

SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

PRESS CLIPPINGS

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

Thursday, October 21, 2004

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.
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Awoko

Motto: Service To The People

Established: 1998

Vol. 7 No 197

October 21, 2004

INDEPENDENT

Price : Le 500

'We burnt, killed in President Kabbah's home' - *Witness*

By Tamba Borbor
Special Court witness-George Johnson has disclosed how they invaded Karina, which is said to be the home of the President- Alhaji Ahmad Tejan Kabbah. Whiles been cross-

examined by a member of the Defence Team representing Morris Kallon and others- Melron Nicol-Wilson, 'Junior Lion' as he is fondly referred to, disclosed that their then Commander- Alex

Tamba Brima ordered them to kill and burn down every house in the town if a single shot is fired against them

when entering. Although he denied killing anyone, George Johnson confirmed that the orders

given to them by their Commander was effected as they were shot at by some

personnel of the SSD and Gbethis who were deployed in the town by then. At Major

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We burnt, killed in President Kabbah's home

From Front Page

Eddie Town, which is in the Kambia district, he confirmed when asked by Melron Nicol-Wilson that some executions took place. "About ten people who were accused of been witches were killed and their bodies cut into pieces and thrown into the Little Scarcies River. While the killings were ongoing, Alex Tamba Brima aka Gullit and other Commanders were busy drinking 'Poyo', which is a local drink obtained from a

palm tree. On how he left the Westside camp where he was the leader then, 'Junior Lion' stated that after the meeting in Liberia, he returned to the camp and decided to join the Army again after serving as the Chief Security Officer of then Junta Leader- Johnny Paul Koroma; disclosing further that the Westside camp was established when they failed to retake Freetown after been chased out by ECOMOG

Questioned by Melron Nicol-Wilson as to the particular group that invaded Freetown on 6th January 1999, the witness said, "the operation was SLA-dominated," revealing that at a village which is around Waterloo called Mamama, they locked up people in thatch houses and burnt them alive while some were killed and displayed openly on the road in a bid to create fear in the ECOMOG troops. The witness' cross-examination continues today.

SECRETS OF JAN. 6 REVEALED

*** '55 GAVE ORDERS TO
AMPUTATE 200 HANDS'**

*** HOW ARCHBISHOP GANDA,
5 NUNS ESCAPED CAPTIVITY**

*** 'OVER 70 ECOMOG SOJAS
WERE KILLED IN FREETOWN'**

By Mohamed Mansaray

Startling revelations about the January 6, 1999 attack on Freetown by AFRC/RUF forces are being made by a Special Court Prosecution Witness, George Johnson, alias Junior Lion.

In one of these, Johnson disclosed this week that it was Santigie Kanu, alias 55 who ordered the amputation of 200 civilians when they were retreating from Freetown in January 1999.

The witness identified Mr. Kanu as a member of the Sierra Leone Army (SLA) and participated in the coup plot that brought fugitive war crimes indictee and chairman of the AFRC, Johnny Paul Koroma to power in May 1997.

"55 gave orders to amputate 200 civilians and send them back to ECOMOG controlled territories in Freetown", the witness told the court but did not say whether he himself participated in the amputation. Mr. Johnson was led in evidence by a prosecution lawyer Peter Harrison at Court Room No. 1, New England in Freetown.

The witness testified that the amputation started in earnest when they were retreating to the Kissy Mental Home after they lost control of Ferry Junction to ECOMOG forces. He told the court that they also abducted scores of civilians when they were pulling out of Freetown but did not say how many.

In another development, George Johnson alias Junior Lion

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**Foday Sankoh, RUF
leader**



**Johnny Paul Koroma,
AFRC leader**

Junior Lion On January 6 Attack

revealed that it was members of the Sierra Leone Army (SLA) including himself who abducted the Archbishop of the Diocese of Freetown and Bo, Most Rev. Joseph Ganda in January 1999.

The witness testified that the Archbishop was abducted when they were retreating from Ferry Junction to the Kissy Mental Home at Kissy.

Mr. Johnson was led in evidence by prosecution lawyer, Peter Harrison at Court Room No. 1, New England in Freetown on Monday.

"Due to an ECOMOG attack on us at Kissy Mental Home, the Archbishop escaped from us," he testified.

Mr. Johnson further told the court that they also abducted eight (8) Catholics nuns on their way to the Kissy Mental Home and that three (3) were murdered by one Fodaba Marrah alias Buldoze. "The other five nuns also escaped from us as a result of the ECOMOG raid", he said, adding that they immediately retreated to Orugu Village in the far east of Freetown. "We spent only two days at the Kissy Mental Home," Mr. Johnson told the court and added that they also conscripted scores of civilians in Freetown but did not give figures.

In a further revelation, George Johnson alias Junior Lion revealed that over 20 ECOMOG soldiers were murdered at Hastings by members of the Sierra Leone Army (SLA) when they were advancing on Freetown on January 6, 1999.

The witness told the court that hours after they captured State House, he saw over 30 dead bodies within State House vicinity and mentioned Nigerian soldiers, police officers and Nigerian civilians who were killed there.

"Alex Tamba Brima alias Gullit gave us orders that when we get to Freetown, Nigerian civilians, police officers, ECOMOG soldiers and senior SLPP officials should be considered as enemies and should be killed," the witness told the court, adding that the orders were given at Orugu Village where they held the final meeting on January 4, 1999 at 6 pm before they invaded Freetown. Led in evidence by prosecution lawyer Peter Harrison at Court Room No. 1, New England in Freetown, Mr. Johnson testified that about ten ECOMOG soldiers were also murdered and their bodies deposited at the SLRA building at PWD, Kissy. The witness further told the court that a government Minister was also slaughtered and his body also dumped at the SLRA building but would not give the name of the Minister. "About fifteen bodies in all were left at SLRA building," he told the court.

Mr. Johnson went on to tell the court that he saw seven dead bodies outside a mosque at Calaba Town when they were pulling out of Freetown, adding that 'dead bodies were also seen inside the mosque. "Red Coat, an SLA officer was assigned to Calaba Town," he said.

Earlier in his testimony, the witness recalled an ambush on an ECOMOG convoy between Makeni and Sewafe led by a battalion commander Lt. Savage during that period. Although the witness informed the court that he did not take part in that operation nor would he give casualty figures, Mr. Johnson quoted Lt. Savage as describing the operation as successful. "The commander returned to Kono with a lot of ECOMOG uniforms, medicines, weapons and food", he testified.

At Up-Gun turntable, the witness told the court, there was heavy ECOMOG presence there but that they nevertheless overpowered them. He did not say how many ECOMOG soldiers died in that attack but Mr. Johnson testified that there were few casualties on the side of the invading forces but did not give figures.

He told the court that the operation to invade Freetown commenced on January 5, 1999 from Orugu Village in the far east of Freetown and they arrived in Freetown on January 6, 1999.

"All police properties and police officers are legitimate targets," he quoted Gullit as giving them orders and further quoted the Operations Commander Hassan Papa Kamara alias Bomb Blast as giving orders to burn down houses when they were retreating from Freetown. "We abducted a lot of civilians in Freetown," Mr. Johnson said but refused to give figures.

The witness testified openly in court and he spoke in English. Mr. Johnson was testifying in the on-going trial of RUF indictees of the Special Court. The trials continue.

Salome Times

21 October 2004

THE EXCLUSIVE

Vol. 2 No. 2159

Thursday October 21, 2004

January 6 Revealed

HOW AFRC/RUF Invaded Freetown

By Joseph Turay

Prosecution witness, George Johnson aka Junior Lion (code name TF1-167), yes-

terday told the Special Court that the AFRC/RUF rebels that left the district headquarters of Koinadugu, Kabala,

under the command of the late Solomon Anthony James Musa attacked Masiaka. The witness testified that he

was part of the AFRC/RUF troops that attacked Masiaka where the Guinean and Nigerian ECOMOG troops were

deployed and captured civilians, arms and ammunition and later returned to their base at Kabala.

The former rebel commander also testified that the Masiaka attack was planned
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How AFRC/RUF Invaded Freetown

From front page

at a meeting that was held in Kabala and chaired by SAJ Musa, adding that at the meeting they unanimously agreed to execute the plan in order to get more arms and ammunition from the ECOMOG troops for the final onslaught on Freetown to restore the junta regime that had been ousted in the February 1998 military intervention.

The witness who was being cross-examined by Defence Counsel Wayne Jordash for the first accused of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), Issa Sesay, further testified that before they attacked Masiaka, their commander SAJ Musa warned them strictly not to capture any civilians as there were already civilians in areas held by them.

TF1-167 told the court that despite the warning from

their commander, they abducted civilians who helped them carry the captured arms and ammunition to Kabala and everyone including SAJ Musa jubilated over the successful execution of their plan. The witness further testified that the captured arms and ammunition were used in the January 6, 1999 invasion of Freetown by the AFRC/RUF.

The witness in his earlier statement told the court that there was another attack on the second city Bo by a joint command led by Issa Sesay who represented the RUF and Major A.F. Kamara who represented the AFRC. He added that during the aborted onslaught on Bo, the RUF com-

mander Issa Sesay suffered minor injuries on the back after a heavy resistance from the pro-government forces including the ECOMOG troops.

The Defence Lawyer, Jordash, told the court that the witness did not mention in his statement to the prosecution that Issa Sesay was one of the two commanders in the Bo attack.

Responding, the witness said he only realised some of the errors after he read the statement on Monday night before taking the witness box the following day, adding that when the prosecution obtained statement from him they did not read it to him to ascertain whether or not there was error.

In his submission to the argument, the Prosecution Counsel, Peter Harrison, told the court that the witness's statement was made available to him at the request of the defence, and not the prosecution.

STANDARD TIMES

Thursday October 21, 2004

Le500

Special Court...

Prosecutor practices racism

BY THEOPHILUS GBENDE

The chief prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, David M. Crane has been referred to as a racist.

Impeccable sources close to the office of the prosecutor reveal that Sierra Leoneans working at the Court are marginalized at the be-

hest of their white colleagues.

Crane, according to the sources, is said to be using his one time CIA experience to militarize the prosecution.

This is to say, Sierra Leoneans attached to the prosecutor's office are given strict orders and shouted at as if they were in a mili-

tary barracks.

Aside from the fact that some Sierra Leoneans working there are far more experienced than many of the white folks (most of whom are having their first ever practical experience in an actual trial), reports indicate that Sierra Leoneans are only restricted to office jobs like

filing and report gathering, rather than being exposed to the trial process in court.

For the better part of the trial, Sierra Leonean folks were rarely seen prosecuting.

This situation has been responsible, according to the sources, for some Sierra Leoneans who do not wish to gamble their status for a few dollars resigning their positions in the prosecution.

Principal amongst them are Attorneys Brown-Mark and Abdul Tejan Cole.

Although cases of racism are not

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Prosecutor practices racism

FROM PAGE 1

that loud in the other areas of the Court, reliable sources maintain that the opportunities there are nothing to write home about.

This is so because all the sensitive sections of the court, excluding the outreach section, are all headed by money-grabbing whites folks, most of whose contribution to the court's success is not in any way desirable.

Sections that could have been effectively handled by Sierra Leoneans (like the general services section) are all headed by Australians, British and Americans, and they receive payments four times more than what they used to earn in their respective countries.

The salary scales of the different sorts of people (black and white) is another issue that will be examined in subsequent editions.

Meanwhile, the presiding judge of the trial Chamber Benjamin Itoe, has threatened to ban either temporarily or permanent any newspaper and reporter, whose articles on the trial proceedings are tantamount to putting the lives of witness at risk.

This threat was made when one of the dedicated reporters of the court, Joseph Turay of the Exclusive carried an article on Friday October 15, 2004, which, according to the presiding judge, was a deliberate attempt by the reporter to thwart the

orders of the chamber, which calls for the protection of witnesses.

This has to do with the disclosure of the identity of George Johnson, alias 'Junior Lion', who was going to testify in secret.

How Junior Lions' name appeared on the paper remains a mystery, but what is clear though is that his testimony was centred on crimes he himself, as commander, participated in.

Meanwhile, court sources indicate that the publication has earned the one time killer and his family a free ticket to a foreign country at the expense of the almighty Special Court, which seems to be using criminals to prosecute presumed criminals.

Iwoko

21 Oct 2004

Special Court warns Journalists

The Presiding Judge of the Trials Chamber of the Special Court- Benjamin Itoe has issued a stern warning to Journalists covering the proceedings of the Court. This came as a result of the 15th October

edition of the "*Exclusive Newspaper*" which according to the Court carried a story, which revealed the identity of the currently-testifying witness of the Court- George Johnson aka 'Junior Lion'. "There is a semblance of contempt committed by the paper, as it revealed the identity of the witness," Justice Itoe stated; adding that this is in contravention of the Court's decisions on protective measures for witnesses. "We would let this one go..." he informed. "The article seeks to thwart the efforts of the Chamber to protect

witnesses..." stating that the Court would not take it lightly regarding any publication in a newspaper that tends to reveal the identity of witnesses. The Trials Chamber Presiding Judge informed, "the Court would exercise the right to prevent any

Journalist found wanton; from entering the Court's premises during sittings either on a temporal basis or permanently, as it would decide." As a new measure to be adopted, Judge Benjamin Itoe said that they would now use a "pseudo" as a way of protecting witnesses from being revealed to the public.



Liberia moves against Taylor aides

Liberia has imposed economic sanctions on two people with connections to exiled president, Charles Taylor.

They appear on a list of 22 names compiled by the United Nations, which passed a resolution in March ordering the freezing of their assets.

Justice Minister Kabineh Janneh said the government now has enough evidence to proceed with the resolution.

Mr Taylor resigned and fled to Nigeria last year and is wanted on war crimes charges in Sierra Leone.

Fuel conflicts

Mr Janneh said the assets of Emmanuel Shaw, a former finance minister in the 1980s and the former commissioner of Liberia's maritime affairs bureau, Benoni Urey, would remain frozen until further instructions from the UN Security Council.

The two men are both top officials at a mobile phone company, Lone Star Communication.

"This is not limited to the two individuals," Mr Janneh told the BBC, warning that further investigations were being made.

The BBC's Jonathan Paye-Layleh in the capital Monrovia, said the Security Council recently sent a team to Liberia to see who on their list of Mr Taylor's aides was still operating businesses there.

The justice minister told the BBC that he hoped the action would help prevent the destabilisation of the region.

The UN alleges that some of the assets of those on its list were used to fuel past conflicts in West Africa.

Mr Taylor is alleged to have backed the RUF rebels in Sierra Leone who killed and mutilated many thousands during that country's brutal 10-year conflict.

The UN resolution, passed in March, said that the former president and his associates are undermining "Liberia's transition to democracy".

After 14 years of civil war, Liberia is expected to hold elections in October next year.

Story from BBC NEWS:
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/africa/3758828.stm>

Published: 2004/10/20 11:27:33 GMT

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NTGL Flexes Muscles

The Analyst (Monrovia)

NEWS

October 20, 2004

Posted to the web October 20, 2004

Began Freezing Assets of Taylor's Associates In Keeping With UN Mandate

Since an Amnesty International report revealed that certain officials of the defunct Taylor regime were aiding and abetting the former president to maintain his grip on the then teething peace process in Liberia, the identification of the officials and what to do with them has been the obsession of the international community led by the United Nations.

In November 2003 and early this year, the UN passed resolutions prescribing punitive measures for the alleged perpetrators. First the UN placed restrictions on the movement of those suspected and later announced the freezing of their assets. The resolutions announcing these measures would not, however, be implemented in Liberia because UN's role in the country does not cover the exercise of civil authority.

Until its silence on the issue was criticized at the UN recently, NTGL did nothing to facilitate the implementation of the resolutions. Now it has announced that it has taken steps to freeze the accounts of former Maritime Affairs Commission, Benoni Urey, and former economic advisor to President Charles Taylor, Emanuel Shaw, in keeping with the recommendations of the UN Security Council resolutions. The Analyst's Senior Staffer reports.

The transitional government has announced the freezing of the assets of exiled former president Charles Taylor and two former members of his government, Maritime commissioner Benoni Urey and economic advisor Emanuel Shaw, who are said to have been amongst those who collaborated with him in undermining the Liberian peace process.

Justice Minister Kabinah Ja'neh announced the freezing of the assets of the two former officials yesterday during a press conference.

The freeze of assets is part of efforts by the UN to ensure that the former government officials and friends of Mr. Taylor do not use their assets to frustrate the peace process or incite others against the process of restoring peace and harmony to Liberia.

The NTGL announcement did not state the volume of assets frozen thus far, but a Justice Ministry statement on the matter says efforts were still underway to identify all of the assets that belong to those affected and that a public statement would be made thereafter.

The move came after an agreement was reached between the Executive and Legislative branches of the power sharing transitional government to enforce the UN resolutions.

The resolutions called for the freezing of the assets of the former officials who "bear the greatest responsibility" for wreaking havoc in the sub-region.

The Security Council Resolution 1343 imposing travel restriction on former Liberian officials for bearing the "greatest responsibility" has begun to take effect.

Minister Ja'neh told newsmen that the move was in response to a directive given by transitional chairman Gyude Bryant.

The chairman recently ordered the Justice Ministry to take measures aimed at freezing the assets of the former officials upon returning from New York where he addressed the Security Council on the progress and obstacles facing the peace process.

Bryant said during the press conference that the freezing of the former officials' assets was necessary since Liberia has become the prime beneficiary of the largest peacekeeping mission of the UN in the world.

On account of that, he noted, he did not see why the government should not completely enforce the UN mandate.

Others affected by the assets freezing exercise initiated by the NTGL include are the former chairman of the erstwhile ruling National Patriotic Party, Cyril Allen; former First Lady Jewel Howard-Taylor, and former Information Minister Reginald Goodridge.

Their names were also placed on the UN travel ban.

The freezing of the officials' assets was enforced after reports that they were using their assets to undermine the Liberian peace process. But the accused termed the UN actions against them as "unjust and illegal," at one time causing laughter by branding it "violation of human rights".

The Security Council adopted Resolution 1532 in March this year, obligating member nations of the UN to freeze funds, other financial assets, and economic resources held by entities owned and controlled by certain personalities.

The Resolution also called for the freezing of assets of any person or persons acting on behalf of those who benefit from the assets.

Acting on the directive of Chairman Bryant, the Justice Ministry began a process to identify the assets of all those listed by the UN. The Justice Ministry has been carrying out intensive investigations, which resulted to the freezing of the economic assets of former Maritime Commissioner Benoni Urey and former economic advisor Emanuel Shaw.

Justice Minister Kabineh Ja'neh said the Ministry has, meantime, directed the Lone Star Communications Corporation to immediately "freeze all shares and assets" owned by Urey and Shaw "directly or indirectly or by those acting on their behalves." The Ministry further advised Lone Star Communications Corporation "to ensure with the full support of law enforcement agencies at the disposal of this government that the two men have no access directly or otherwise to any and all the facilities of the Lone Star Communications Corporation".

Ja'neh said government was taking further actions to identify and freeze assets believed to belong to other named persons.

He said consistent with the Security Council resolution, the government has taken concurrent actions of issuing the directives to the Lone Star Communications Corporation and also filing a petition before the Civil Law Court.

"We will continue to give effect to the UN Resolution 1532 as we gather more information", Minister Ja'neh said.

According to him, Messrs. Urey and Shaw have shares in the Lone Star Communications Company and that the Justice Ministry has evidence to support the claim.

"The freezing of the assets is to ensure that the main persons do not have control in spending the money to further the cause of war," he noted.

On what would happen to money collected from the assets, he said the government would seek clarification from the UN on that.

"The freezing will not only be cash but assets and economic resources. The list is a very long one," the Liberian attorney general said.

He said the Bureau of Immigration was ready to enforce the travel ban on the officials involved.

He said, "Since the Resolution was filed, there has been almost no instance of violations yet."



Sierra Leone's TRC Report: Preliminary Comments

Concord Times (Freetown)

ANALYSIS

October 20, 2004

Posted to the web October 20, 2004

By Lansana Gberie
Freetown

Sierra Leone's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) finally submitted its long-awaited report to the government last week. The main report is 1,500-pages long, and there is a CD-ROM version (Vol. 4), along with transcripts of testimonies. The transcripts are more than 3,500 pages. Put together, the report is 5000 pages long.

The report is well organised and reader-friendly.

There is an Executive Summary (of about 40 pages), which very well captures the substance of the massive report; and the main report is broken down into several sections dealing with various aspects of the decade-long war that ravaged Sierra Leone from 1991 to 2001:

the historical antecedents of the war and other preceding events;

the causes of the war, with a particular focus on issues of governance;

the conflict itself, including military and political events;

its nature, with a focus on such demented atrocities as amputations and sexual slavery;

the role of external actors, and circumstances that fuelled the war, such as mineral resources;

the impact of warfare on various groups, particularly on women, children, and youths;

the relationship between the TRC and the Special Court for Sierra Leone;

and the efforts made to help Sierra Leone reconcile with its past, including the proposed reparations programme and the National Vision for Sierra Leone, a still-inchoate project which was the direct offspring of the TRC.

A set of well-detailed and cogent recommendations (including, with exquisite fitness, a call for the abolition of the death penalty) constitute a whole chapter: this section should be treated with particular urgency by the government and people of Sierra Leone.

The Commissioners had initially planned to submit the report in October 2003. When this proved impossible---the Commission was handicapped throughout by its poor finances and by the rather serious

shortfall in quality personnel---an extension was granted it in September 2003. The TRC was then to submit its report to the President in March 2004, a deadline it again failed to meet. What has been submitted, however, is rather worthy of the long wait, and a read through its thousands of pages will repay many times over. No doubt there will be questions about the report's methodology, interpretation of events, and its often idiosyncratic political and military analysis, but there is no question that the report is one of the most important documents on Sierra Leone's recent history.

Congratulations are due to the Commissioners, the diligent staff of the Commission, including its senior staff (notably Ozonia Ojielo, a brilliant human rights lawyer and former civil society activist in Nigeria, who almost single-handedly ensured that the process remained on track even after the Commission ran out of funding), the researchers, and the donor community.

MANDATE AND METHODOLOGY & ANALYSIS

The TRC was set up as a result of the Lome Accord of July 1999 (the highly controversial but definitive agreement that ended Sierra Leone's war), whose Article XXVI states thus: "A Truth and Reconciliation Commission shall be established to address impunity, break the cycle of violence, provide a forum for both parties and perpetrators of human rights violations, to tell their story, get a clear picture of the past in order to facilitate genuine healing and reconciliation." On 10 February 2000, the Sierra Leone Parliament passed an Act legally setting up the Commission.

The Act made provisions to compel persons to appear before the Commission where Commissioners were convinced that this would be necessary to get important statements from them. The Act described the purpose of the TRC as an instrument designed to create "an impartial body of historical record" of the war and to "help restore the human dignity of victims and promote reconciliation." The TRC was required to conduct a year-long nationwide process of collecting testimonies and research, and to foster "inter-change(s) between victims and perpetrators." At the end of the year, the Commission was to present a report to the Sierra Leone government, which would then share the findings with the UN Security Council.

A budget for the exercise was initially set at \$10 million, but this was reduced to \$6.5 million after potential donors complained that the earlier figure was too high. The cash-strapped Sierra Leone government was to contribute only a small fraction of this. In the event, it was not until 5 July 2002 that the TRC was finally inaugurated in Freetown.

The Commissioners and staff were from various backgrounds and of various nationalities, and they saw themselves clearly as being above the undue influence of any party to the just-ended conflict. This was an undeniable strength, but in the report they also curiously affected to be above the moral sensitivities that come naturally in such a situation. They write that it was not part of their mandate to "assess the justice of the conflict itself." This is also the position taken by the Special Court for Sierra Leone, another instrument of transitional justice in Sierra Leone---and it is one of the few things on which these two instruments agree. It is a hugely problematic position, of course. It is not that a fiercely evenhanded approach to assessing the war's protagonists and responsibility for the destruction and atrocities is inherently bad or misguided; it is just that a report like this should seriously attempt to provide a proper context in which groups emerged or acted they way they did. And this should involve, clearly, assessing "the justice" or rationale for which the various groups resorted to arms and did what they did.

Shifting through thousands of testimonies, mainly from victims but also from some perpetrators, the TRC sought to establish what it called "social truth", by which it meant the establishment of a kind of "consensus about the nature of the conflict." This obviously involved making judgments about the "personal or narrative truths" that were collected from individual testimonies, although the report is rather coy about this. It emphatically submits its findings as largely a matter of statistical truism, which is reasonable and fair, as far as it goes. We read: "The Commission finds the RUF [Revolutionary United Front, the group that initiated the war], the AFRC [the Armed Forces Ruling Council, the junta, actually a coalition of the RUF and rogue government soldiers, that ruled Sierra Leone from May 1997 to February 1998, and continued its

depredations even after it was unseated] and the SLA (the Sierra Leone Army, when it operated with the AFRC) to be the primary organizations that committed violations against children. Of the violations known to the Commission with a victim with known age and alleged to have been committed by the RUF, 15.4% (3090 out of 20125 violations) was against a child. The corresponding statistic for the AFRC, (including the SLA when it operated with the AFRC), was 10.7% (603/5610). The leaderships of these organisations are held responsible for permitting the commission of gross human rights violations against children. There are no mitigating factors to justify such inhuman and cruel conduct." The report states that overall the RUF committed 60.5 % of the atrocities; the AFRC 9.8 %; the SLA 6.8 %; the Civil Defence Force (mainly Kamajors) 6 %; and ECOMOG, the Nigerian-led West African intervention force, 1 %.

As stated earlier, this statistical apportioning of blame for the violations appears reasonable and fair, as far as it goes. But since the report evokes the concept of "just war", one would expect certain judgments, of a broader more cosmic nature, to be made about responsibility for the war itself, and therefore for the atrocities that resulted from it. The war was started by the RUF, and it is arguably true that only the RUF ensured its continuation and even its character. The RUF was a predatory and self-interested, even criminal, organization, and the report's statement that some people may argue that "those who initiated the attempts to overthrow the Momoh regime were justified in taking up arms" (an obvious reference to the RUF), betrays a certain lack of insight into how the RUF was organized and inflicted on Sierra Leone.

The TRC in fact does make strong judgments, and not only in the matter of naming prominent names and assigning responsibility (the RUF leadership is held responsible for RUF's actions; the government of Sierra Leone, including the President, is held accountable for the depredations of the CDF etc). It also makes pronouncements on what it considers "caused" the war, although the broadness of culpability it assigns makes such pronouncements of rather little value. It dismisses the "commonly held view, both within and outside Sierra Leone, that the Sierra Leone conflict was a war fought over diamonds" as "only partly true." The report stresses that issues of bad governance, endemic corruption and poverty, disenchanted youth, a dictatorship that closed legitimate avenues of political expression, the dubious policies of the former colonial administration, uneven development in the country, capital punishment, a sclerotic elite, autocratic chiefs, a demented gerontocracy, patrimonial politics---all of these "laid the grounds for the war which would have taken place even without the existence of diamonds in the country."

The report concludes that the "exploitation of diamonds was not the cause of the conflict in Sierra Leone, rather it was an element that fuelled the conflict," and that "diamonds were used by most of the armed factions to finance and support their war efforts." Isn't there a non sequitor here? Did anyone ever doubt that other "armed factions" benefited from diamonds or used them in their war efforts? The government of Sierra Leone certainly used profits from the diamond trade to fund its war effort, as well run the government; and the Civil Defence Force (CDF), which fought to protect civilians, also mined diamonds and used the profits to fund its activities. To make this recognition, however, is different from attempting to blur the distinction between the various groups by arguing that the RUF was just another "armed faction." The war was the RUF's war, and diamonds for the RUF were more than simply an available resource to fund its war effort: they were also a principal motivation for its crucial external supporters, particularly Charles Taylor and various arms dealers, as well as most of its core fighters.

These are only preliminary comments, and the criticism here certainly do not detract from the overall value of what is, in my view, a profoundly important and well-researched document, one that should be read and evaluated with great care by all Sierra Leoneans and those interested in Sierra Leone. Below, I reproduce some important findings made by the Commission; I highlight them because they are rather fresh, in some ways surprising, but ultimately rather reasonable and intriguing: WHAT THE REPORT SAYS, IN ITS OWN WORDS: "Most of the violations reported to the Commission were committed against adult males (59.6%, 6816 violations out of 11429).

Of the victims reported to the Commission for whom age and sex are known, 66.5% (7603 out of 11429 victims) are male while 33.5% (3826 out of 11429 victims) are female. Female victims reported to the Commission comprised 31.9% of adult victims (3186 out of 10002 victims) but made up 44.9% (640 out of

1427) of the child victims." "The Commission finds the RUF, the AFRC and the SLA (when it operated with the AFRC) to be the primary organizations that committed violations against children. Of the violations known to the Commission with a victim with known age and alleged to have been committed by the RUF, 15.4% (3090 out of 20125 violations) was against a child. The corresponding statistic for the AFRC, (including the SLA when it operated with the AFRC), was 10.7% (603/5610). The leaderships of these organisations are held responsible for permitting the commission of gross human rights violations against children.

There are no mitigating factors to justify such inhuman and cruel conduct." "The Commission has identified an astonishing "factional fluidity" among the different militias and armed groups that prosecuted the war. Both overtly and covertly, gradually and suddenly, fighters switched sides or established new "units". These "chameleonic tendencies" spanned across all factions without exception." * "The factional fluidity that defined this conflict was drawn into its sharpest focus in the latter stages of the conflict. Many of the early members of the RUF on its Southern Front in the Pujehun District reappeared as Kamajors under the banner of the CDF after 1997. Theirs was not so much a switching of sides as the identification of a new vehicle on which to purvey their notions of empowerment as civil militiamen." * "The Commission finds that the RUF was responsible for more violations than any other faction during the period 1991 to 2000: 60.5% (24353 out of 40242) of all violations were attributed to the RUF.

Furthermore, the RUF committed more violations than any other group during every individual year between 1991 and 2000." * "The AFRC was responsible for the second largest number of violations during the period 1991 to 2000. Some 9.8% (3950 out of 40242 violations) of all allegations made in statements to the Commission were attributed to the AFRC." * "The Sierra Leone Army (SLA) was responsible for the third largest number of violations during the same period.

Some 6.8% (2724 out of 40242) of the allegations made in the statements were levelled at the SLA." * "6% (2419 out of 40242) of violations alleged by the statement-makers are attributed to the CDF, and 1.5% (of violations alleged by the statement-makers are attributed jointly to the SLA and AFRC during the second quarter of 1997." * "Other groups such as ECOMOG, the Special Security Division (SSD) of the Sierra Leone Police and the Guinean Armed Forces (GAF) account for less than 1% each of the recorded violations. 5.0% of the recorded violations are considered to have unknown perpetrators." * Knowledge of CDF Atrocities "The Commission finds that the Government was aware of human rights violations and abuses carried out by the CDF, through the role of its Deputy Defence Minister, Chief Samuel Hinga Norman, who served as CDF National Co-ordinator and members of the War Council at Base Zero.

The Government was further kept informed through its Security Committee briefings and through reports received from ECOMOG, but failed to take steps to stop them. The Commission, accordingly, holds the Government responsible for the violations and abuses of human rights committed by the CDF." * "Of the various groups that comprised the CDF, the Kamajors received the most scrutiny by the Commission as they were responsible for largest number of violations committed by the CDF after 1996 . A defining characteristic of the CDF is the initiation ceremony, described by many witnesses before the Commission as entailing gross abuses and violations of human rights." * "The War Council in Exile established by President Kabbah struggled to assert its mandate. Indeed, the War Council's efficacy depended largely on the extent to which its directions converged with Hinga Norman's own views.

* "Nonetheless, the Commission finds that the War Council and the President were fully and timeously apprised of events that were taking place on the ground in Sierra Leone during their period in exile. They did not act to stop the violations being carried out by CDF elements nor did they speak out against them. As such, they are held responsible for the acts of their agents on the ground.

* "The failure of the pro-Government forces to halt the AFRC advance on Freetown in January 1999 represents a blunder on the part of the Government of Sierra Leone and ECOMOG. Both parties had multiple prior warnings of the impending disaster. Their joint neglect and poor analysis of the situation culminated in the wanton destruction of Freetown by bands of thugs and hooligans." * Citizenship should be

acquired by birth, descent or naturalisation. Race and gender must not be a consideration in the acquisition of citizenship. The Sierra Leone Citizenship Act should be amended accordingly. This is an imperative recommendation.

*Prosecution of corruption cases should be free of any scope for political interference. The Commission recommends that the Anti- Corruption Commission (ACC) should be permitted to pursue its own prosecutions in the name of the Republic of Sierra Leone. The Commission recommends that the ACC Act 2000 should be amended to include a provision deeming prosecutions undertaken by the ACC to be in the name of the Republic." *"The Commission calls on the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists and the Media Commission to be more proactive in monitoring standards of journalism practiced in Sierra Leone and to establish mechanisms for effective self-regulation. These organisations can do much to advance a culture of human rights in Sierra Leone."

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Milosevic lawyers plead to quit

Lawyers appointed to defend Slobodan Milosevic are appealing for the former Yugoslav president to be allowed to defend himself at his war crimes trial.

Mr Milosevic refuses to co-operate with the defence team and insists on his right to put his case to the court.

His lawyers claim the judges sacrificed this right to speed up the trial, which has suffered numerous delays.

Mr Milosevic is accused of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes during the 1990s Balkans war.

The reason for more than a dozen delays to the trial proceedings has been Mr Milosevic's poor health.

'Fundamental right'

British barrister Steven Kay was part of the defence team appointed last month when the court ruled Mr Milosevic was too ill to continue acting as his own defence lawyer.

MILOSEVIC TRIAL

Began February 2002

Milosevic faces more than 60 charges

Prosecutors' case rested February 2004

Court already heard from 295 witnesses

Mr Kay told the five-judge panel at the appeals court: "One cannot think of a more fundamental right, more in the interest of justice, more going to the fairness of a trial, than the right to present your defence as you want to present it, rather than how somebody else would like for you to present it."

The defence lawyers also claim it is difficult to represent him, as he has refused to co-operate with them.

The prosecution argues that the trial would be delayed even further if Mr Milosevic was allowed to represent himself.

Many witnesses are refusing to testify unless Mr Milosevic is allowed to conduct his own defence.

The BBC's Geraldine Coughlan, at The Hague, says some experts feel the appeal ruling will go in favour of the judges and that they will consider his health as a main issue, as well as the benefits of a professional defence.

Story from BBC NEWS:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/europe/3762224.stm>

Published: 2004/10/21 09:09:19 GMT

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M2 Presswire October 19, 2004

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M2 Presswire

October 19, 2004

LENGTH: 2531 words

HEADLINE: **UN: Secretary-General outlines key lessons for building peace in war-torn societies, in lecture at University of Ulster**

BODY:

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Following is the text of **Secretary-General** Kofi Annan's Tip O'Neill **Lecture**, "Learning the **lessons of peace-building**", delivered at Magee Campus, **University of Ulster**, United Kingdom, on 18 October:

My talk today is about learning -- not teaching. The question I want to examine with you is, how can outsiders best contribute to the process of **building peace in war-torn societies?**

Such a process must, by its very nature, be deeply rooted in local communities and local identities. Outsiders, however well-intentioned, do not know best. The people of the country or region concerned must feel that it is their process, if it is to have any hope of success. Yet I believe that outsiders can help, particularly if they learn the right **lessons** from their own experience, and apply them with sensitivity.

Let me start by saying how deeply moved and gratified I am to be giving the Tip O'Neill **Lecture** at this distinguished **university**. But, please do not take my general observations about **peace-building** as oblique comments on your own problems. You have been managing those without the help of the **United Nations**. You have well established mechanisms to do so. And we have an equally well established policy of not seeking to duplicate such mechanisms.

I don't mean to imply that you have solved all your problems.

There are many, I know, that you are still wrestling with.

But it does seem to me that you are managing them better and more hopefully than in the past. For some years now you have been spared the large-scale violence and terror that used to disfigure your beautiful part of the country and seemed to blight its future. Your efforts to create a better world for your children have been a source of inspiration and hope to people in many other countries. If the world is to learn **lessons** about how to manage a transition from troubles and violence to **peace**, surely it can

learn some of them from you -- from your commitment, courage and imagination in seeking solutions and fostering trust between communities which had been at loggerheads for decades.

Which brings me back to my theme. Since the end of the cold war, our Member States have set the **United Nations** to work in many fractured and **war-torn societies**. We are no longer asked, as we used to be, just to "keep the **peace**" by helping maintain a ceasefire. Now, increasingly, we are tasked with going beyond that, to engage in conflict resolution. This means tackling root causes. It means trying to help the people in those fractured **societies** to work together to build a lasting **peace**. And I believe we have learnt some valuable **lessons**, if only by the painful method of trial and error.

For one thing, we have learnt to approach this whole topic with considerable caution. A great Northern Irish poet [Louis MacNeice] once wrote:

"World is crazier and, more of it than we think,

Incorrigibly plural".

And that is certainly true of **war-torn societies**. Each has its own particularity, born of its own -- often very local -- history, culture, and, quite often, religion and ethnicity.

There is no "one size fits all".

So there are no easy answers, and very few uncontested ones.

There is now a huge literature about post-conflict **peace-building**. It deals, for instance, with secession and partition; with spoilers; with transitional justice, truth commissions, and reconciliation; with elections and power-sharing; with the rule of law; with economic liberalization, reconstruction and development; even with international administration or trusteeship. All these issues have spawned intense debate. Some would put the emphasis on eliminating root causes and dealing with spoilers. Others would give primacy to the need for swift economic growth and reconstruction, arguing that lapses back into conflict are much more common in very poor **societies**. The debate remains unresolved, because we are all still learning, and it may take some time before the various approaches can be reconciled.

In the last 15 years or so, the **United Nations** has developed a considerable body of experience of managing and resolving conflict, as well as of **peace-building**. But we should acknowledge that our record has been mixed. Among the successes I would mention particularly Namibia, South Africa, Mozambique, El Salvador, Eastern Slavonia, Guatemala and East Timor. The failures, alas, often receive more publicity -- especially those of the early and mid-1990s, Somalia, Bosnia, Rwanda and Angola. I do not think it coincidental that, in the case of the failures, either there was no **peace** to keep or **peace** agreements proved fragile because the underlying causes of conflict had not been resolved. We have learned useful **lessons** from both our successes and failures, and are doing our best to put those **lessons** into practice.

What are these **lessons**? Let me suggest nine that are well worth considering.

-- First, we should say no when we need to.

We must know the limits of what is achievable by the **United Nations**. We should be especially careful not to allow ourselves to be used as a fig leaf for lack of political will by the international community to deal effectively with an issue. If the Security Council seeks to give the **Secretary-General** a mandate which he believes to be unachievable, especially if coupled with means which he knows to be inadequate, he should say so, clearly and in advance. I believe that we have learnt that **lesson**, uncomfortable though it may be.

-- Second, know where you are going.

Our most successful experiences have started from a clear and achievable mandate. In post-conflict work, this means the clearest vision of the end-state -- or at least, a clear understanding, accepted by all parties, of how and when the end-state will eventually be decided.

In your own case, I know, you have agreed that that decision must be based on the fundamental democratic principle of the consent of the governed.

In East Timor, the task of the **United Nations** was made much easier by the fact that the goal of independence, the interim **UN** stewardship, and the authority vested in us during that time, were all established from the outset. The same was true, before that, in Namibia.

Contrast that with the situation in Kosovo, where there is profound disagreement about the end-state, and the method for deciding it, not only between the former belligerents but also among international actors.

-- Third **lesson**, know the context.

Here I return to Louis MacNeice and his "drunkenness of things being various". The specificity of a conflict will determine what can be done when. In Nicaragua and South Africa, we were able to help with elections, in countries that were ripe for elections. But in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where three-and-a-half million have died in six years of war, careful and thorough preparations are needed before elections can go ahead. In post-conflict situations, elections work best when they are the result of a political consensus as to their objectives. In the absence of such consensus, the parties often feel under no obligation to honour commitments they have entered into. They don't respect the rules of the game because they haven't really acquired the rules of the game.

I wish I could tell you that the **United Nations**, and in particular the Security Council, was always attuned to the context -- to the hard questions of what drove the killing, and what drove the end to the killing. Too often it has not been so attuned, and people in the countries concerned have paid the price. The bottom line, I am convinced, is that we need to be closer to those whose **peace** it is, to make or to break.

-- Fourth, never neglect security.

This is the point closest to achieving consensus among experienced **peace-builders**: most of the tasks that we call **peace-building** can only be carried out where there is already a reasonable level of physical security.

Of course that begs the question of what level any given **society** will consider "reasonable" -- and also of how you get there. In some cases security can be achieved purely by negotiation or dialogue between the warring parties; in others you need a stabilization force, with robust rules of engagement.

But it is none the less true: without security almost everything else is impossible: no effective government; no reconstruction; no return of refugees; no return to school; no elections.

-- The fifth **lesson**, manage expectations.

There is a moment, when the killing stops, when everything seems possible. Expectations run high.

That can be dangerous, because the road to **peace** often proves long and hard. The various elements of **peace-building** -- transforming suspicion into trust, re-crafting State institutions, reconstructing **war-torn** economies -- can take years or decades to accomplish. During that time people's hope, and their faith in the process, need to be sustained.

So expectations need to be managed from the beginning, and throughout the process -- which requires a major effort of public information and education by the **peace-builders**.

In particular, it is vital to explain what the **United Nations** is there to do, and what it cannot do. Otherwise expectations are unrealistic, and they are inevitably disappointed. When disillusion sets in, the people can easily turn against the very **peace** agreement they had at first welcomed.

-- Sixth, stay the course -- **peace-building** is a long-term commitment.

This **lesson** follows from the previous one. Nearly half of all **peace** agreements collapse within five years. Others fall into a sort of limbo of no war, no **peace**. In the life of almost every **peace** process, there comes a time -- usually three to seven years out -- when disillusionment is high, when the wheels seem to be turning without any real forward movement.

Fatally, this often coincides with the waning of outside interest. Political engagement and financial support are drawn down, just when the process needs a second wind.

Hard-won agreements on human rights and the reform of justice are often eroded once domestic and international attention diminishes. In Guatemala, securing such reforms, which were crucial to moving the country beyond the mere absence of warfare toward consolidated **peace**, was the hardest part.

In Haiti, we had a peacekeeping mission in the mid-1990s, and trained a new police force. And then we left -- along with other international institutions -- before a viable **peace** had taken root. Now we are back, with much of what we did before swept away -- almost literally, as the recent floods have laid bare the legacy of years of misrule.

The **lesson** -- a very important one -- is that everyone needs to stay engaged: the Security Council; MemberStates; international NGOs; and of course the former parties to the conflict, and the people themselves, who are the most essential actors in any **peace-building** process.

At least there are signs that the international community is now learning that **lesson**. We are staying the course better today in places like Sierra Leone and East Timor. And we are structuring our new mission in Haiti for the long term.

-- Now I turn to the seventh **lesson**, get the sequencing right.

One of the things we have learnt, from painful experience, is the peril of trying to do things in the wrong order. For instance:

Before there can be meaningful elections, there must be respect for the law, and some shared understanding of what the result will mean and how power will be distributed. We learned that **lesson** the hard way in Angola.

Before there can be full economic liberalization, there must be some social stability. We have learned how disastrous it can be to introduce policies, however sound in the long-term, which cause high short-term unemployment while large numbers of people still have weapons, and little or no stake in the **peace**-time economy. In such circumstances, surely what we need is not stringent structural adjustment but poor-friendly and **peace**-friendly policies on the part of the International Financial Institutions.

And before the international community disengages, there must be a growing economy. It should be no surprise that in the poorest countries, with little or no economic growth, like Haiti and Liberia, **peace** processes failed and conflicts lapsed back into violence.

-- Eighth, keep everyone on the same page.

We have had massive interventions in the past which failed, or came close to it, because they were too fragmented. The system is now working in a more coherent way. We are reaching out to our colleagues in the **United Nations** family, to NGOs, to the broader international community and also to the local population in the countries where we work, to make sure that we are all on the same page, both in setting our priorities and in the way we carry them out.

-- Finally, local populations should take responsibility -- it is they who must live with the **peace**.

There are many situations in which it seems easier, for everyone, to let outsiders take the lead -- to draft the laws; to run the elections, or the courts; to make the hard economic choices. But unless those who will live with the effects of decisions have a real part in taking them, the decisions will sooner or later be put aside.

No conflict can be overcome by the goodwill of outsiders alone. Those who live with it understand the

dynamics better than any international player. Those who live with it must be involved in the effort to end it, and must see benefits that justify the compromises and sacrifices involved.

This is a list that could go on. There are **lessons**, forexample, about greed as well as grievance. Whatever the origins of a conflict, it often cannot be ended without cutting off the resources that sustain it -- and providing the fighters with an alternative, peaceful means of earning their living. Nowadays we no longer contemplate demobilization and disarmament -- the two "Ds" -- without adding an "R", which stands for reintegration into the civilian economy. Without this, it is a virtual certainty that new weapons will be acquired and violence will resume. And there is also, of course, the need for reconciliation, which cannot work unless the victims of atrocities feel that they have obtained justice, or at least a full acknowledgement of past wrongs.


Absent such a reckoning, there is a lingering sense of unfinished business, and in the long run this can be destabilizing.

Let me end by saying that the most important **lesson** of all -- for me personally, and for the **United Nations** as an organization -- is that we must always be listening and looking out for new knowledge. Ladies and gentlemen, let us learn those **lessons**. And let us employ them in our future **peace** operations, as we work together to try to make the world a better and a safer place, for our own sakes and for our children.

Thank you very much.

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Date/Time: Thursday, October 21, 2004 - 6:46 AM EDT

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International conference prods Serbia to face war crimes issues

- KATARINA KRATOVAC, Associated Press Writer
Friday, October 1, 2004

(10-01) 01:50 PDT BELGRADE, Serbia-Montenegro (AP) --

Chief U.N. war crimes prosecutor Carla Del Ponte, international law experts and human rights activists gathered in Belgrade on Friday to review Serbia's shortcomings in dealing with war crimes committed during the 1990s Balkan conflicts.

The conference on international justice and war crimes was the first of its kind in Serbia, where extremism is still rampant and where many consider the U.N. tribunal in The Hague, Netherlands, to be biased against Serbs.

The conference comes amid intense Western pressure on Belgrade to capture fugitive Bosnian Serb wartime military chief Gen. Ratko Mladic and about 14 other war crimes suspects believed to be hiding in Serbia.

Many in Serbia still believe -- as they did under former President Slobodan Milosevic, now on trial in The Hague for his role in fomenting the Balkan bloodletting -- that Serbs were the victims, not the perpetrators of war crimes.

"Without facing war crimes committed in our name, we shall forever remain trapped in the shadow of Milosevic's bloody heritage," said Natasa Kandic, whose Belgrade-based Humanitarian Law Center, an independent group assisting victims of persecution, organized the conference with support from the Council of Europe.

The two-day gathering will cover topics ranging from international and domestic war crimes trials to reconciliation among the former Yugoslav republics.

Bosnia's 1992-95 war claimed about 250,000 lives, while 1.8 million were driven from their homes in fighting that pitted the country's Muslims, Croats and Serbs against each other. The 1998-99 war in Kosovo killed some 10,000 people, mostly ethnic Albanians.

The conference hopes to provide "guidelines for a nationwide strategy to help Serbia deal with the past," Kandic told The Associated Press.

"We owe it to the victims to raise our voice against forgetting or hushing up of war crimes," she said.

On Thursday, U.S. Undersecretary of State Marc Grossman met with Serbian officials and urged them to arrest and extradite war crimes suspects, saying Serbia faces further international isolation if the demands are not met.

Failure to hand them over to The Hague could cost the republic millions of dollars in U.S. aid, which is dependent on cooperation with the court.

Del Ponte was to meet with Serbian officials on Monday to press for tangible moves to bring suspects to



justice.

Topping the list of those sought by the U.N. court are Mladic and Bosnian Serb wartime leader Radovan Karadzic, indicted for the 1995 massacre of up to 8,000 Muslim men and boys in Srebrenica -- Europe's worst slaughter of civilians since World War II.

Karadzic is believed to be hiding in Bosnia while Del Ponte claims Mladic is somewhere in Serbia.

Richard Dicker, of New York-based Human Rights Watch, said Serbia's cooperation with the U.N. tribunal over the past year has been "dismal."

"Serbia cannot expect to be integrated into the community of nations by stonewalling its responsibilities," Dicker said in Belgrade. "It befalls the country's leaders to speed up this process."

URL: <http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/news/archive/2004/10/01/international0450EDT0468.DTL>

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Only Hussein Had Full Picture

By Bob Drogin and Mark Marzetti
Los Angeles Times | October 21, 2004

WASHINGTON — Shortly before the U.S. bombing and invasion of Iraq last year, Saddam Hussein gathered his top generals together to share what came to them as astonishing news: The weapons that the United States was launching a war to remove did not exist.

"There was plenty of surprise when Saddam said, 'Sorry guys, we don't have any' " weapons of mass destruction to use against the invading forces, a senior U.S. intelligence official said.

The unexpected peek inside Hussein's inner circle in the days and weeks before the regime was toppled comes in a report by the CIA's Iraq Survey Group released Wednesday, as well as from Senate testimony Wednesday by Charles A. Duelfer, head of the survey group, and from a briefing for reporters by an official familiar with the interrogations of Hussein and his aides.

The new accounts contradict many U.S. assumptions about relations between Hussein and his senior aides, as well as American views on what Hussein was doing and how he saw the outside world before the invasion.

For example, many in the U.S. intelligence community had believed that Hussein's sycophantic generals kept him in the dark about the state of Iraq's chemical, biological and nuclear weapons programs — that is, that the dictator was misled by associates who told him what he wanted to hear.

Far from being misinformed, the report says, Hussein was micromanaging Iraq's weapons policy himself and kept even his most loyal aides from gaining a clear picture of what was going on — and, more important, not going on — with the program.

"Saddam's centrality to the regime's political structure meant that he was the hub of Iraqi WMD policy and intent," the report concluded.

His paranoia and his fascination with science and technology "meant that control of WMD development and its deployment was never far from his touch," it said.

Although the interrogation reports may shed new light on Hussein's role, they also raise a question: If Hussein understood that he had no stockpiles of chemical, biological or nuclear weapons, why did he limit the activities of the United Nations inside Iraq, violate U.N. Security Council resolutions and defy the outside world from the end of the Persian Gulf War in 1991 until his regime was toppled in 2003?

Hussein often denied U.S. assertions that he possessed banned weapons in defiance of U.N. resolutions, but for years he also persisted in making cryptic public statements to perpetuate the myth that he actually did have them. The Iraq Survey Group believes that he continued making those statements long after he had secretly ordered the destruction of his stockpiles.

Based on the interrogations, it appears that Hussein underestimated how seriously the United States took the weapons issue, and he believed it was vital to his own survival that the outside world — especially Iran — think he still had them.

It was a strategy, Hussein has told his FBI interrogators during the last 10 months, that was aimed primarily at bluffing Iraq's neighbor to the east.

"The Iranian threat was very, very, palpable to him, and he didn't want to be second to Iran, and he felt he had to deter them. So he wanted to create the impression that he had more than he did," Duelfer, the Iraq Survey Group head, told members of the Senate on Wednesday.

And, the man known for colossal miscalculations made perhaps his greatest strategic blunder by refusing to believe

that President Bush would make good on threats to forcibly remove him from power.

"He kept trying to bargain or barter, and he had not realized the nature of the ground shift in the international community," Duelfer said. "That was Saddam's intelligence failure."

Captured in December hiding in a hole in northern Iraq, Hussein is imprisoned at Camp Cropper, a U.S.-run facility at Baghdad's fortified airport. He spends much of his days writing, reading and tending to a solitary tree inside a walled courtyard on the camp grounds.

Yet despite reports that Hussein is delusional and often engrossed in romance novels, the senior U.S. official said he had shown himself in recent interrogations by an FBI agent to be lucid and even capable of appearing charismatic.

Before the interrogations began, Duelfer tried to determine what incentive U.S. officials could offer the ex-dictator to get him to cooperate. In the end, they decided to appeal to Hussein's vanity.

"The only thing we could offer was an opportunity to help shape his legacy," the official recalled. They asked Hussein whether he wanted "to be remembered by what these characters are saying about you" — referring to other captured Baathist officials who were talking to U.S. interrogators.

According to the report, Hussein told interrogators that two experiences in particular convinced him that Iraq's possession — or at least perceived possession — of banned weapons assured his survival.

During the late 1980s, when Iraq appeared to be losing its war against Iran, Hussein's outnumbered army managed to stave off fast-moving Iranian forces by firing more than 100,000 munitions containing mustard gas and other lethal blister agents and nerve gases. The chemical attacks caused as many as 80,000 Iranian casualties, according to U.N. reports, and ultimately led to a cease-fire.

Second, Hussein and his aides were convinced that their chemical and biological weapons saved the Baath Party regime after a U.S.-led military coalition forced Iraqi troops out of Kuwait in 1991. U.S. and allied troops halted their advance deep in southern Iraq, and Hussein and his regime unexpectedly were allowed to remain in power.

At the time, aides to then-President George H.W. Bush thought the reason Hussein had not used illicit weapons against the coalition was that Washington had delivered a clear warning that it would respond with overwhelming force, implying a nuclear attack if necessary.

Yet Hussein and his aides apparently read U.S. thinking differently. As they described it to interrogators, they thought Washington left him in power because U.S. officials knew of his orders to load and disperse his nerve gases and germ agents, and his orders that the weapons were to be used if U.S. troops entered Baghdad.

In the years after the Gulf War, the senior official said, Hussein became convinced that Washington would decide it was in its interest to deal with his regime because Iraq was large, secular, educated and had oil. That view may have been reinforced by the fact that during much of the Reagan administration, Washington supported Hussein as a counterweight to Iran.

The alliance became strained, however, and was ruptured when Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990.

"He believed that ultimately the U.S. would come to deal with Baghdad," the official said. "The mistake he made was thinking he would still be in Baghdad."

The official predicted that Hussein would be "very compelling" when he was finally brought to trial in Baghdad for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

"He's looking forward to the stage, the theater, that the trial will offer him," he said. "Don't expect someone bug-eyed ... or waving his arms."

The Iraq Survey Group report also reveals a passion that Hussein had for certain aspects of Western culture, and how he personally related to certain fictional characters, such as Santiago in Ernest Hemingway's "The Old Man and the Sea."

In the story, the fisherman Santiago hooks a marlin that drags his boat out to sea. When the marlin dies, Santiago fights an ultimately futile battle with sharks that tear into the fish and reduce it to a skeleton.

"Saddam tended to characterize, in a very Hemingway-esque way, his life as a relentless struggle against overwhelming odds, but carried out with courage, perseverance and dignity," the report concludes.

"Much like Santiago, ultimately left with only the marlin's skeleton as the trophy of his success, to Saddam even a hollow victory was by his reckoning a real one."