

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:

Wednesday, February 23, 2005

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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at the Special Court... **Witness reveals how he buried 150 people**

By Odilia French

At the Special Court, a witness- TF2 047 has revealed how he buried a total of 150 people allegedly killed by Kamajors in Tongo. Led in evidence by Prosecution Counsel- Kevin Tavener, he went on, "I was ordered by

one Kamajor Commander- Keikula alias 'Kamabote' to bury the corpses because I was a sanitary officer." The witness revealed further that with a wheelbarrow, he took the corpses and dumped them into a big pit at the back of the security headquarters in

Tongo. "Some of the corpses were headless, while others were disembowelled and others had wounds all over their bodies," he went on. He said that before the Kamajors came to Tongo, they sent letters warning everyone to leave. "These

Contd. Page 2

Wednesday February 23, 2005

Witness reveals how he buried 150 people

From Front Page
letters were dropped around the townships and people would read them and pass on the message to us," he said.

According to him, when the Kamajors attacked Tongo, they were told to converge at the security headquarters and on their arrival, "we met a lot of

Kamajors and civilians at the headquarter." He said that one of the Kamajor Commanders- B.J.K. Sei warned his colleagues not to kill or harass the

civilians and that anyone caught would be dismissed. "But as soon as he left, another Commander- Lahai Siaka took over and told us the civilians that they

are going to kill us because they had earlier warned us to leave the township," he explained, adding that in his presence, one rebel known as Dr. Blood had

his head chopped off when one Fatmata Kamara identified him. The witness further explained that 'Kamabote' chopped the same Fatmata with a cutlass because according to him, she had been cooking for the rebels.

Anika
Wednesday February 23, 2005

AFRICA

THE G

Tuesday, February 22, 2005

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NEWS

National
Metro
Africa
World
Business

OPINION

Editorial
Columnists
Contributors
Letters
Cartoons
Discussions
Outlook

SPORTS

Home
Abroad
Golf Weekly
Results

FEATURES

Focus
Policy & Politics
Arts
Media
Science
Natural Health
Law
Education
Weekend
Friday Review
Executive Briefs
Fashion
Food & Drink
Auto Wheels
Friday Worship
Saturday Magazine
Sunday Magazine
Ibru Ecumenical
Centre
Agro Care

Liberia's minister insists on Taylor's trial

From Anietie Akpan, Calabar

A SERVING Liberian minister, Miss Vabah Gawflor, has insisted that former Liberian President Charles Taylor must appear before the international court over his role in the Liberian war.

Gawflor, who is the current Liberian Minister of Gender and Development, told journalists in Calabar yesterday that the war in which Taylor was a main actor destroyed almost a whole generation and "he should be made to face justice.

"Personally, I believe Taylor was a terror and up till now many Liberians are still traumatised. Almost a whole generation of Liberians were destroyed... I am watching when he will be taken to Sierra-Leone or The Hague for trial," Gawflow declared.

Asked if she would love to visit Taylor in his asylum home in Calabar, Gawflor retorted: "I don't want to visit him. He is nobody I want to visit. He destroyed almost a generation of children, raping their grandmothers, destroying the tradition and culture of the people."

Gawflor, who was in Calabar for the "Africa Regional Learning Institute for Women's Leadership and Training of Trainers" workshop, noted that "the presence of Charles Taylor was a big threat to the entire region. Now you can sleep and speak without threat to life. I believe that there is a big relief without Charles."

According to her: "I am challenged as a woman minister and this will show that the young people in Liberia have something to offer. Out of 21 ministers, we have only three women. Out of 76 parliamentarians, we have four women and one female judge."

The conference, which opened with several women from nine countries, noted that the workshop is about granting to women leadership opportunities like the men.

The women argued that "we are not talking liberation, but a new leadership based on a shared power and dialogue, we are not talking about leadership skill or skill acquisition but leadership enabling women displaying their innate skill wherever they find themselves."

The Director of Research and Technology of Women's Leadership Partnership, Rakhee Goyal (India), noted that this time around women were not going into competition with men but men should understand that a reasonable percentage should be given to women.

Quotas are necessary for women as "for instance 400 people are in the national dialogue, but only 31 women are there. We are aggrieved. It is really unfair and discriminating if you are looking for justice and egalitarian society," declared Olubunmi Dipo-Salami of Baobab for Women Human Rights.

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The workshop, which started yesterday, will end on February 25.

Meanwhile, opposition to Taylor's asylum has become the theme of a public hearing on the domestication and implementation of international treaties by Nigeria.

At the hearing convened by the House of Representatives committee on Foreign Affairs and the open Society for Justice Initiative, the Nigerian Coalition on the International Criminal Court (NCICC) asserted that Nigeria is subject to an international obligation to deny asylum to individual, accused of crimes against humanity and war crimes like Taylor.

Delivering an address at the public hearing chaired by House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman, Usman Bugaje, the NCICC, represented by M. Olukemi Ogunsua recounted that the war crimes tribunal in Sierra Leone had conducted Taylor of a "bearing the greatest responsibility for crimes against humanity, war crimes and other serious violations of international law falling within the court's jurisdiction." "Since Charles Taylor has been charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity by the special court for Sierra Leone and an international court brokered by the United Nations, Nigeria cannot afford to permit him to enjoy political asylum within its territory. And if there is unwillingness to prosecute him, he must be extradited to the special court for Sierra Leone to start the trial on the charges against him," Ogunsua posited.

Also presenting position papers yesterday were the senior legal officer for Africa of the Open Society Justice Initiative, Chidi Anselm Odukalu and Saudatu Mahdi, executive director at Women Rights.

Mahdi asserted that it was wrong for the Federal Government to employ public resources to keep Taylor in comfortable and opulent asylum in Nigeria while citizens of the country dwell in squalor and austerity.

At the public hearing yesterday, Bugaje faulted the Ministries of Justice and Foreign Affairs over what he termed unseriousness in their handling of matters regarding treaties appended by Nigeria.

Bugaje spoke in reaction to the admission by the Justice Ministry, which Minister was absent at the event, that it has not been able to keep count and complete records of the treaties signed by Nigeria.

Representing the Justice Minister, a solicitor in the Ministry, Mrs. Ekwueme disclosed that the minister had constituted a committee to compile all of Nigeria's Treaties for collation and publication as required statutorily.

She announced that various ministries of the Federal Government are in the habit of embarking on Agreement and Treaties with other countries without recourse to the Ministry of Justice.

Lamenting the state of affairs, Binta Koji (Kaduna South) recalled that Female Federal Lawmakers from Nigeria had once been embarrassed by

a country report presented at an International Parliamentary Union meeting in Geneva.

According to her, a convention on Child Rights had been signed by Nigeria without the knowledge or input of the National Assembly.

"We were in the peculiar dilemma of defending a Treaty we knew nothing about.

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United Nations Mission in Liberia
(UNMIL)

**UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary
22 Feb 2005**

02/22/2005 10:06:05

Liberian ex-rebel leader wants general amnesty

By Alphonso Toweh

MONROVIA, Feb 22 (Reuters) - The leader of Liberia's biggest former rebel group called on Tuesday for a blanket amnesty for people who had fought in its civil war -- including the ex-president, Charles Taylor.

Sekou Conneh, whose rebel Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) movement forced Taylor to flee in August 2003 after a siege in the capital Monrovia, said it was time to ``forgive in the interest of peace."

02/22/2005 08:46:51

Disarm the north or leave, Ivory Coast president tells UN peacekeepers

ABIDJAN, Feb 22 (AFP) - Ivory Coast President Laurent Gbagbo used his hardest tone yet Tuesday in demands that the 10,000 French and UN peacekeepers in the west African country disarm the rebels holding the north or leave immediately.

REUTERS South Africa

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Sports

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Top News**Liberian ex-rebel leader wants general amnesty**

Tue February 22, 2005 5:15 PM GMT+02:00

By Alphonso Toweh

MONROVIA (Reuters) - The leader of Liberia's biggest former rebel group called on Tuesday for a blanket amnesty for people who had fought in its civil war -- including the ex-president, Charles Taylor.

Sekou Conneh, whose rebel Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) movement forced Taylor to flee in August 2003 after a siege in the capital Monrovia, said it was time to "forgive in the interest of peace".

Taylor is wanted by a U.N.-backed special war crimes court in neighbouring Sierra Leone, where he has been accused of funding a decade-long rebellion.

He currently lives in Nigeria, where the authorities have refused to turn him in to the special court, saying they will only hand him to Liberia if the government there asks for that.

His departure from Liberia paved the way for a peace deal aimed at drawing a line under 14 years of on-off civil war, which Taylor started in 1989. He was elected president in 1997 but LURD took up arms to oust him a couple of years later.

Human rights groups both in and outside Liberia have called for a special court to be set up in the country similar to that operating in Sierra Leone, and prosecute those from all sides responsible for the worst atrocities during the conflict.

Some have also urged the creation of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, modelled on the one that helped South Africa come to terms with its apartheid past.

"Instead of people calling for people to appear before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the tribunal in Sierra Leone, it is good to just forgive in the interest of peace," Conneh said by phone.

He said he would recommend parliament pass a bill granting a general amnesty for the former warring factions and protect their property from being frozen, adding that Taylor should be allowed to return to his homeland.

"We are tired of war. We do not want for anyone to live in exile again. If you live in exile, it should be of your own will and not because you are afraid to come here," he said.

"Taylor is undergoing punishment at the moment and if we go ahead to punish him for the second time, it will not be

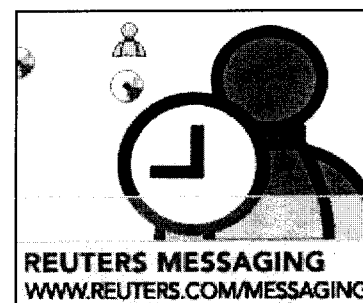
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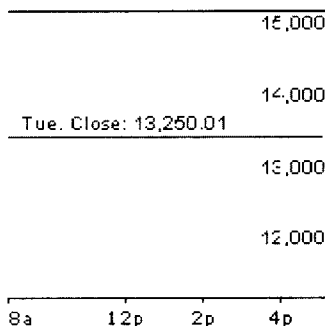
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Index	Last	Change
JSE	13232.06	-17.95
DJIA	10611.20	-174.02
Nasdaq Comp	2030.32	-28.30
S&P	1489.54	-12.03

okay."

Under the peace deal, a transitional government was set up bringing together the war's former foes, including Conneh's LURD fighters. Presidential and parliamentary elections are due in October this year.

All warring factions were accused of atrocities.

"Those found guilty of war crimes should be held accountable," said Christine Koerner, spokeswoman for the U.N. peacekeeping mission in the West African country.

Additional Articles >

Samuel Kofi Woods Opens Up: A Daily Observer Exclusive Interview

Liberian Observer (Monrovia)

INTERVIEW (Excerpt)

February 22, 2005

Posted to the web February 22, 2005

Mr. Samuel Kofi Woods, *the founding director of the foremost human rights organization in Liberia, the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission and currently the Regional Representative for the Foundation for International Dignity (FIND) managed on a shoestring budget to write and distribute to the international community reliable reports of abuses in the midst of a brutal civil war.*

His work led to the liberation of more than fifty inmates at the Central Prison in Monrovia, many of whom were held without charges after arbitrary arrests. He has been a strong advocate for the citizens Grand Bassa and River Cess in the ongoing LAC saga. In this exclusive interview with Daily Observer Editor-in-Chief, Rodney D. Sieh, Mr. Woods discusses among other things, his work, his vision for Liberia, the current state of corruption in Liberia, the transitional government and why he turned down a request for George Weah to be his running mate.

Daily Observer: You had a lot of run-ins with Charles Taylor. Now that the tide has changed he's in exile and your work goes on. How does that make you feel?

Mr. Kofi Woods: I feel vindicated and reassured that the struggle for peace and justice will continue unabated. The work is however not over. Charles Taylor, his likes and other warlords must face justice. It is good for them and society alike. There must be finality. Taylor was indicted for crimes allegedly committed in Sierra Leone not Liberia. He and several others must answer for crimes allegedly committed against the Liberian People. We must confront the past and experience some form of closure as a nation. Taylor and others deserve due process and we must all advocate for same. Mere indictment is not enough. He must be given his day in court to defend his innocence. They all deserve due process and free and fair trials. They are alleged to have committed crimes and they are innocent until proven guilty. I will defend their rights to due process. My conviction is universal and it must seek to do what is right irrespective of who is involved. The work has just begun.

Government orders probe into conviction of Australian in Sierra Leone

AFP

Fri Feb 22 7:32 PM AET

SYDNEY (AFP) - An investigation has been ordered into the conviction by a Sierra Leone court of an Australian police officer on a child sex charge, Foreign Minister Alexander Downer said.



AFP/HO/File Photo

Peter Halloran, former head of Victoria state's homicide squad who took a year off to work as an investigator with the UN-backed war crimes court in Sierra Leone, was convicted Monday of indecently assaulting a 13-year-old girl who had withdrawn her accusation.

Halloran, 56, faces 18 months in the grim and overcrowded Pademba Road prison in the capital Freetown.

His friends and colleagues have criticised what they saw as a political verdict, saying there was no evidence to support it.

Halloran was charged in August with unlawful carnal knowledge, procuring a girl under 14 years, and indecent assault, but was acquitted last month of the carnal knowledge and procuring charges and was cleared of conspiracy on Monday.

Downer said the government was unlikely to be able to intervene at this stage, beyond providing consular assistance in an appeal by Halloran.

But he told ABC radio a consular official was being sent from Ghana to Sierra Leone to investigate the case.

"We are concerned about the way the court case has been handled and the question of whether he appeals or not is now being considered," Foreign Minister Alexander Downer said.

"I think, from what I last heard, he is likely to appeal, and obviously we will provide appropriate consular assistance as we have been doing for quite some very good time now.

"Of course he has been, by a court, convicted of quite serious charges but nevertheless ... we are concerned about the court processes and we don't want to say too much because we don't want to have too much of an impact on the appeal itself."

Downer said Australian consular officials had not spoken to Halloran because they were not yet in Sierra Leone where Australian interests are normally covered by the British High Commission.

"I want our consular officer to go from Accra to Sierra Leone and to see him and to investigate the case further," he said.

The case, controversial from the start, was based on allegations brought initially by Halloran's former colleague, Australian police officer Mandy Cordwell, who resigned from the UN in January.

A UN inquiry cleared Halloran after contradictory evidence by the 13-year-old girl who said she had been coerced into making allegations against Halloran by Cordwell.

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We Are The World

Sierra Leone: UN Special Court Investigator Locked Up for Molesting 13-Year Old

UN Integrated Regional Information Networks

NEWS

February 22, 2005

Posted to the web February 22, 2005

Freetown

Peter Halloran, the Chief Investigator at the UN-backed Special Court that is trying those deemed most responsible for war crimes in Sierra Leone's civil war, has jailed for 18 months on charges of sexually molesting his 13-year-old maid.

Halloran, a 56 year old former Head of Homicide in the police force of Victoria state in southern Australia, was convicted and sentenced by the High Court in Freetown on Monday.

He was found guilty of luring his maid to his bed and groping her bare breasts in the night.

Judge Samuel Ademusu said Halloran "took most improper liberties with the girl who was anxious to get a job [and he] told deliberate lies to the police out of a wish to conceal his disgraceful behaviour."

"It would be meaningless to impose a fine on the accused, bearing in mind that this is a very serious offence in which I feel very strongly - taking a girl from school who was anxious for a job should not be visited with any other sentence than a custodial one," he continued.

Sierra Leone is one of the poorest countries in the world.

According to the World Bank, the West African country had an annual gross domestic product (GDP) per capita of only US\$150 in 2003 - less than the minimum wage for a 30 hour week in the United States.

Although there are no official unemployment figures, regular paid work is hard to find.

Evidence against Halloran came from one of his own colleagues on the Special Court. Mandy Caldwell, an investigator working under Halloran, was staying at his house when she discovered that the young girl was sleeping in Halloran's bed.

The unnamed Sierra Leonean girl confirmed to police that she had slept in the house for two days during which Halloran had molested her. His attentions stopped short of intercourse, she added.

The Special Court is an impartial body set up by the government of Sierra Leone with the backing of the United Nations to try those most responsible for crimes against humanity during Sierra Leone's 1991-2002 brutal civil war.

Halloran, as Head of Investigations, lead the team that prepared evidence for the prosecution.

His job included interviewing witnesses, perpetrators and victims of war crimes that included the hacking

off of limbs, rape, torture and mass killings.

Halloran's lawyer, Nicholas Browne-Marke said that his client would appeal against the verdict.

Attorney General, Frederick Carew said that though there was no precedent, he would not object if the Australian government made moves to have Halloran be transferred back to Australia to serve his sentence there. He noted that Australia, like Sierra Leone, was a member of the Commonwealth and had been magnanimous in taking in Sierra Leonean refugees.

However, such a move would require "a diplomatic and political decision," Carew said.

[This report does not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations]

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System flawed: Halloran



By Keith Moor

23-02-2005

From: Herald Sun

VICTORIA Police Superintendent Peter Halloran wishes normal procedure had been followed when sex allegations were made against him in West Africa.

He says doing so would have cleared him and stopped him having to endure a five-month trial that ended this week with a conviction and an 18-month jail term.

Halloran, 56, was found guilty of indecently assaulting schoolgirl Kadia Kabia in the Sierra Leone home he shared with three other war crimes investigators employed by the UN-backed Special Court.

It was one of those investigators – former Tasmanian police officer Mandy Cordwell – who first raised the allegations after saying Kadia had told her Halloran sexually abused her.

Halloran – a former head of the Victoria Police homicide and vice squads – said he and Ms Cordwell had fallen out over various things before the sex claims were made.

He said basic police procedures were ignored when the allegations surfaced in June last year.

"Mandy claims the girl told her I had had sex with her and sexually abused her within hours of it supposedly happening," Halloran told the *Herald Sun*.

"Yet the girl was not taken to a doctor to be examined, my sheets weren't taken to be tested for forensic evidence and nor were all the girl's clothes seized for testing.

"Mandy gave evidence during my trial that she was an experienced investigator of sex crimes so would certainly have known the steps that should have been taken.

"Indeed, a probationary constable would have known what to do.

"A local Sierra Leone police officer, who was working for the Special Court and was subservient to Mandy, gave evidence that she advised Mandy immediately after a statement was taken from the girl that she should be taken to be examined by a doctor.

"But she gave evidence that Mandy refused to do so and instead drove the girl home and told her to tell lies to her family about what had happened.

"You have to ask yourself why Mandy would not allow the girl to be medically examined. The only reason that occurs to me is that doing so would show the girl hadn't been sexually assaulted, and Mandy didn't want that to come out as it would reveal her story to be a pack of lies.

"The thing I find most disturbing is that Mandy Cordwell claims she discovered a girl in my room while I was at work.

"When I returned home with fellow Special Court employee and housemate Sharon Holt, she made no mention of this clear security breach.

"She also says that she believed the young girl was staying in my room that night.

"If that is true, then she had a legal and moral obligation to intervene to protect the girl, but she chose not to do so.

"She could have just walked in with other housemates to satisfy her suspicion, but she chose not to do that.

"I ask the question, `If she was really concerned about this girl, why did she not intervene immediately or report the matter to someone credible?'"

Halloran denied sexually abusing Kadia. He was charged in August after Ms Cordwell said Kadia confided to her that Halloran had sexually abused her.

Kadia has since told Halloran's High Court trial that Ms Cordwell told her to say Halloran abused her – even though it was not true.

She said statements implicating Halloran were made as a result of Ms Cordwell offering her lucrative rewards to make the false allegations.

A Special Court board of inquiry held before the High Court trial found there was no credible evidence to support the sexual misconduct allegation against Halloran.

It criticised Ms Cordwell and two other staff members for their handling of the matter and recommended a further inquiry into their investigation.

Ms Cordwell has since resigned after being suspended by the Special Court.

Sierra Leone High Court Judge Samuel Ademusu threw out two of three sex charges against Halloran on the grounds there was no case to answer. But he this week convicted Halloran on the final indecent assault charge.

Halloran said he presumed Ms Cordwell would argue she did not follow usual procedures because she was not authorised to conduct a criminal investigation in Sierra Leone.

"That just doesn't ring true as she was prepared to conduct investigations, organise a statement to be taken from the alleged victim and play an active role in the preparation of that statement," he said.

"By international standards that questioning was done improperly, as there was no adult relative or guardian present during the interview.

"She was also prepared to search my room for evidence in my absence. She had no lawful authority to do that.

"So she is already heavily involved in the investigation.

"You have to ask yourself why she didn't follow basic procedures. Or, better still, use common sense and have someone totally independent conduct the investigation.

"Then they would have followed basic procedures and quickly identified that no offence had been committed.

"She has an obligation as an investigator to get to the truth of the matter rather than be single-minded. If she had followed basic procedures, it would have shown I didn't sexually abuse the girl."

Halloran said Ms Cordwell claimed to have found clothing belonging to the alleged victim in his room.

"She didn't have any witness who could testify that she did indeed find the clothing in my room," he said, "whereas Kadia said in her evidence in court that the clothing Mandy claimed to have found in my room was actually left by her in the storeroom downstairs."

"Statements from Kadia's brother and our cook corroborated Kadia's testimony that she left her clothes in the storeroom."

Sierra Leone police officer Sgt Janet Tommy – who was working for the Special Court under Ms Cordwell – confirmed Ms Cordwell's active role in the sexual assault investigation.

It was Sgt Tommy whom Ms Cordwell rang and asked to take the first statement from the alleged victim.

She said she interviewed Kadia based on the information provided by Ms Cordwell.

"After the statement was made, I advised Mandy that we should take Kadia to the hospital, but Mandy refused," Sgt Tommy said during Halloran's trial.

"She suggested we should take Kadia to her relatives, which we did."

The court was told Ms Cordwell told Kadia to lie to her family and say she and Sgt Tommy had brought her home because she had a stomach ache.

Halloran said that showed a lack of concern for Kadia.

"If Mandy really believed Kadia had been repeatedly sexually abused, surely she would have ensured she was medically examined, both for reasons of her health and wellbeing as well as to gather evidence," he said.

"And surely she would have ensured the girl was left with somebody who would care for her, not dumped at home and told to lie and say she had a stomach ache."

Sgt Tommy told the court Ms Cordwell played an active role in the questioning of Kadia. "Whilst I was speaking to the girl, Mandy spoke as well," she testified.

"She prepared some questions; I asked Kadia those questions. I put the questions written by Mandy to Kadia."

Halloran said Ms Cordwell claimed in a statement to police that she had not played a role in the interviewing of Kadia. "Sgt Tommy's evidence shows she did," he said.

Two fellow Victoria Police officers have been accused by Superintendent Peter Halloran of conducting a vindictive campaign against him.

He says their muck-spreading contributed to his conviction in a West African court this week.

"For them to be dishonestly manipulating and leaking information to the media – and to continue with that even after being warned about it doing damage – is disgraceful," Halloran said.

He said he was fighting to clear his name and get bail on sex charges when two high-ranking Victoria Police officers began blackening his name.

Halloran said they were involved in circulating corruption rumours about him and falsely alleging he was about to flee West Africa to avoid his trial.

"There I was, in a very difficult situation struggling to just stay out of jail, and there they were handing corrupt authorities in Sierra Leone the knife to cut my throat," he said.

"That was vindictive and malicious.

"Just one example is that Victoria Police leaked information to the media that Victoria Police had provided security advice to my main accuser, Mandy Cordwell, because of a supposed threat to her safety during my trial.

"Implied in that was that I was the threat, which had a potentially harmful effect on the trial.

"Victoria Police never denied this, even when requested to do so.

"The Special Court, which employed Mandy and me, has a huge security operation designed to protect court staff and assets.

"Mandy Cordwell never raised these security concerns with the Special Court.

"The truth is there never was any threat to her."

Halloran also blasted Victoria Police command, saying he was offered no support during his trial.

"But worse than that, they allowed lies and rumours to be circulated about me without coming out and denying them.

"That is a shocking way to treat a loyal employee of 39 years' standing.

"The primary sin is that senior Victoria Police officers engaged in a deliberate campaign to use official communications to provide false information to the authorities in Sierra Leone and to the media in Australia," he said.

"Doing so has placed me in unnecessary jeopardy in a very delicate environment."

Halloran said the two senior officers gave credence to false allegations raised with them by Ms Cordwell.

He said the official communiques about him contained false allegations that he was intending to flee West Africa.

Those communiques were passed by the Australian Federal Police to both Mandy Cordwell and the Sierra Leone police without regard to the accuracy of the information.

"So the Sierra Leone police all of a sudden had this information supposedly from different and reputable sources," Halloran claimed.

"Yet it actually came from the woman making complaints about me – hardly an independent or reliable source.

"That information alone was enough for me to be arrested and put in prison.

"On top of that, there were suggestions in the Australian media that I was under investigation for supposedly having long-term corrupt relations with Melbourne criminals.

"Then there was the wrong information published that I left the National Crime Authority under a cloud.

"I can easily demonstrate these allegations to be incorrect.

"The only allegation I am aware of was discussed, at my request, with the Victoria Police ethical standards department before I went to West Africa.

"There was no suggestion they considered it serious enough to stop me going, and they were well aware I was about to leave for Sierra Leone.

"The allegation dates back many years and was made by somebody with something to gain from making corruption allegations about police. I can prove the allegation is false.

"I know for a fact the false corruption allegations found their way to the prosecutor and the judge in Sierra Leone, and seriously affected my credibility with them.

"I was on trial fighting to clear my name, and back in Australia there are people within Victoria Police spreading this damaging stuff.

"That's either stupidity or mischievous, and mischievous is a very kind word."

Asked if he believed the two officers had put his life at risk and harmed his defence during the trial, Halloran answered, "Most definitely."

The Australian Crime Commission, which replaced the NCA, has denied a media report that Halloran left the NCA under a cloud.

Ms Cordwell initially refused to comment to the *Herald Sun*, saying the Special Court ordered her not to. Since resigning from the court, she has not responded to requests by the *Herald Sun* for an interview. Victoria Police refused to comment on Halloran's allegations.

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I'm afraid I will die, cop says



By Keith Moor

23-02-2005

From: Herald Sun

PETER Halloran fears he will die in the West African jail hellhole he has been thrown into.

The Victoria Police superintendent told the *Herald Sun* he could easily perish in Sierra Leone's notoriously violent and disease-ridden Pademba Rd prison.

Halloran revealed that an angry mob of prisoners came within seconds of attacking him while he was awaiting trial in the war-torn capital of Freetown.

"I am a white policeman in a foreign country accused of that most loathed of crimes – sexual assault of a child," he said. "Of course I will be a target in jail, and of course I might not get out alive."

Halloran said lies spread by Australian police officers helped convict him. Wife Neeltje yesterday vowed to stand by her husband.

"I have absolutely no doubt Peter is innocent and is simply a victim of a corrupt legal system," she said.

"I know my husband and there is no way he would do what he was accused of. He's a father of two daughters himself and would never do anything to harm a child."

Mrs Halloran said she had been in constant contact with her husband since he was first accused in June last year.

"The guilty verdict is devastating. I was so looking forward to having Peter home again," she said.

His two adult daughters also told the *Herald Sun* yesterday that they fully supported their father and knew he was innocent.

Premier Steve Bracks yesterday joined Victoria Police Association secretary Paul Mullett in expressing concern for Halloran's safety. Sen-Sgt Mullett and Mr Bracks both vowed to do all they could to ensure his appeal was heard quickly.

Halloran described Pademba Rd as being just like the horrifically primitive jail featured in *Midnight Express*.

Sierra Leone High Court Judge Samuel Ademusu this week convicted Halloran, 56, of indecently assaulting a teenage girl, Kadia Kabia, in June last year and jailed him for 18 months.

Halloran's lawyer, Nicholas Browne-Marke, plans an immediate appeal and will seek bail this week. The conviction came despite Kadia telling the court Halloran had not assaulted her or touched her in any way.

Halloran says he was convicted for political reasons. He accused corrupt elements in the Sierra Leone Government and police force of being out to discredit his employer through him.

Halloran took 12 months' leave from Victoria Police to work as commander of war crimes investigations at the UN-backed Special Court in Sierra Leone.

Speaking to the *Herald Sun* just before being jailed, Halloran said that false allegations made by police in Australia – and others – were responsible for him being thrown behind bars.

Had he been cleared, he intended seeking legal advice in Victoria about suing the alleged rumour-mongers.

Those Halloran accused include two high-ranking fellow Victoria Police officers and at least one Australian Federal Police agent.

He said his bail was revoked as a result of their spreading false allegations that he intended fleeing Sierra Leone to avoid the sex charges. He alleges the Victoria Police officers were also involved in a whispering campaign to blacken his name by falsely claiming to the media that he was corrupt.

"The information they were spreading got back to those prosecuting me and could help get me convicted of something I didn't do," he said before the verdict.

The allegations include that he had corrupt relationships with Melbourne criminals for many years and that two Victoria Police officers were on their way to West Africa to smuggle him out of the country before his trial.

There were also rumours he sexually assaulted a girl in Asia years ago and that he had to leave the National Crime Authority under a cloud.

Halloran, a former head of the Victoria Police homicide and vice squads, said he could prove the allegations were false.

Halloran claimed:

SIERRA Leone police officers goaded prisoners to harm him on his first day behind bars, but relatives of the alleged victim stepped in and saved him by assuring inmates he was innocent.

HE COULD have fled the country after being charged because his UN passport was never seized, but he chose to stay to try to clear his name.

VICTORIA Police, his employer for almost 40 years, offered virtually no support or welfare during his ordeal.

HIS accusers in Sierra Leone didn't carry out basic investigation procedures, such as forensic testing of bed sheets and clothing and getting a doctor to check the alleged victim, because doing so would confirm his innocence.

A SIERRA Leone police officer alleged in court that his main accuser, former Tasmanian police officer Mandy Cordwell, overruled a recommendation that the alleged victim be medically examined.

MS CORDWELL, 37, waged a concerted campaign to blacken his name after the pair fell out over various issues at the house they shared with two other war crimes investigators in Sierra Leone.

SIERRA Leone Attorney-General Frederick Carew ignored advice from the DPP's office and demanded the case be prosecuted and later insisted it continue – despite the prosecution recommending withdrawing because evidence was lacking – because he saw it as a chance to discredit the Special Court.

MR CAREW'S insistence on prosecuting could be linked to his friendship with former Sierra Leone

Deputy Defence Minister Sam Hinga Norman, who has been charged by the Special Court with horrendous war crimes.

Halloran alleged several false claims were made about him by the senior Victoria Police officers and others. "I know for a fact the judge hearing my case was made aware of these allegations when he was assessing my character," he said.

"Of course the allegations would have affected his view on the likelihood of my doing what I was accused of doing."

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February 22, 2005

AUSTRALIAN WITH UN POLICE "SHOCKED" BY SIERRA LEONE JAILING

Excerpt from report by Radio Australia on 21 February, from ABC Radio National's "AM" programme

(Presenter Tony Eastley) The former head of the Victorian homicide squad, Peter Halloran, has been convicted and jailed on sex charges in the West African nation of Sierra Leone. The senior officer, seconded to the UN special court investigating war crimes, will now spend 18 months (in) jail for indecently assaulting a 13-year-old local domestic worker. Africa correspondent Zoe Daniel reports from Freetown.

(Daniel) In Sierra Leone, they make you sweat, literally. This is the fourth time in a week that Peter Halloran has fronted up to the dusty, steamy Freetown courtroom to find out his fate. Today he was expected to go free, but Judge Samuel Ademusu shocked the courtroom with a guilty verdict. (passage omitted)

This highly political case has been running for eight months. In Sierra Leone, debate has been hot on whether it was a witch hunt against a white special court investigator or whether there were legitimate charges to answer. (passage omitted)

During the course of the trial there have been serious allegations of political pressure and manipulation of the process. The family of the alleged victim changed sides, backing Peter Halloran and claiming they had been bullied into making allegations against him. However, Sierra Leone's attorney-general, Frederick Carew, maintains the process has been fair.

(Carew) Both parties have argued on points of law and facts and the judge has come to his independent conclusion on the matter.

(Daniel) Peter Halloran was immediately behind bars after the judgment, and in tears. His lawyers are set to appeal, but in doing so they risk an increased sentence in a higher court. Meanwhile, the Sierra Leonean government says it would consider an application for the convicted man to serve his time in Australia.

This is Zoe Daniel in Freetown for "AM".

(Eastley) The conviction and sentencing of Victoria Police superintendent Peter Halloran has shocked friends and supporters. Last year, former Victorian policeman

Tim Carrodus travelled to Sierra Leone to pay for Peter Halloran's bail and to help organize his legal team. Tim Carrodus is speaking here with our reporter, Nick McKenzie.

(Carrodus) Peter would be extremely distressed about it, but at the same time as saying that, he told me that he was also very fearful that he could be convicted of these allegations politically. And he didn't want to go back into that Pademba Road jail. He spent six weeks there, totally, before he was released on bail.

(McKenzie) What are the conditions like in the prison?

(Carrodus) Well, it's a hell hole. I've been there a couple of times, it's very hard to describe it to get the right message across. It's something like the prison you'd see in Papillon the movie and Midnight Express, that sort of place. It's very unhygienic, it's overcrowded, it's very, very third-world. It's an absolute hell hole, the best way I can describe it.

(McKenzie) Supporters of Peter Halloran including yourself were quietly confident that he would be acquitted of all charges, especially since the girl allegedly abused, when she actually presented to the court, had told the court she had actually never been abused and also in light of a separate report finding that there were severe problems with the gathering of evidence and the whole process. What went wrong?

(Carrodus) Well, it's very, very simple really. He's been convicted politically. The evidence does not exist, as simple as that.

(McKenzie) What will Peter Halloran's next move be and are you hoping for, for instance, some government representation from Australia?

(Carrodus) His next move, of course, he will appeal. He's always said to his lawyer, and he said to me many times that if he gets convicted he will certainly go through the appeal process.

Source: Radio Australia, Melbourne, in English 2210 gmt 21 Feb 05

BBC Monitoring

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February 23, 2005 Wednesday All-round Country Edition

Gates of hell close on 'pedophile' police chief

Carmel Egan

A former top cop faces a prison nightmare, writes Carmel Egan

THOSE who have seen Pademba Road jail in Freetown, Sierra Leone, describe it as a place where evil thrives.

It is now Peter Halloran's life, after the proud superintendent, with influential friends, was this week condemned to spend the next 18 months as a convicted pedophile in the same pitiless place he had been trying to send the country's war criminals.

"It's an absolute hell hole," Halloran's friend and former police officer Tim Carrodus told ABC radio.

"I've been there a couple of times. It's hard to describe it to get the right message across. It's something like the prison you'd see in Papillon, the movie, and Midnight Express. It's very unhygienic. It's overcrowded. It's very, very Third World."

The former head of Victoria's homicide squad was yesterday found guilty of indecently assaulting a 13-year-old girl in the bedroom of the house he shared with two other police officers in Freetown.

The 56-year-old, who is on leave without pay from Victoria Police and was working as a prosecution inspector for the UN-backed war crimes court in Sierra Leone, has said he will appeal against the conviction.

Halloran was acquitted last month of two charges of unlawful carnal knowledge and procuring a girl under the age of 14. He was also acquitted of a conspiracy charge relating to the incident, as were the brother and uncle of the teenager at the centre of the case.

Halloran maintains he hired the girl, Kadiatu Kabia, as a babysitter for his girlfriend and her young son, who were to join him in Freetown.

But Kadiatu told investigators that on June 3, 2004, Halloran had fondled her breasts, placed his finger inside her vagina on two occasions, had sexual intercourse with her on two occasions and forcibly removed her polo shirt before sucking and fondling her breasts.

Kadiatu gave her statement to police after Halloran's fellow war-crimes investigator Mandy Cordwell -- a former Tasmanian police officer -- saw the girl in his bedroom on the night of June 2 and again the next morning.

Kadiatu later recanted her police statement, saying Ms Cordwell had coerced her into

making allegations against Halloran. Following Kadiatu's contradictory evidence a UN inquiry cleared Halloran.

But children's rights campaigners say it is not uncommon for children at the centre of such sexual abuse allegations against foreigners in impoverished nations to withdraw their statements and Kadiatu's initial allegations stood as admissible evidence in Halloran's trial.

Ms Cordwell, who is highly regarded and has an unblemished record as a police officer, was subsequently the subject of a UN inquiry into media leaks and was suspended from her war-crimes role on full pay. She resigned from the UN in January.

Halloran, his friends and lawyers claim that he has been wrongfully convicted. They say that he is the victim of a political conspiracy, of third-world corruption, of trumped-up allegations and that there is no evidence against him.

They have appealed to the Victoria Police for support, to the Australian Government to help expedite his appeal, to the UN, to the Victoria Police Union and for public sympathy via the media, particularly through Halloran's friends among police reporters on Melbourne's major newspapers.

Many allegations have been made by Halloran about those who write and talk about him -- including this newspaper, against which he has issued a writ for defamation.

Despite the dismissal of three serious charges, he says his trial has not followed international rules of justice. He told the Melbourne Herald Sun that powerful Sierra Leone government figures applied pressure to get a conviction as a means of discrediting the UN's Special Court, a claim denied by Sierra Leone's attorney-general General Frederick Carew.

"Both parties have argued on points of law and fact and the judge has come to his independent conclusion on the matter," General Carew said.

The Federal Government yesterday confirmed it would examine Halloran's conviction based on the accounts of "independent observers" in the Freetown courtroom, but refused to identify who those individuals are.

Since Australia introduced child-sex tourism laws in 1994 making it an offence to abuse children anywhere in the world, there have been 17 prosecutions and 13 convictions.

Last year Australians were arrested over child sex allegations in Cambodia, Papua New Guinea and Bali, one a former diplomat.

Bernadette McMenamin, national director of the international children's advocacy group Child Wise, yesterday said she hoped any Australian in any country around the world would have the same opportunities as Peter Halloran. "If there are fundamental flaws in the process then they should be raised and he should have support," Ms McMenamin said.

"I don't know if he is innocent or guilty. I don't know how strong the evidence is.

"But it is very common for children who make such allegations to then withdraw them. Children involved in high-profile sexual cases around the world are often threatened, paid off or the families pressured ... Our organisation, which is an international coalition, strongly advocates that people who are arrested overseas be prosecuted and serve their sentences in those countries."

Northern Territory News (Australia) February 23, 2005 Wednesday

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February 23, 2005 Wednesday

Aussie cop gets jail

FREETOWN: The Investigations Commander of the Special Court in Sierra Leone, 56-year-old Australian Peter Halloran, has been jailed for 18 months.

A High Court judge on Monday found him guilty of indecently assaulting an under-age girl.

Two Sierra Leone nationals who were standing trial with Halloran were set free by the judge.

Defence Counsel Nicholas Browne-Marke in a plea said Halloran has had an unblemished character . . . both with the Special Court and for the Victoria Police from where he was seconded.

"The conviction would have a damaging effect on his job as a Superintendent in the Victoria Police," counsel said.

An appeal will be filed and bail sought, he said.

Indecent assault...

18 months jail for Special Court Investigator

BY UNISSA BANGURA

Peter Halloran, a Superintendent of Police who is on special assignment with the Special Court in Sierra Leone as Investigator was yesterday sentenced to eighteen months in jail after he

was found guilty for the offence of Indecent Assault by Justice S.E. Ademusu in the Freetown High Court No.1.

The 56 year old Investigator was

charge along-side with two other Sierra Leonean, namely Shaka Fofanah and Abdul Fofanah on four counts charge, including conspiracy to commit a crime, Inde-

cent Assault and procuring a young girl under the age of thirteen, contrary to Cap 31 of the laws of Sierra Leone.

Between May 31 and June 2004 in Freetown, the first accused indecently assaulted a schoolgirl under the age of 13 years.

In his one hour and thirty minute judgment, Justice S.E. Ademusu

reviewed the entire evidence of the prosecution witness and that of the defence, and arrived at the conclusion that the schoolgirl was indecently assaulted a teenage girl.

The two accused persons Shaka Fofanah and Abdul Fofanah were acquitted and discharged, while Halloran was found guilty.

Before passing sentence, the judge asked the accused if he has something to say.

"I was surprised at the outcome of the matter" he replied, however, he went on, my lawyer will make a plea of mitigation on my behalf" he concluded.

Mr. Brown-marke appealed to the judge to temper justice with, and not to impose a custodian sentence on his client.

Judge Ademusu said it would be meaningless to impose a fine on the accused bearing in mind that the offence is a grave one, noting that as a senior police officer, he should not have committed such an act.

He however sentenced the accused to eighteen months in jail.

Standard Times

Tuesday February 22, 2005

Centinel Times

Wednesday, February 23,

2005

Australian Police urges for Halloran's appeal

By Chernoh Alpha M. Bah

Police in Australia have reportedly urged Australian Authorities to help persuade the Sierra Leone government to expedite, Victorian Police Superintendent Peter Halloran who was sentenced Monday to eighteen months imprisonment after been found guilty by Justice Ademusu on three counts charge of indecent assault and unlawful canal knowledge.

Victorian Premier Steve Bracks told the Australian Police Council Tuesday that Halloran's future as a police officer will be decided by the Police Chief Commissioner Christine Nixon after his appeal.

He said the Victorian Police Association has requested that Halloran's appeal needs to be dealt with quickly.

"Any decision by the Victoria Police Force on Halloran's

Continued page 3

Australian Police urges for Halloran's appeal

From page 1

future employment should be delayed until his appeal is heard," he said, adding that the Victoria Police Force will be considering their position on that but if he does lodge an appeal that puts any termination process on hold.

Former Victorian policeman, Tim Carrodus traveled to Sierra Leone last year to help organize Halloran's legal team.

He says Halloran had been confident he would be acquitted and his next move would be to appeal against the verdict.