he is an agent. Send him. Send as many as you want. Plant
15:40:29 10 them in these areas. Once they get information and pass it on to
11 you over there, tell us, say on this date at this time this
12 person did this, we will go after them.

13 We couldn't even get this to happen. Even calling on them
14 to send their undercover people into Liberia. I don't know what
15:40:48 15 else I could have done. Everything mentioned here to Security
16 Council was done by my government. Every one of them.

17 Q. "We believe that the United Nations can still play an
18 important role in the resolution of the conflict in Sierra Leone.
19 Since October 1997, the Government of Liberia has called on the
15:41:16 20 United Nations to deploy observers on the Liberian-Sierra Leonean
21 border and in May 1998 we reiterated this appeal to the
22 Secretary-General. In paragraph 78 and 79 of this fifth progress
23 report on Sierra Leone, the Secretary-General indicated his
24 intention to discuss the matter further with the government with
15:41:46 25 a view to making appropriate recommendations to the Security
26 Council for the deployment of observers on the border. To date,
27 nothing has been done by the Security Council to this effect.

28 There can be no doubt that the Government of Sierra Leone
29 takes offence at the suggestion of the Government of Liberia that

1 dialogue be pursued as a means to end their civil war. From our
2 experience in Liberia, only a negotiated settlement, and not a
3 military victory, will bring sustainable peace to Sierra Leone.
4 The aversion of the government of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah to
15:42:31 5 dialogue is a clear indication of a lack of political will to
6 pursue a negotiated settlement."

7 Did you feel that was the position of the Kabbah
8 government, Mr Taylor?

9 A. Well, in all fairness to President Kabbah, even though
15:42:56 10 we've had our differences, deep inside him he wanted to dialogue
11 but he was under pressure not to. I believe that this is the
12 best way I can put it. I'll be fair to him, because he always
13 spoke about our brothers need to sit down to talk, so - but he
14 was under pressure. Where some believe that they could have
15:43:20 15 achieved military victory and were pushing him a lot to combat,
16 combat, combat. Eventually it was through dialogue that we got
17 the peace.

18 Q. Pressure from where?

19 A. I'll tell you it's very difficult to - because we're in a
15:43:44 20 court of law, sometimes these conversations, people could come
21 back and say, "Well, you know, we don't recall what was said."
22 But my discussion with President Kabbah, he always showed a
23 desire to talk. But when it came down to the decision to stop
24 combat, he did not have the ultimate power to stop it because he
15:44:12 25 didn't have - he was being backed by the Nigerian force at the
26 time and most of his support were coming from outside.

27 For example, if you read - from our reading of the
28 Secretary-General's report, you see the Secretary-General
29 speaking openly about ECOMOG is carrying out attacks in these

1 areas. He is not saying that ECOMOG is defending himself which
2 tells you that they are in what? Peace enforcement at this
3 particular time. So even Kabbah cannot stop it. He cannot stop
4 it.

15:44:51 5 If you read through the reports you'll see where the
6 Secretary-General talks about ECOMOG and the CDF carrying out
7 these attacks. So this now shows anyone that this is with the
8 acquiescence of what? The international community. So Kabbah on
9 his own right now, it's out of his hands. He cannot do anything
10 about this.

11 But I never - I never - throughout my discussions with him,
12 I never saw in him this mood where he wanted to fight. I always
13 thought he wanted to dialogue and to get this matter settled, but
14 it was out of his hands.

15:45:35 15 Q. And it goes on:

16 "The attendant failure of the Government of Sierra Leone to
17 achieve a military conquest has occasioned these unfounded
18 allegations against the Government of Liberia."

19 What did you mean by that, Mr Taylor?

15:45:53 20 A. Well, again these things, they are mostly coming from
21 ECOMOG. So this belief that they can achieve military victory
22 and seeing that they are getting resistance, so the only thing to
23 do is to try to find a - you know, some whipping boy. So I
24 became the whipping boy.

15:46:13 25 Q. "In all candour we should be concentrating our efforts,
26 directing our energies and committing our resources to the
27 attainment of a ceasefire and the re-establishment of dialogue,
28 rather than engaging in reckless accusations.

29 Permit me to reassure the members of the Security Council

1 of the continued willingness of the Government of Liberia to play
2 a positive and meaningful role in helping to bring peace to
3 Sierra Leone and to enforce all resolutions of the United
4 Nations."

15:46:49 5 Now, Mr Taylor, at this time in January 1999, do you recall
6 who was your deputy minister of information?

7 A. Yes. The deputy minister of information was a gentleman
8 called Milton Teahjay. I can remember Milton Teahjay in fact was
9 - if I'm correct, because of all of the steam that had built up
15:47:37 10 during this time not only did we write the Security Council, but
11 knowing that some of the principal undercurrent from this matter
12 was coming from Britain, Britain, Britain, we dispatched the
13 deputy minister of information with a document to the British
14 foreign office in London to come. It was a diplomatic mission.

15:48:04 15 Teahjay came along with another gentleman. I think it was
16 Mr Jackson, Samuel Jackson, to present a document to the foreign
17 Commonwealth office again trying to --

18 Q. The foreign Commonwealth office where?

19 A. In London. In London. Mr Teahjay was dispatched to London
15:48:26 20 with an explanation - again a document to explain to the area
21 that the fire was coming from that, look, here is the situation
22 on the ground. That was later on in January.

23 Q. Now, have you seen that document presented by Mr Teahjay?

24 A. Yes, I know the document very well. I read it. I approved
15:48:51 25 the document. I know it very well.

26 MR GRIFFITHS: Before we move to that document could I ask
27 please that the letter to the Security Council dated 6 January
28 1999 from Charles Taylor, the President of Liberia, to the
29 president of the Security Council, that be marked for

1 identification MFI-67.

2 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is so marked.

3 MR GRIFFITHS:

4 Q. Before we go to the Milton Teahjay document, Mr Taylor.

15:49:46 5 PRESIDING JUDGE: I wonder if you could just pause there,
6 please. We seem to be having some LiveNote problems here. We're
7 not getting the transcript.

8 MS IRURA: Your Honour, I will confer with the technicians
9 to find out what is going on, but I can report that my LiveNote
15:50:03 10 appears to be working, therefore transcription is ongoing. It
11 would be a problem with LiveNote.

12 PRESIDING JUDGE: Mr Griffiths, my understanding is that
13 the court reporter is recording the proceedings. It's just that
14 the LiveNote that we're looking at - I don't know if it affects
15:51:00 15 you as well - is not working at the moment.

16 MR GRIFFITHS: Mr President, I'm quite happy, so long as
17 everyone is assured that a record is being kept, to continue.
18 I'm quite happy to continue, because I don't think, given the
19 nature of the exchange, that I particularly need to have the
15:51:21 20 LiveNote in front of me.

21 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, thank you for that, Mr Griffiths.
22 We're happy to continue as well. Madam Court Manager, you do
23 confirm that the record is being kept though?

24 MS IRURA: Your Honour, the record is being kept and I
15:51:37 25 would be able to broadcast my LiveNote for purposes of those
26 whose LiveNote has stalled.

27 PRESIDING JUDGE: All right. Thank you. We'll continue,
28 please, Mr Griffiths.

29 MR GRIFFITHS:

1 Q. Mr Taylor, could we look, please, behind divider 4 in this
2 same bundle. Do you have it, Mr Taylor?

3 A. Yes, I do.

4 Q. What are we looking at?

15:52:25 5 A. We are looking at the document that I dispatched to London
6 with my deputy minister of information Milton Teahjay.

7 Q. Now, the document is headed "Liberia's response to
8 allegations of her involvement in the Sierra Leone civil war and
9 dismisses such accusations as an international conspiracy

15:52:52 10 spearheaded by the United States and Britain in an attempt to
11 internationally isolate, economically destroy and politically
12 destabilise the Government of the Republic of Liberia, presented
13 by the deputy minister of information, J Milton Teahjay, London,
14 United Kingdom, 26 January 1999". Yes?

15:53:22 15 A. Yes, that's a very important allegation there and I think
16 there's reason for that.

17 Q. Right, I'm going to ask you directly about that. Why are
18 you suggesting in this document, Mr Taylor, that this is a
19 conspiracy spearheaded by the United States and Great Britain?

15:53:46 20 A. Look, your Honours, the issues here are very clear. We
21 have accusations of arms traffic. We have accusations of near
22 invasion of a nation. These matters are before the Security
23 Council. Britain has expressed its own interest even when we -
24 when ECOMOG launched the attempt to stage the intervention in
15:54:36 25 February, Britain through its ambassador, Sir John Weston,
26 condemned the attacks on Freetown claiming that so many civilians
27 were being killed. Britain has expressed her interests and it's
28 accepted that she has interests in Sierra Leone.

29 If Britain and the United States wanted to get to the

1 bottom of these accusations after nearly two years of making it,
2 just before this is done the Washington Post - and those of us
3 that have been in international - in diplomatic circles know that
4 in the United States there are two papers. When the New York
15:55:32 5 Times comes out with something, or the Washington Post, you know
6 the United States government is involved one way or another, or
7 is going to claim their attention. The Washington Post
8 immediately on or about the middle of January writes a long
9 publication saying that Liberia's hand seen into Sierra Leone.
15:55:54 10 That's the attention of the United States government.

11 So this accusation is - and bringing it into their faces
12 here is an attempt to say to them, "Guys, let's get to the bottom
13 of it." And the fact that they are willing and prepared to see
14 this linger shows that they have an interest in seeing Liberia go
15:56:22 15 through this headache every day.

16 On the Security Council we know, more than five permanent
17 members - there's not a President in the world that doesn't know
18 this. Five permanent members, we know China very rarely - when
19 was the last time you heard China casting a veto in the United
15:56:42 20 Nations? Almost never, okay? If we look at Russia, how
21 frequently? Almost never. Let's look at France. I think maybe
22 one or two over the past almost 50 years. Who's cast more?
23 Things get done in the Security Council - when America and
24 Britain push it, it gets done. Now, this is fact and everybody
15:57:02 25 knows. Nobody wants to say it, but I'm saying it here. All
26 presidents will go through this.

27 These two countries have their little sway to move their
28 colleagues on the Council. I don't want to say they control
29 them, but they can move them. They had done nothing but

1 acquiesce in seeing this whole thing fester and seeing Liberia
2 cook and stew. That's what I call it.

3 And I'm saying - I'm talking today and even now I'm hurt.
4 I'm angry, I'm hurt, because I saw the whole country of Liberia
15:57:42 5 destroyed, my government destroyed, a war with LURD come, simply
6 because two responsible members of the international community in
7 the way I'm saying acquiesced in all of this nonsense. So I'm
8 hurt even today as I sit here, okay?

9 So I'm saying that they are responsible. This is why we
15:58:02 10 send directly to the foreign office and put it in their faces,
11 "Here is the issue. What do you have to say?" By the same time
12 in Washington we are doing the same thing. We have our
13 ambassador directly in contact with the State Department. In
14 Monrovia, my foreign minister is putting it in their faces. I'm
15:58:23 15 not saying something here today that these people were not
16 confronted it. We confronted them face to face with it. So
17 that's why we can say this today that they are responsible.
18 That's why we made this accusation.

19 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, you mentioned in that answer an article
15:58:39 20 appearing in the Washington Post, yes?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Before we come to this document behind divider 4, can we
23 just go quickly behind divider 2 please. What do you have behind
24 divider 2, Mr Taylor?

15:59:11 25 A. This is the exact document that I'm talking about that came
26 out from the Washington Post.

27 MR GRIFFITHS: Unhappily, I have this in a different format
28 and my copy is incomplete. So I'm wondering if I can borrow
29 someone's version - complete version:

1 Q. Mr Taylor, can I borrow that version please. Thank you
2 very much. Now, Mr Taylor, is this the Washington Post article
3 you were talking about?

4 A. That's it. January 10, 1999, that's it.

16:00:46 5 Q. Let's just have a quick look at this, shall we?

6 "Liberian's Hand Seen in Sierra Leone War, The Washington Post,
7 James Rupert, 10 January 1999", yes?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. "The West African states of Liberia and Burkina Faso have
16:01:08 10 been aiding the rebels in Sierra Leone who have stunned the
11 elected government there by seizing much of the country and its
12 capital in recent weeks, according to Liberian, other West
13 African and US sources.

14 In Sierra Leone's capital, Freetown, rebels battled for a
16:01:28 15 fourth day today against Nigerian troops of the West African
16 intervention force, known as ECOMOG, which is defending the
17 civilian government. The rebels' startling rebound has set back
18 efforts by Nigeria, supported by the United States and others, to
19 stabilise Sierra Leone's government.

16:01:51 20 The rebels - who include former army soldiers and bush
21 guerrillas of a rural, revolutionary movement - ran a brutal and
22 chaotic military government in Sierra Leone for much of 1997.
23 ECOMOG drove the rebels back into the countryside last year,
24 where the insurgents drew global attention for avenging their
16:02:15 25 ouster by amputating the hands, arms or ears of civilians they
26 captured in village raids.

27 African and western military analysts said that, while the
28 rebels' advance in part reflects ECOMOG's weaknesses, the rebels
29 have reinforced themselves with recruits from Liberia and have

1 gotten new weapons. The Liberian government of President Charles
2 Taylor denies accusations that it is aiding the rebels, but
3 several Liberian sources, including one close to Liberia's
4 security agencies, said it is doing so."

16:03:00 5 Mr Taylor, has anyone ever named these sources?

6 A. That's the problem right there. This is how they cause
7 trouble.

8 Q. Now, let's go a bit further.

9 A. Never.

16:03:11 10 Q. Let's go a bit further:

11 "Both Liberia, which recently emerged from a seven year
12 civil war, and Sierra Leone are formally under international arms
13 embargoes.

14 Sierra Leone's rebels appear to have gotten help from white
16:03:27 15 mercenaries. Sierra Leoneans fleeing recent fighting in the east
16 have reported seeing white soldiers among the rebels. Sierra
17 Leone's government has said it suspects the white soldiers are
18 Ukrainian mercenaries.

19 While Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Britain publicly have
16:03:48 20 accused Taylor's government of helping Sierra Leone's rebels, the
21 US government has held back. Washington has solid evidence that
22 Taylor is helping the rebels, but 'cannot discuss it openly for
23 fear of compromising intelligence sources', said one of several
24 US officials reached in Africa and Washington."

16:04:18 25 Pause there. Mr Taylor, in 1998 was there not a military
26 attache attached to the Liberian embassy who conducted certain
27 research in Liberia?

28 A. Oh, definitely, yes.

29 Q. What was his name?

1 A. It was Colonel Dempsey.

2 Q. And, as you remarked in your speech, that military attache
3 had found limited evidence of arms transactions across the
4 border, is that right?

16:04:58 5 A. That is correct.

6 Q. Now, here this article is saying "Washington has solid
7 evidence that Taylor is helping the rebels." Have you ever seen
8 such evidence?

9 A. I have never seen it, they have never produced it and this
16:05:25 10 is the type of language that is used maybe by journalists that
11 you never get to the bottom of it. Washington has solid evidence
12 that Taylor is helping, but cannot discuss it openly for fear of
13 compromising the intelligence sources.

14 Now, we have heard this type of language before "said one
16:05:45 15 US official". You never get to know who the official is. You
16 never see the report. All they do is hide behind this big lie of
17 intelligence and this is the source of some of these problems.

18 You now, now, now call Rupert before this Court and he will
19 not be able to show you one report. It is just this - this is
16:06:06 20 the - it's almost like a cancer. This whole journalistic
21 nightmare here is part of this propaganda machinery that
22 destroyed me in Liberia. You will never get to know who the
23 official is and there was probably never an official that ever
24 said anything. They write this up just to fan the flames of
16:06:31 25 trouble against country. You would be spending the rest of your
26 life trying to find out and you would never find out who said it.
27 This is it right here.

28 Q. Mr Taylor, has any government produced quote unquote any
29 solid evidence showing that you've been supplying arms to the

1 RUF?

2 A. I have seen no such reports. Not one. And if one exists
3 now, I hope they bring it forward. Not one. Only allegations
4 and allegations and allegations. Not one.

16:07:13 5 Q. Let's continue for completeness sake:

6 "But 'cannot discuss it openly for fear of compromising
7 intelligence sources', said one of several US officials reached
8 in Africa and Washington.

9 The State Department has called for Liberia to halt support
16:07:32 10 for the rebels emanating from its territory."

11 Mr Taylor, did the US State Department contact you in those
12 terms.

13 A. No, no, no. Not at this time, no. Never. Later on in
14 another period later we get a visit from a senior State
16:07:59 15 Department official who visits later and we discuss this matter.

16 Q. What was the name of that official?

17 A. What's that? The Undersecretary of State Pickering.
18 Undersecretary Pickering came to Liberia later on in I think '99
19 or 2000. But up until this time there had not been any direct
16:08:24 20 accusation or anything. But look at what he says earlier than
21 that, okay. He says something interesting. He said that what
22 the Taylor government, but Washington has solid evidence but
23 cannot discuss it. But he never discussed it even privately.
24 Never discussed it.

16:08:50 25 Q. So where this journalist is claiming to quote from a State
26 Department statement to you, because you note it's in quotation
27 marks, at this time was there such a document in existence,
28 Mr Taylor, that had been sent to you?

29 A. No. The Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs

1 Vicky Huddleston has just said there's no evidence. There's not
2 even 30 days, here is a journalist saying - remember the report
3 that we looked at earlier, the statement that I made on 29
4 December where the Assistant Secretary of State, December 29, I'm
16:09:40 5 saying has said that there is no evidence. So between December
6 29 and the 10th now of January here is a journalist saying there
7 is no such thing. There is no such thing.

8 Q. "The State Department has called for Liberia to halt
9 support for the rebels emanating from its territory. According
16:10:06 10 to one official, there was a lot of debate over that formulation,
11 with some policymakers arguing for explicitly accusing the
12 Liberian government. Other officials said US intelligence
13 reporting suggests that the bulk of the aid to the rebels is
14 flowing from somewhere other than Liberia, notably from the
16:10:29 15 nearby country of Burkina Faso."

16 Mr Taylor, let's just pause for a moment. Does Burkina
17 Faso share a border with Sierra Leone?

18 A. No.

19 Q. To transport material from Burkina Faso to Sierra Leone,
16:11:02 20 help us, which country would you have to cross?

21 A. You have to cross a number of countries. From Burkina Faso
22 you have to cross La Cote d'Ivoire, then to Liberia to get to
23 Sierra Leone. From Burkina Faso you have to cross La Cote
24 d'Ivoire, then come across Guinea into Sierra Leone. These are
16:11:28 25 two possible directions.

26 Q. "Liberian sources said rebel recruits from Burkina Faso,
27 have in recent months crossed Liberia to reach Sierra Leone."
28 Mr Taylor, do you know anything about that?

29 A. That never happened. Well, let's look at the evidence

1 before the Court and this is how these - let's look. Is there
2 any evidence before this Court so far that there are Burkinabes
3 so far from even the Prosecution side? Maybe I'm wrong. I've
4 never heard any evidence led in this Court that there was a bunch
16:12:09 5 of Burkinabes that were arrested or killed in Sierra Leone. I
6 could stand corrected on that.

7 But to show you the confusion of this young man who is
8 writing this, only a troublemaker, he is showing in these last
9 two paragraphs on the first page that there appears - he is
16:12:25 10 saying that there appears to be some debate ongoing in the State
11 Department where some officials are saying no, it may not be so
12 and others are saying the bulk of aid is coming from Burkina
13 Faso. So on the one hand the American government doesn't operate
14 like this. I don't work for them, but even a small government
16:12:44 15 like Liberia will not operate like this; where there is still
16 internal debate and you say somebody has - the government
17 officially has said halt your support emanating from your
18 territory. No responsible government operates in this manner.

19 Once issues are being debated - I do not dispute that maybe
16:13:02 20 an issue was being debated within the American government circles
21 but, as responsible as the American government is, nobody in that
22 State Department will make such a statement unless it's been
23 cleared. So it doesn't work the way this fellow is saying. It
24 doesn't work that way. Even for a little country like Liberia it
16:13:20 25 wouldn't work where on the one hand you see some official saying
26 there's a lot of debate over that formulation of the policy
27 arguing for explicitly accusing the Liberian government and other
28 officials saying US intelligence report suggests that the bulk of
29 the aid is flowing from outside of - no. You see a formulation,

1 a policy formulation in the making and not a decision.

2 So on the one hand he can't say he - he cannot point to a
3 decision here and on the other hand point to debates that are
4 going to lead to the formulation of a policy. The United States
16:13:57 5 government is too responsible to operate like this and I don't
6 think they operated this way.

7 Q. "It was not immediately possible to reach Burkina Faso's
8 government for comment. Covert Liberian help for the Sierra
9 Leonean rebels is connected to, 'A mindset of fear and an
16:14:23 10 obsession with security among Taylor and his people that is
11 leading his government to build a heavily police state in which
12 overlapping security agencies show too little respect for law or
13 for human rights', said a Liberian journalist who asked not to be
14 named.

16:14:43 15 At least three Liberian security agencies, including a
16 secret military force called SWAP" - what's that, Mr Taylor?

17 A. I've never heard of SWAP in my life in Liberia.

18 Q. But it's supposedly commanded by your son because it goes
19 on, "Reportedly commanded by Taylor's son". What's SWAP,
16:15:07 20 Mr Taylor, S-W-A-P?

21 A. No, I have no idea.

22 Q. What does it stand for?

23 A. I don't know. The force that my son commanded was the
24 special anti-terrorist unit, not this. I don't know this word in
16:15:26 25 my life. Never. My son commanded the special anti-terrorist
26 unit in Liberia, not this thing I see here.

27 Q. "...share responsibility for Taylor's personal protection.
28 Liberian officials declined to discuss SWAP but other Liberian
29 sources said it is training men from Gambia, Guinea, and Burkina

1 Faso for missions that may include fighting in Sierra Leone."

2 Was there such a thing, Mr Taylor?

3 A. Never. Never such a thing.

16:16:07

4 Q. I mean, help us, please. Did you have a camp in Liberia,
5 Mr Taylor, where you were training Gambians, Guineans,
6 Burkinabes, whilst ECOMOG was still in the country?

16:16:36

7 A. Never had such a camp. Never. Never. If we look back at
8 that report of Colonel Dempsey that should be around June or so.
9 Never. The country is full of peacekeepers. It's full of United
10 Nations staff personnel. I don't know - maybe I'm just bad
11 lucky. I don't know how these people make up these things and
12 then, you know, it becomes so serious because, you know, human
13 beings are human beings and I guess going through the - but what
14 is it about this Taylor man that everybody is picking on him?

16:16:57

15 Then somebody will say, "Well, there's got to be something about
16 him." But I don't know why a James Rupert way in Washington
17 would write this nonsense. Maybe he doesn't know. He doesn't
18 know and they just make mischief, okay.

16:17:16

19 Another guy made mischief, I think the Washington Post got
20 rid of him, that's the Farah man. But these guys just write
21 things. You call this man, unknown sources, unnamed officials.
22 You never find out who said it but then you are left with the
23 headache of trying to correct it. There's no such thing.

16:17:35

24 If it were so the Secretary-General representative or
25 ECOMOG even with all of Helicis' accusations against me, he has
26 never talked about these people training. Remember this General
27 Shelpidi that is so anti-Taylor, even he doesn't say that this
28 nonsense is going on in Liberia. He doesn't even say that.

29 Q. "For months Taylor has accused neighbouring states and

1 ECOMOG of joining Liberian opponents of his in plotting a coup."

2 Had you been doing that?

3 A. I accused them and it was true.

4 Q. "Three weeks ago he ordered a military alert against what
16:18:12 5 his radio station said was a force of 5,000 men massing in Sierra
6 Leone to overthrow him."

7 Did you say that?

8 A. Not 5,000, he lied about it. But I did accuse them of the
9 forces and it was true and it ended up being LURD. They came
16:18:31 10 out. President Kabbah - if President Kabbah - and I tell you,
11 like I said, we had our differences but I'm not going to give him
12 a bad name. If President Kabbah had not been strong, the attack
13 of LURD would have come out of Sierra Leone. He did his best.
14 It ended up coming out of Guinea. All they did was to transfer
16:18:47 15 themselves from Sierra Leone into Guinea and come in as LURD and
16 the war started.

17 Q. "Liberians, including a human rights activist and a source
18 close to the country's security agencies, said members of a
19 Sierra Leonean guerrilla group the Revolutionary United Front
16:19:07 20 have in recent months recruited Sierra Leoneans from refugee
21 camps at Vahun near the northern border, at Bopolu further south
22 and at Sinje not far from Monrovia."

23 Is that true, Mr Taylor?

24 A. Complete and total lie. All these places that he is
16:19:27 25 talking about, Sinje for example, Bopolu, who is operating in
26 Sinje? That's the infiltration that ECOMOG is using for the
27 Kamajors. So Sinje, you look on the map, is on the road from
28 Cape Mount to Bo Waterside. That's where Sinje is. That's the
29 route being used by ECOMOG ferrying Kamajors from Liberia into

1 Sierra Leone. That's the route. So now we're supposed to be
2 there with the RUF at the same time doing what he's saying. This
3 is not true. If you look on the map you see where Sinje is.
4 It's near the Bo Waterside area.

16:20:06 5 Q. "Liberian reporters in Monrovia 'have had reports on this
6 for months but cannot publish it' for fear of reprisal by the
7 government said James Momoh, a reporter for a Monrovia daily The
8 Inquirer. Momoh who was leaving the country was the only
9 Liberian source willing to be quoted by name."

16:20:28 10 Do you know James Momoh, Mr Taylor?

11 A. No, I don't. I don't know James Momoh.

12 Q. "Liberian officials concede that in 1991 when Taylor was a
13 militia leader fighting for power during Liberia's civil war he
14 formed an alliance with the Revolutionary United Front. The
16:20:45 15 group was founded by Foday Sankoh, a cashiered Sierra Leonean
16 army corporal who wove bits of Maoist populism and
17 pan-African rhetoric into fiery speeches. In Sierra Leone's
18 impoverished eastern jungle Sankoh won disciples among young men
19 with no hope for education, jobs or the riches being won by
16:21:11 20 foreigners and Freetown elites who ran the rich diamond fields
21 nearby. But his group, whose members often stoked their fighting
22 spirit with drugs, embraced little ideology other than that of
23 ousting those in power.

24 Taylor and Sankoh shared an enemy in the Nigerian forces
25 frustrating their respective battles for power and former Taylor
26 associates say Sankoh paid for Taylor's help with diamonds mined
27 from territory Sankoh controlled in eastern Sierra Leone.

28 With Sankoh being held by the Sierra Leonean government,
29 the rebels' most prominent leader is Sam Bockarie. Several

1 Liberian sources said Bockarie has visited Liberia regularly in
2 the past year and Momoh reported seeing Bockarie in early
3 December outside Taylor's offices here."

4 Pause. Did Bockarie come to see you in December,
16:22:10 5 Mr Taylor?

6 A. In December Bockarie did come through, yes. I saw him on
7 his way to Ouaga, yes.

8 Q. "Liberian defence minister Daniel Chea denied any current
9 role by Liberia in supporting the Revolutionary United Front.

16:22:33 10 'Hundreds of Liberians are fighting in Sierra Leone's war', said
11 Chea, 'but they are people who were recruited as early as 1990 by
12 various parties to the Sierra Leonean conflict. Sierra Leone
13 find a fighter with Liberian identity papers and says that means
14 Liberia is supporting the rebels now', he said. 'It's not true'.

16:22:57 15 Chea said Taylor has offered but ECOMOG has declined to
16 have ECOMOG observers placed along the Liberia-Sierra Leone
17 border to check for illegal movements of arms or fighters."

18 Now, this document, Mr Taylor, this report, was it brought
19 to your attention?

16:23:19 20 A. This --

21 Q. This Washington Post article?

22 A. Oh, yes. Oh, yes. Oh, yes, it was brought to my
23 attention. I'm sure our public affairs department dealt with
24 James Rupert. I don't think he wrote again.

16:23:38 25 MR GRIFFITHS: Before I move on can we have that marked for
26 identification please, the Washington Post article by James
27 Rupert dated 10 January 1999, MFI-68.

28 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, that document is marked MFI-68.

29 MR GRIFFITHS:

1 Q. Now, Mr Taylor, that newspaper article, is it indicative of
2 the kind of press you were getting at the time?

3 A. Yes. I would say, yes, but for us this was significant
4 because we knew what the Washington Post is all about. We know
16:24:16 5 the New York Times. And when certain reporters come out in these
6 papers, if you're a government that have been studying them you
7 begin to open your eyes.

8 And James Rupert - you know, they have - you know, we're in
9 this Court and I think a lot needs to be very clear. Little
16:24:40 10 countries watch out for these. These are what we term as an
11 intelligence script. Whenever - if you watch across the world,
12 whenever these major countries are planning to really do you in,
13 they start with mischievous reporters in big papers. You see one
14 publication - and I say this because, following this, you begin
16:25:13 15 to see how the whole process evolves, how other reporters pick it
16 up and these papers like the Washington Post are so big they have
17 other papers around the world. For example, everyone knows that
18 the New York Times owns the International Herald Tribune. So
19 once you get one of these - now one paper will publish this and
16:25:35 20 before you look across the world all of the auxiliary papers will
21 publish them and then they are building up a case against you,
22 and if you don't watch out that's when you begin to sink.

23 It starts with James Rupert. This is the ploy. This is
24 how they drive these intelligence operations. This newspaper now
16:25:57 25 is beginning to paint you as this guy who is behind the war and
26 members of congress of the United States read the Washington
27 Post, take it seriously, you are sinking deeper and deeper and it
28 sticks and sticks and sticks and nobody ever investigates to
29 eradicate the symptoms. So we take this one very seriously.

1 MR GRIFFITHS: Mr President, I was moving to another
2 document now. I'm quite happy to embark on it, but I do note the
3 time.

4 PRESIDING JUDGE: Well I've already been told,
16:26:36 5 Mr Griffiths, that we're within the five minute mark and it's
6 probably less than that already and so I don't think it's worth
7 embracing another topic at this stage.

8 MR GRIFFITHS: I'm grateful.

9 PRESIDING JUDGE: So just before we adjourn, Mr Taylor,
16:26:50 10 I'll once again caution you that you're not permitted to discuss
11 your evidence with any other person.

12 THE WITNESS: Okay, your Honour.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE: We'll adjourn now until 9.30 on Monday.

14 [Whereupon the hearing adjourned at 4.27 p.m.
15 to be reconvened on Monday, 10 August 2009 at
16 9.30 a.m.]

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I N D E X

WITNESSES FOR THE DEFENCE:

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EXAMINATION-IN-CHIEF BY MR GRIFFITHS	26128