

SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

PRESS CLIPPINGS

Enclosed are clippings of local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Press and Public Affairs Office as of:

Monday, 13 February 2006

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.
If you are aware of omissions or have any comments or suggestions please contact
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Special Court gives deadline on Kabbah's subpoena

Story: Ibrahim Seibure

Head of the Special Court Trial Chamber. Justice Pierr Boutet Friday warned that the adjournment for Tuesday 14th February is the last on behalf of Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Frederick Carew for the defense of President Kabbah not to testify at the Special Court.

Justice Boutet informed the defense counsel for Norman, Aliou Kondiwa and Moinina Fofanah that he has received a letter from

the Attorney General and Minister of Justice requesting for an adjournment due to his absence from the court to argue on President Kabbah's subpoena.

He said the Minister indicated in his letter that he could not appear Friday, as he had to attend a security meeting but will make himself available on the 14th February 2006.

Defense Counsel, John Arrow Bockarie accepted the judge's ruling.

Kabbah took no action to stop May 25th coup



...Demby tells Special Court



Third witness of first accused at the Special Court in the Civil Defense Forces (CDF) trial, former Vice President Albert Joe Demby Friday testified that he is not aware that President Kabbah took action to forestall the May 25th coup.

Demby said before the May 25th 1997 coup in a meeting at State House with President Kabbah, which was attended by himself, Teddy Williams (former Inspector General of Police), Chief Norman, Hassan Conteh (former Chief of Defense Staff) and Max Kanga (former Chief of Army Staff), Norman told the President that Max Kanga and Hassan Conteh were planning a coup and that he (Kabbah) will sign their death warrant.

Demby maintained he is not aware whether President Kabbah took action. He said Max Kanga burst into tears when the President was informed about the

Cont. page 3

Kabbah took no action to stop May 25th coup

From page 1
planned coup.

"After the coup, I was at a secret location for some time before I moved to the Nigerian contingent based at Kossoh Town before my sister who was living in Guinea made an arrangement with the Guinean forces who dressed me as a General and escaped with me to the Lungi International Airport where I stayed on the instruction of President Kabbah till his return from exile," Demby told the court. He said the Kamajors did not participate in the intervention to overthrow the AFRC but it was all a Nigerian contingent, loyal Sierra Leone Army and police affair.

He told the court that the late Brigadier General Maxwell Khobe

was appointed by President Kabbah to head the SLA and the CDF.

Demby said Khobe was responsible for the deployment, supply of arms and ammunitions to the CDF after President Kabbah returned from exile in Guinea.

In his narrative testimony, the erstwhile Vice President informed the court that he became aware of the acronym 'CDF' after the return of President Kabbah from Guinea in March, 1998 to Sierra Leone. He testified that President Kabbah requested for the secondment of the then Colonel Maxwell Khobe from the Nigerian Army to head the SLA and the CDF, a permission that was granted.

Demby maintained that before the emergence of the CDF, there

had existed militia groups in the country at the time to protect the life, property and families in their various localities headed by traditional leaders.

He confirmed to the court after cross-examination by defence counsel Dr. Bu Buaki Jabbi that President Kabbah set up the National Coordinating Committee to oversee the welfare

of the CDF but that the deployment and supply of arms and ammunitions was in the hands of Gen. Khobe.

Dr. Bu Buaki Jabbi tendered in evidence a letter from the Kono district CDF to the CDS requesting for logistical support. The document was tendered as exhibit 126.

May 25 Coup...

Norman Warned Kabbah

By Sheikh Sulaiman

Former Vice President of the SLPP government Dr. Albert Joe Demby, during cross-examination by the Defense Council Dr. Bu-buakei Jabbe on Friday

10th February, told the court that, he could not tell the exact date of appointment of the former CDF National Coordinator, Chief Sam Hinga

Norman.

According to Dr. Demby, both Hinga Norman and President Kabbah were in Conakry, Guinea, while he was at Lungi at the time of

appointment. He further confirmed that the SLPP government knew about the coup, but little if anything, was done to avert it.

***Dr. Albert Joe Demby**

On the issue of support and recognition of the kamajors, Dr. Demby as-

sured that it was a cost
Contd. page 2

May 25 Coup...

From front page

ation of the good work of the NPRC government which started to support them as others during the war. He highlighted the problems the government faced as a result of some disgruntled members of the SLA. Dr. Demby told the court that he organised several receptions in his capacity as Vice President and tried his best to ameliorate the situation. However, the situation was tense especially among junior ranks particularly on the part of unbalanced food ration supply. He further revealed to the court how he, Norman, Hassan Conteh, Max Kanga and President Kabbah held a meeting at State House in which Norman gestured at the Chief of Defense Staff, Hassan Conteh and Chief of Army Max Kanga that they (Hassan and More) were plotting a coup. Both denied Norman's allegation in tears. The Dr. went to state that Norman told President Kabbah at the meeting that "Sir, you have not experienced a coup, but if you survive this, you will sign the death warrant of these 2 soldiers" referring to (Hassan Conteh and Max Kanga). The former VP told the court that barely a week after their meeting the coup took place. When asked about the fate of the soldiers, he revealed to the court that they faced a Court Martial in which they were found guilty and executed by firing squad.

Dr. Demby further stated that while he was in exile at Lungi Airport, he got news from Conakry that President Kabbah has sent Norman to the Liberian border to help coordinate the activities of the Kamajors. Norman according to the former Vice President, moved to a location in Sierra Leone called 'Base Zero.'

Col. Arche was the head of the Nigerian contingent in Sierra Leone, but replaced by another Col. by the name of Maxwell Khobe. Khobe, the Dr. revealed, was liaising with the CDF Coordinator. He explained how His Excellency used to fly from Conakry to Lungi to address some of the kamajors and pledged his continued support for their activities.

These kamajors were flown back to 'Base Zero' by helicopter under the control of Khobe. It was during these visits to Lungi that Eddie Massalay reported Norman to him that he, Norman did not appoint him leader of the kamajors in the South and that the position was given to Daramy Rogers.

Norman responded in his presence that "the appointment at Base Zero was done by an appointment committee of the War Council, which Alhaji Daramy Rogers headed. The former VP further told the court that one night, Col Khobe displayed a large consignment of arms and ammunition which were provided by H.E Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah. He said it was agreed that kamajors should be incorporated in the intervention but that at the end of the day, the kamajors were not even consulted for the intervention.

On the issue of Nigerian contingent, Demby told the court that they were not part of Ecomog. He said Ecomog was here as a result of a defence pact signed between the late President J. S. Momoh and the Nigerian government. He however acknowledged that the kamajors were engaged in military activities and that the SLPP government was aware of that, and that they did support and recognised the kamajor militia. Dr. Demby further told the court how on 29th January 1997, the president by letter created the National Coordinating Committee of the CDF. At this juncture, the Defence Counsel submitted exhibit 120 and others like 126 and 128 were also submitted to the court.

In these exhibits, names like Mr. Okere Adams, Chief Braimah Kargbo of Kenema, Harry Will-South and Momodu Koroma then Minister of Presidential Affairs were conspicuous.

Chief Demby accepted that he was the Chairman for the National Coordinating Committee of the CDF, but was later replaced by the late RES Lagao.

Exhibits disclosed to the court that government was spending over 51.6 million Leones on kamajors per month excluding food, arms and ammunition. In another exhibit, the then Hon. Minister of Presidential Affairs Momodu Koroma prepared a requisition on the 4th of November 1999 which was approved by H.E. on 6th November 1999. The subject of the requisition "payment of ration to the CDF."

Other documents contain 3,440 bags supplied to the CDF monthly and 51.6 million for condiment.

Hearing/testimony continues today at the Special Court.

At Special Court **Demby confirms Kabbah's knowledge of coup**

By Betty Milton

In his evidence at the Special Court, former Vice President Dr. Albert Joe Demby confirmed that President Tejan Kabbah did have knowledge of the May 25th 1997 coup.

During examination in chief by Dr. Bu-Buakei Jabbie, defence lawyer for the first accused Chief Samuel Hinga Norman, the witness said in one of their

meetings with the President at State House, Chief Norman told President Kabbah that, "those two men there [pointing at the direction of the military officers] are planning a coup. Kabbah then asked the men if that was true but they denied."

The meeting was attended by the then Deputy Minister of Defence Hinga Norman,

the Chief of Army Staff Brigadier Hassan Conteh, the Chief of Defence Staff Colonel Max Kanga. Also at the meeting were the Navy Commander Sesay and the then Inspector General of Police, Teddy Williams.

Continuing, Dr. Demby said Norman then told the President that, "sir you have not experienced a coup but if you survive this you will be the person to sign the death warrants of these people" the President didn't

say anything. After one week there was a coup."

Dr. Demby recalled that on the day of the coup, he was escorted by some Guinean soldiers who disguised him as their [Guinean] Commander until

he was taken to Kossoh Town as the town was under the control of Nigerian Contingent where he spent about three months and was airlifted to Lungi and stayed there till after the intervention.

Contd. Page 2

Demby confirms Kabbah's knowledge of coup

From Front Page

When he went to Lungi, the witness said that was the first time he met with Colonel Maxwell Khobe who informed him that the President wanted him to stay at Lungi. He further explained that it was on the BBC's 'Focus On Africa Programme' that he heard that Norman had been appointed as the National Coordinator of the CDF and that he had moved to Base Zero. He said Khobe usually went to Base Zero to collect some Kamajors and took them to attend meetings at Hastings and then back to their base.

At one time, the witness said, President Kabbah

went to Lungi where he held a meeting with some members of the Kamajors including Paramount Chief Coker, Eddie Massally and Arthur Koroma where he promised them his government's support and commended them for the support they had given him.

While at Lungi also the witness said, Col Khobe showed him a cache of ammunition stored at a secret location. This, he said, was incidentally the period of the Sandline saga though he [Khobe] never told him specifically that they had come from Sandline, he was only told that they were sent by President Kabbah.

Khobe, he added, told him [Demby] that he would supply some of these arms to the Kamajors at Base Zero after he had been given clearance from the President. But noted that he couldn't tell whether they were delivered to the Kamajors.

As they were also at Lungi, he received a complaint from Eddie Massally who told him that as a senior member of the Kamajors he should have been appointed leader and Commander of the militia in the Southern region but instead Chief Norman had appointed Daramy Rogers. In response, Norman told him [Dr. Demby] that the appointment was made by the Appointment Committee of the War Council.

DEMBY SAYS!

**Norman Accused Brig Hassan Conteh Of Planning A Coup!
How Army Officers Refused To Give Up Their 600 bags Quota!
How Executed Chief Of Army Staff Max Kanga Wept!
Demby Tells Kamajor Immunity To Army Bullets & Formation!
Also How Eddie Massallay Fumed When Daramy Rogers
Was Appointed War Chairman And Never Forgave Norman!**

FORMER VICE-president, Dr Ngor Albert Joe Demby last Friday testified before the Special Court what he knew about the events following the 1997 coup d'etat and Norman's participation.

by
S U THORONKA

Demby said among others, that after the signing of the Abidjan peace accord between the RUF and the government of Sierra Leone, fighting resumed and that there was general dissatisfaction among soldiers based on their welfare.

He said he then organised a reception with senior military officers and ministers to address the needs of the soldiers and the meeting ended in a friendly mood.

Two weeks later, Demby said he organised another reception for NGOs and ministers and where dissatisfaction was expressed about the army, stemming from the rice quota and its distribution.

That while senior officers in the army were receiving between 500-600 bags a person, private officers got one bag to two people and that senior officers outrightly rejected the idea for the rice to be sold and the proceeds used for their salaries.

Demby said it was in one of the meetings with the president, together with

Norman before the coup in May 1997, and which was also attended by chief of defence staff Brig Hassan Conteh, chief of army staff Max Kanga, navy commander Sesay and police Inspector-General, Teddy Williams, that Norman pointed at both Kanga and Conteh and told the president: "Please Sir, these two gentlemen are planning coup."

President Kabbah in response asked the two officers: "gentlemen, did you hear that?"

Norman then interposed and said: "Please Sir, you have not experienced a coup, but if you do survive this, you will sign their death warrants later."

Demby said at that point, Kanga broke into tears and that two weeks later, the coup took place.

Demby said his security officers evacuated him and his family to an unknown destination but that it was published in a local newspaper which he did not name, that had the army not staged a coup, himself and Norman had planned to take over government using the kamajors.

He said AFRC-RUF

leader, Johnny Paul Koroma later invited the RUF to join their movement, a move that was supported by rebel leader, Foday Sankoh while in detention in Nigeria.

Demby said he succeeded in reaching Lungi airport by August 1997 and it was confirmed to him that Kabbah and his ministers, including Norman were in Conakry and that it was through the BBC that kamajor Eddie Massalay announced that the kamajors were fighting the junta regime.

He also learnt that Norman had moved with some of his kamajors to a location called Base Zero to solicit support from Ecomog and co-ordinate the activities of the kamajors.

At Lungi, Demby met with Nigerian Col, Maxwell Khobe who took charge of the Ecomog contingent in May 1997, and was told by Khobe that Kabbah advised that he stays at Lungi, much against his wish.

He said Khobe was liaising with Norman at Base Zero and the international community as well as the people of Sierra Leone had refused to recognise the junta government.

Also that meetings were



NORMAN:all declare Kabbah responsible

brought under a single umbrella controlled by the paramount chiefs and elders but that another group of kamajors was also formed by those who had fled the war to neighbouring countries as refugees on voluntary basis.

He said as the war progressed, some people developed magical powers and medicinal herbs which when used rendered people immune to bullets and that the initiators were like private medical practitioners who sat in their homes and people who needed initiation contacted them and made payment before they were initiated and that these initiators were not under the control of either the chiefs or elders.

Demby said chiefdom people also subscribed stipu-

lated amounts for the initiation of their already formed kamajor group for the protection of their locality.

He said the kamajor movement had existed a long time when Norman was a regent chief but cannot tell whether his chiefdom was involved in the kamajor movement and that Norman came into prominence after the 1996 elections when Kabbah appointed him as deputy defence minister and national co-ordinator, the latter during the interregnum.

Demby said the SLPP government continued to give logistical support to the kamajors in the form

Continued Page 9

MPs call for Taylor to be tried in absentia

Members of Parliament last week resolved that the Special Court in Sierra Leone should try in absentia former Liberian President Charles Taylor, if he fails to appear in person.

This motion was proposed by Hon Dr. Princess Baba Jigida who also proposed that the House should congratulate the United Nations through its Secretary-General on

the occasion of the attainment of 60 years of its existence.

The House adopted the motion unanimously.

Also Hon Zainab Kamara proposed that the House thank the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) for having successfully completed its peacekeeping and peace building mission in Sierra Leone and for its selfless contributions to the socio-economic and political development of the country.

She pointed out that

without UNAMSIL, peace would be an illusion, noting that UNAMSIL had been described as the most successful UN mission to date. She said, "We should never forget UNAMSIL's role in improving the lives of Sierra Leoneans" citing examples of the rehabilitation and construction of infrastructures in the country by various UNAMSIL contingents.

Other MPs contributed to the motion and was finally approved.

THE PATRIOTIC VANGUARD

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Salone News

Special Court: Penfold Annoys Judges, Demby Appears

By Gibril Koroma - Saturday 11 February 2006.

Former British High Commissioner to Sierra Leone, Peter Penfold, ended his testimony on Wednesday without any startling revelations as most of what he said was already public knowledge among Sierra Leoneans.

But Penfold, who has never concealed his dislike of the Special Court, managed to annoy the judges with some of the statements he made. One of those statements was believed to be the one in which he asserted that Norman was not a "war criminal", but a "war hero".



Penfold's testimony, which was merely a repetition of what he had been saying and writing since Hinga Norman was arrested and incarcerated, dealt with, among other things, the fact that it was he that brought together senior members of the exiled government to establish and later train and provide arms and ammunition to the CDF for the restoration of the Kabbah government overthrown by junior members of the Sierra Leone army in May 1997.

Penfold said he and other diplomats had warned Kabbah of the impending coup a week before it occurred and that Kabbah had assured him he would take action, but never did.

Penfold also spoke about corruption in the army and the major role Norman played in the restoration of the Kabbah government.

Meanwhile former Vice President Albert Joe Demby started his own testimony Wednesday afternoon.

The eagerly awaited oral arguments on the subpoena motion on president Kabbah were put on hold yesterday because Attorney General Frederick Carew had written to say he could not make an appearance. It's not clear what will happen next.

Our sources say tongues are wagging in Freetown over the appearance or non-appearance of Kabbah at the Special Court. A legal expert told the Vanguard that Kabbah will ultimately have to appear because the Special Court, because of its hybrid nature, is above the laws of Sierra Leone which grant the president several privileges and immunities.

Photo: President Kabbah, after his return from exile in Guinea
Credit: BBC online.

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Analysis

Special Court: A Daniel Come To Judgment?

- Saturday 11 February 2006.

There are many views among Sierra Leoneans on the Special Court for Sierra Leone; such views also include differing opinions about the war crime indictees and people yet to be indicted (if ever). Here is one of such personal views from one of our London correspondents:

By Saidu Kaye Sesay, London, UK

The Special Court in Sierra Leone, to my mind, is as good as over, with revelations emanating from a principal player in the Sierra Leone war, junta interregnum and subsequent restoration of the so-called legitimate government of Ahmed Tejan Kabbah. Before the restoration of the Tejan Kabbah government, the international community and the political big shots of Sierra Leone were caught in the interpretation of two phrases 'the constitutional order' and 'a constitutional order'.



According to think tanks from both the SLPP and AFRC, 'the constitutional order' carrying the definite article meant the restoration of Kabbah's SLPP, whilst the AFRC brains, including Dr. Abass Bundu argued at the conference hall at Cockerill (Military HQ) that what the international community wanted was the restoration of 'a constitutional order' which loosely interpreted meant a fresh election

Komrabai Penfold

Peter Penfold is a household name in Sierra Leone with a mission: the restoration of constitutional order. He was held in high esteem by the people of that country because of his philanthropist gestures and genuine emotional attachment to the deprived people of Sierra Leone. So esteemed was the man, that immediately after the restoration of the Tejan Kabbah led SLPP government, the ex-High Commissioner was crowned honorary Paramount Chief by the people of Lungi, where some of the most horrible fighting took place, thus adopting the name Chief Komrabai Penfold.

Hopeless Regime

Stories abound about the involvement of Peter Penfold in Sierra Leone's crises. When the junta toppled Kabbah's government the role of Penfold in negotiating a safe passage and juicy packages for the coup leaders was widely rumoured. Having failed to lure the coupists, Penfold relocated to Conakry, Guinea where the dethroned president and majority of his cabinet colleagues were seeking refuge. Penfold was again caught in the schemes and intrigues of the regime that eventually led to its restoration. But Penfold had to pay a price; the loss of his job as Britain's High Commissioner to Sierra Leone, amidst claims of his brokering the infamous SANDLINE deal. The truth is still shrouded in mystery, but maybe the

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Opinion>

Penfold: The Ultimate Deception?

By Gbakanda Kam
Penfold's subpoena
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anti-climax of 'Sierra Leone's Special Court' would lay this bare. Whilst the likes of Lord Avebury argued in the British parliament about the futility of restoring a hopeless regime, Penfold had hopes in the people of Sierra Leone, little realising that the traitors of the land are the very powers that he wined and dined with.

Truth would last

Whilst all of these sordid activities happened, culminating in the setting up of an irrelevant and unpopular Special Court, the ever courageous Sierra Leoneans silently whispered that the truth would last. Indeed the truth is 'beginning' to rear its head. Not that the citizenry were not privy to the truth, but intimidations and fear of being forced to wear the dreaded tags of junta activists /collaborators/sympathisers, with its attendant butchery and burning alive of our compatriots kept the entire populace like cringing dogs before cruel masters, painfully silent.

Dishonest and callous

Peter Penfold has now taken the witness stand at the Special Court. In as much as he intended to exonerate Chief Sam Hinga Norman, a principal indictee at the courts, he has given Sierra Leoneans and the world an insight into the dishonest and callous world of the country's political class. Not that this is strange to some of us, but try though we did to bring this malaise to the attention of our compatriots and the entire world, our efforts were belittled by the lopsided logic of political spinsters, who dished out negative propaganda that was shamelessly imbibed even by the so called Big Brothers. But maybe now the world would listen, as I believe that this is a testimony of a genuine witness who meant well for the people of that country.

No respect

I do not wish to comment on what Kabbah would or would not say, if and when he appears before the court. We now know that Kabbah was not only aware of the formation of the CDF, but actually set up the structures and designated roles. We did and still know that whilst Kabbah was globe trotting, seeking military support for his cause, Norman initially stayed behind to pacify the junta to hand over power. So, who is the villain and who is the saint? We knew, and it is now becoming clear that Kabbah had little or no respect for the national army. Otherwise, how would a Commander-in- Chief decide the fate of his army by merely pronouncing the rationing of food in a crisis that bordered on the security of an entire nation?

These and more, are questions we expect Kabbah to answer, and not, repeat not, with his usual mumblings and inanities. And I do not say this lightly. If the Special Court cannot deliver us from the evil claws of this dictator, we might as well resort to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which to me sounded more serious anyway.

Photo: The author, Saidu, on a recent trip to Makeni, Sierra Leone.

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UNMIL Daily Newspaper Summary
Friday, 10 February 2006

[The newspaper summary does not necessarily represent the views of UNMIL.]

U.S. to Continue Aid to Liberia

(The Inquirer, New Democrat and Heritage)

- The U.S. Government plans to continue to support Liberia and its fledgling democracy beyond the US\$ 1 billion the U.S. has already provided the country over the past two years, officials of the Bush administration, including Assistant Secretary of State Jendayi Frazer told Congress this week.

UN Envoy Clarifies Media Report

(The Inquirer)

- Speaking in Monrovia yesterday during a reception in honor of the United Nations Assessment Mission, Special Representative of the Secretary-General Alan Doss clarified that the redeployment of a batch of UNMIL soldiers to neighboring Côte d'Ivoire was no indication that the mission would soon come to an end. He added that UNMIL would rather stay a longer time in Liberia.
- Mr. Doss said that the assessment mission was in Liberia to review progress made in the peace process and make suggestions for the way forward.
- The UN Assessment Mission's head, Dmitry P. Titov said that the new mandate might be to help strengthen the Liberian government.

Disgruntled Former Liberian Soldiers Joining Ivoirian War

(Liberian Express)

- Disgruntled former soldiers of the Armed Forces of Liberia are said to be daily crossing over to neighboring Côte d'Ivoire—using border points in Nimba and Grand Gedeh Counties--to join the country's civil war, an unnamed former Defense Ministry Official was quoted as saying.
- Most of these demobilized soldiers moving to Côte d'Ivoire are unlettered and unable to pass the aptitude test for recruitment into the restructured Liberian army, the Defense official said.

UNMIL Daily Radio Summary **Saturday, 11 February 2006**

Following are excerpts of select Liberian radio stations' news programs. Parts of the transcripts have been paraphrased and edited to conform to UNMIL style. The radio summary does not necessarily represent the views of UNMIL.

RADIO VERITAS *(News monitored yesterday at 18:45 pm)*

President to Establish Department for Veteran Soldiers

- In her message to mark this year's Armed Forces Day, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf declared that she would create a department in the Liberian army to manage and follow up issues affecting veteran soldiers. She said that the appropriate statutes and mechanism for the functions of the Department of Veteran Affairs shall be prepared and submitted for legislative approval.
- The Commander-In-Chief ordered National Defence Minister-designate to streamline and re-profile the civilian sector of the Ministry.
- President Sirleaf disclosed that she has obtained bilateral assistance from the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the United States to help with the on-going restructuring of the new Armed Forces of Liberia.
- President Johnson-Sirleaf said that President Olusegun Obasanjo has nominated Major General Luka Yousuf to serve as Command Officer-in-charge of the new Liberian army while the US government has nominated a senior US Military Officer to serve as Senior Military Advisor to the Government of Liberia.

(Also reported on Star Radio)

Airport Security Prevent Former Foreign Minister from Travelling

- Speaking to journalists yesterday, former Foreign Minister Thomas Yahya Nimley said that he was detained at the Roberts International Airport while traveling to Ghana last Sunday.
- He said that the security claimed had they acted in compliance with the travel ban imposed by the government on former National Transitional Government officials.
- Mr. Nimley described his detention as molestation and an abuse of his right, adding that freedom of speech, assembly and movement are the bedrock of any democratic State.
- Mr. Nimley said lots of sacrifices were made to achieve the democracy the country enjoys. He appealed to the President to remain focussed by not looking backwards but by moving forward.

(Also reported on Star Radio)

Former Special Court Prosecutor Predicts an Unstable West Africa Unless Taylor Faces Justice

- Addressing a United States Congressional Committee Wednesday, former UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone Prosecutor David Crane said that peace would remain illusive in West Africa unless former President Charles Taylor is surrendered to face justice.
- He added that Mr. Taylor's surrender would neutralize him before he undermines the new Government of Liberia.
- Mr. Crane called on the international community to forcefully urge Presidents George Bush and Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf to demand Taylor's surrender to the court.

(Also reported on Star Radio)

President Pays Tribute to Armed Forces of Liberia

- The Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Liberia, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf has paid tribute to demobilized soldiers of the Armed Forces of Liberia as the nation observes Armed Forces Day as a national holiday.
- The President however pointed out that the customary fanfare which characterized previous celebrations would not be held because the Army has been demobilized and was undergoing restructuring.
- She commended the soldiers for their sacrifices over the years in defence of the country and its people and said the government was planning a special honouring ceremony for the soldiers.

(Also reported on Star Radio)

Liberian Leader to Empower Liberian Artists

- Commending Liberian artists for their effort to promote Liberian art and culture, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf said that the government would help Liberian artists to achieve heights in their professional career. She encouraged the artists to effectively utilize their talents to reflect the nation's interest.
- The President made the remarks when a photography group, the Creative Colours, presented to her photos of herself and United States Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

(Also reported on Star Radio)

Budget Director-Designate Promises to Instil Budget Discipline to Reduce Corruption

- During his Senate confirmation hearing, Bureau of the Budget Director-designate Augustine Ngafuan said that he put in place measures to ensure discipline in the management of the budget with the aim to reduce corruption in government.
- He added that heads of government ministries and agencies would be required to make comprehensive budget performance reports to government to ensure the sanity of the budget.

(Also reported on Star Radio)

Civil Service Agency Director-General-Designate Wants Identification System for Civil Servants

- Civil Service Agency Director-General-designate Dr. William Allen said that he would improve the identification system for civil servants throughout the country to help remove ghost names from government payroll. He also said that he would ensure the formulation of a code of conduct for all civil servants.

(Also reported on Star Radio)

USAID Administrator Urges United States to Lead Liberia's Rebuilding Process

- United States Aid for International Development Assistant Administrator Lloyd Pierson urged the US to lead in the reconstruction of Liberia by helping to complete its transition from war to peace and democracy.

Also reported on Star Radio)

ELBS RADIO *(News monitored yesterday at 19:00 pm)*

Ex-Combatants Enrol in Agriculture Training in Rivercess County

- Speaking to more 500 ex-combatants currently enrolled in an agriculture training program in Rivercess County, the Joint Implementation Unit Information and Sensitization Manager Jonathan Refell assured the beneficiaries that they would be supported until they graduate and receive their tool kits. He encouraged them to attend classes, participate in course work and show good conduct.
- The training is being conducted by United Nations Development Program in collaboration with the Joint Implementation Unit's Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (DDRR) programme.

STAR RADIO *(News culled from website today at 09:00 am)*

International Medical Group Opens Voluntary Testing Centers for HIV/AIDS

- According to a press release issued in Monrovia, an international health non-governmental organization, Merlin, has established two voluntary confidential counselling and testing centers for HIV/AIDS in Montserrado County. The centers will run under the auspices of the county health team, and National Aids Control Program.
- The release added that the centers are part of the Government of Netherlands' support to primary health care activities in eight Public Health Centers in Montserrado County.

UNMIL Public Information Office
Press Clips 10 February 2006

[The press clips do not necessarily represent the views of UNMIL.]

International Clips on Liberia

(There were no press clips on Liberia in the international media)

International Clips on West Africa

Sierra Leone lawmakers seek Taylor's trial in absentia

FREETOWN, Feb 10, 2006 (AFP) - Parliament in Sierra Leone has passed a resolution seeking the trial of Liberia's former strongman Charles Taylor in absentia if he fails to appear before a UN-backed special court.

Legislators urged Thursday the United Nations and the international community to ensure that Taylor is "tried in Sierra Leone for war crimes charges in absentia in the event that he fails to appear before the Special Court in person," state radio said Friday.

The request comes days after some 300 African and international rights groups running a "Campaign against Impunity" wrote an open letter to the new Liberian leader, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, urging her to surrender Taylor to the court in Freetown.

Sirleaf has repeatedly said that handing over former strongman Taylor to a court trying war crimes in Sierra Leone was not an urgent priority for Liberia.

The former Liberian leader, now in exile in Nigeria, has been accused of sponsoring rebels who fought in Sierra Leone's gruesome 10-year war.

In August 2003 Taylor stepped down as Liberian president and was given asylum in Nigeria to allow a UN-brokered peace process to bring an end to 14 years of civil wars.

Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo has defied international pressure to hand over Taylor to the Freetown tribunal, insisting he would surrender him only to an elected Liberian regime.

Treason trial of former Sierra Leone rebel spokesman to open Monday

FREETOWN, Feb 10, 2006 (AFP) - The treason trial of former rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF) spokesman Omrie Golley and two others is set to open Monday before Sierra Leone's High Court, judicial sources said Friday.

Nigerian-born judge Samuel Ademusu, who has served on the Sierra Leonean bench for years, and a 12-man jury selected Thursday, will hear the case.

Golley, a Kosovo-based Sierra Leonean-born lawyer who holds a British passport, is accused along with two others of plotting to overthrow the civilian government of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah.

Along with Mohamed Alpha Bah and David Kaitongi, Gomrie is also accused of planning to assassinate the Vice President Solomon Berewa between December 1 last year and January 13.

The three suspects have refused to enter their pleas on grounds that they are not assured of a fair trial.

If convicted, they face the death sentence.

Rebel leader joins Ivory Coast talks

ABIDJAN, Feb 10, 2006 (AFP) - Ivory Coast rebel leader Guillaume Soro, whose New Forces have held the north of the country since 2002, joined talks Friday on implementing plans to resolve the crisis in the world's top cocoa producer. Soro, who is minister for reconstruction and number two in a transitional UN-backed government headed by Prime Minister Charles Konan Banny, arrived in a helicopter provided by French peacekeepers, the prime minister's office said. The talks in the administrative capital Yamoussoukro involving Banny and international mediators began Thursday but Soro was not present, citing security fears.

The closed-door meeting to run until Saturday is to clarify Banny's plans in line with a UN Security Council resolution passed in November to ensure disarmament and reconciliation leading up to elections in October.

President Laurent Gbagbo has not been included in the talks.

Gbagbo's term of office expired in October with no arrangements made for new elections, after both his government and the rebels holding the north of the country failed to implement a peace deal.

The United Nations gave Gbagbo another year in office, during which he was ordered to work with Banny to resolve the crisis.

The Yamoussoukro meeting was scheduled to adjourn later Friday to enable participants to follow the final of African Nations football tournament in Cairo, where Ivory Coast faces hosts Egypt.

The Perspective

Extradition And Trial, A Necessity : A Rejoinder

By Bai Gbala

The Perspective

Atlanta, Georgia

February 10, 2006

Introduction

In an “exclusive interview “ with the Liberian *Daily Observer* newspaper published on the internet on December 14, 2005, Mrs. Jewel Howard-Taylor, estranged wife of Former President Charles Ghankay Taylor, said that “I will not support extradition”. It can be recalled that the former president, now exiled in the Federal Republic of Nigeria, is under indictment for War Crimes & Crimes Against Humanity by the Un-backed, Special War Crimes Tribunal, now sitting in the Republic of Sierra Leone.

The International Community (led by the USA/UN); the local, Liberian Human Rights Organizations; and the Liberian people in general have applied and continue to apply pressure increasingly upon the newly elected, Liberian President, Mrs. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, to request extradition of the former president to stand trial.

It will also be recalled that the former president was the organizer/leader of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia whose unprovoked, military attack upon the Liberian nation resulted to the historic, national tragedy of a fourteen-year civil war of destruction, brutality, human suffering and death. Mr. Charles Taylor is alleged to be the architect and behind-the-scenes supporter/manager of the ten-year, deadly rebel war “transported” to neighboring Sierra Leone. “If I am asked to give a vote to send Charles Taylor to Free Town (Sierra Leonean Capital) for trial, I will not”, said Mrs. Jewel Howard-Taylor.

This Rejoinder is **not**, particularly or specifically, intended to advocate the extradition of former President Charles Taylor for trial by the UN-backed Special Court whose **Competence – Organization, Structure & Powers** (see <http://www.specialcourt.org/documents/statute/html>) – are being questioned and are highly likely to be challenged successfully. Moreover, I am not informed as to whether or not the Special Court’s indictment against the former president is for war crimes committed in Liberia, against Liberians.

For legally- and politically-compelling and persuasive reasons clearly stated herein, it is very important, indeed mandatory, that not only the former president, but also his

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associates of the NPFL hierarchy who, with him, organized, ferociously and violently launched and carried out the historic tragedy, be brought to justice. **This includes those now “elected” senior & junior senators and representatives; appointed cabinet ministers; and executives of state agencies, now posing in the country as defenders of a democratic, peaceful, united, secured, just socio-economic and political order.**

In the light of these considerations, I call upon and beseech the Liberian people and their new democratically-elected, inaugurated government to summon the political will in order to constitute a Liberian, *Special War crimes Tribunal* for the trial of all those individuals who committed these horrific crimes against Liberians in Liberia.

icty

International Criminal Tribunal
Former Yugoslavia
www.setimes.com

The Rejoinder

For a housewife, despite estrangement, deeply concerned about the fate of her husband charged with serious, criminal offences, penalty for which includes life in prison or death itself, any reasonable person will be moved to understand and sympathize with Mrs. Taylor’s position, in terms of family considerations.

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However, in light of the profoundly persuasive, compelling argument and the requirements of applicable International and the Liberian Law (Constitution), and the pain/agony inflicted upon the families of innocent victims, one must, also reasonably, inevitably disagree with the position of the Former First Lady of Liberia. For, Mrs. Jewel Howard-Taylor is not only the Former First Lady of Liberia and wife of the Former President, but also now the elected Member of the Upper Chamber (the Senate) of the Liberian National Legislature, an important first branch (of three branches) of the Liberian government, with crucial responsibility for law- and policy-making, including the responsibility for critical matters of state-craft for peace, unity, justice, and security under the rule of law.

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Mrs. Jewel Howard-Taylor’s Argument

Briefly, the following are the major points raised by Mrs. Taylor in support of her case against the extradition and trial of former President Charles Taylor; she argues that:

1. Mr. Charles Taylor did not create the position in which the Liberian Nation finds itself today. She contends that “Liberia was at a point where it could have been John Doe” or anyone else “to ignite a crisis”.

2. The series of socio-economic and political crises that afflicted Liberia over time leading to the nation’s prevailing “failed-state” status, include:

a) The 1980 coup de tat in which the late Former President Tolbert was killed and that no one cared how many family members were killed the night he was assassinated . . . about the 13 ministers and other officials (of government) that were shot at the pole”;

b) The late Honorable David Coleman (Former Minister of Internal Affairs) “. . . was falsely accused of trying to kill (the late) President Tubman”, but no one cared to “. . . asked that family what agony they went through (Hon. David Coleman and son John were killed by military forces and put on public display at the Barclay Training Center)”

c) c) “So, for me (Mrs. Taylor says), it is not about the (recent) 15 years (of Taylor’s NPFL mindless nightmare of brutality, destruction of towns and villages, refugees, suffering and death) that you hear people shouting

about. We have been in crisis situation . . . I think we had gotten to that point where there was a lot of envy, a lot of hurt, and a lot disappointment . . . the cup was at the boiling over . . . and here comes a Charles Taylor”;

d) “I think our lives are destined by God . . . to go a certain path . . . and do certain things . . . the nation was just at that point where we just had to go through what we went through . . . (but) people keep trying to blame Charles Taylor. So, are we as Liberians ready to look at this story (of Liberia) in a holistic sense . . . those who lied on Hon. David Coleman; those who shot the 13 ministers and other officials on the pole . . . whoever it was that killed the best President . . . Dr. William R. Tolbert, Jr.?”;

e) On the Charles Taylor-led NPFL insurgency, the Bong County Senior Senator said that “. . . no one was forced or coerced into joining the war . . . everywhere they (the NPFL combatants) went, everybody joined”;

f) Mrs. Taylor holds that no Liberian is innocent of the civil war. She said, “I wonder if someone can tell me if there are any innocent Liberians . . . if you are an ex-combatant, you were part of the war . . . if you went to a meeting where killing of Liberians was discussed and you decided not to say anything, you were part of the war you acquiesced”. She holds that the “Liberian people were not asked if Charles Taylor should go into exile. A foreign president . . . decided Charles Taylor must leave Liberia . . . now”; and

g) Finally Mrs. Taylor contends that the “Liberian people need to state what their opinion is on this matter (of extradition/trial of the former president by national referendum) because we have a few people talking about it . . . some say go to Sierra Leone; the other say, leave him (Mr. Taylor) alone. What happens to Mr. Charles Taylor is something that will have to be discussed in collaboration with the International Community, especially the African Union and ECOWAS”.

My Response

Firstly, it is very important to note that the interview provides a significant glimpse and insight into the socio-cultural, political and legal mindset, and thoughts of the Bong County Senior Senator, in terms of **her response to the wide range of critical issues raised by the decision to extradite the former president for trial or not to extradite and “leave him alone”**. Those issues include formidable challenges in the re-building of a new and cohesive Liberia.

For example, rather than confine her response and discussion to the issue of the demands being made for the extradition of the former president to face trial as charged, and address the critical issues arising therefrom, the former First Lady of Liberia not only conveniently disregarded this main issue, but she also introduced and agonized at length over Liberia’s past, unfortunate historical experiences concerned with tragic episodes clearly irrelevant to the issue at hand and the issues arising – **respect for and obedience to applicable International Law and the Liberian Constitution as they relate to Crime & Punishment, Liberian National Reconciliation & Healing for national peace, unity, security and justice at this critical period in our history**.

Moreover, Mrs. Jewel Howard-Taylor’s apparent, convenient disregard of the crucial, central issues is disappointing, because **she is not only the wife of a man “against the ropes”, so to speak, but also a budding, national political leader who is now the Senior Senator From Bong County, a member of Liberia’s national Legislature**. The only higher, political leadership position than the Senate is the Presidency of the nation.

From this, it appears that Mrs. Taylor “conveniently ignored” the facts or is simply ignorant of the issues,

particularly, the fact that open and fair trial of leaders and other individuals charged with serious war crimes during civil conflicts such as our 1989-1997 tragedy in which the former president was the leader (hence the extradition), **is and will be not only an act of national, legal house-cleaning, but also national reconciliation and healing; in that, the trial and sentencing will send out clear, loud and important message that no one is above the law, no matter one's position in society, as well as provide a sense of relief and remedy, justice, fair-play and personal satisfaction to the families whose loved ones were victimized by the conflict.**

Secondly, Mrs. Taylor's arguments are not only irrelevant to the issues at hand, but also a blatant design to miss-inform and miss-lead, because:

A. Although some of her recitations [2(a-g)] are unfortunate facts of Liberian political history but clearly irrelevant to the issues of extradition and trial, **because there has never been, throughout the nation's existence as an independent state, the range, depth, breadth, scope and level of historic degradation, destruction, disruption of populations and refugees, inhumane brutality, human suffering, cruelty and death such as that which the Charles Taylor-led NPFL inflicted upon the Liberian nation and its innocent, unarmed and helpless citizens, a tragedy that spared no village, town and city throughout the country.**

B. Arguments [2(a-c)] appear to be clear "justifications" for, but not relevant to the horrendous brutalities inflicted by the NPFL; in that, there is no proof that political power prevented individuals responsible for the acts cited, from being brought to justice.

C. Also argument [2(e)], that "...no one was forced or coerced into joining the war...", is absolutely false; for, there were hundreds of thousands of 9-10-year-old "boy- and girl-soldiers" who were forced into the NPFL fighting forces, forced into the drug-abuse culture and killed their seniors indiscriminately with AK-47s too heavy for these young Liberians and they did. There were other **resistance groups, notably the ULIMO fighting forces**, that took up arms to prevent the NPFL from taking political power by the gun (see records of UNAMIL, ECOMOG and ECOWAS).

D As for [2(f)], that "...there are no Liberians innocent of the war", the falsity of this Assertion is so obvious that it needs no proof.

E. And finally, that Mrs. Taylor's suggestion of a national referendum (to decide on extradition and trial of an accused) underscores the fact that the Bong County, Senior Senator apparently lack an understanding or disregard the provision of International and Liberian Law on this issue of a trial of anyone charged with commission of a crime, and our national, legal obligation with responsibility to uphold and enforce the law. In this case, a referendum is not lawfully necessary; besides, it is a costly, unnecessary alternative.

In view of the foregoing, I suggest very strongly that President Johnson-Sirleaf request the extradition of the former President so that he may "have his day in court".

