

SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

PRESS CLIPPINGS

**Enclosed are clippings of local and international press on the Special Court and
Related issues obtained by the Press and Public Affairs Office**

as of:

Wednesday, 25 August, 2004

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.
If you are aware of omissions or have any comments or suggestions please contact
Ibrahim Tommy at tommyi@un.org Or 232 76 645 914.

Special Court links Taylor to Sept. 11 bombing

in the region through 2002.

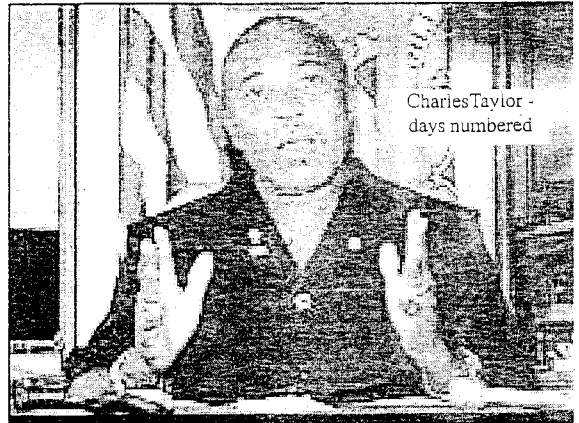
John Melrose, former US Ambassador to Sierra Leone, says "The United States never perceived itself to have a strategic interest in sub-Saharan Africa on the terrorism front until very recently." He said the development of a functioning criminal state in West Africa is not a secret to anyone who has been in the region.

US officials believe that a Tanzanian national, Ahmed Khalfan Ghajani, arrested July 25 in Pakistan for allegedly masterminding the 1998 US embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania, paid Taylor protection money.

They allege that Taylor had dealings with Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah, a top al-Qaeda player included on the US Federal Bureau of Investigation's most wanted list, and Ibrahim Bah, a top RUF commander who served as an intermediary between the RUF leadership and Taylor. Bah is said to have arranged with Taylor for Abdullah to buy millions of dollars worth of diamonds mined in Sierra Leone.

US officials further allege that Taylor facilitated the smuggling of blood diamonds with the aid of Samih Ossaily and Aziz Nassour, both of whom are in custody of the

Continued page 3



Charles Taylor - days numbered

CHARLES TAYLOR

FROM PAGE 1
Belgian authorities awaiting trial for their shady dealings in Sierra Leone. Taylor is among those

indicted by the Special Court for bearing "the greatest responsibility" for crimes committed during Sierra Leone's civil conflict.

Concord Times

August 25th, 2004

Lawyers gang up to extradite Charles Taylor From Nigeria



Charles Taylor: his watertight case is getting closer

electd leaders in a keenly contested poll with a Nigerian lawyer, Mr. Femi Falana, at an inaugural briefing with newsmen, yesterday vowed that the association would soon take a definite position on the legal push for the extradition of the Liberian warlord. President Charles Taylor.

The former Liberian leader is to stand trial before the Special Court in Sierra Leone on charges of rape, murder, enslavement and pillage during the ten-year civil conflict in Sierra Leone.

The Nigerian government said it would not hand-over Taylor to the Sierra Leone court.

To take the decision with him are five other newly

electd executive members of WABA, including Messrs. Waidi Mustapha, the association's Secretary-general, Paul Adu Gyamfi its first Vice President, Abdul Camara, its second Vice President, Councillor Marcus Jones, its and Mrs Ogugu Ikpese, a deputy Secretary of the association.

The quartet of Abdul, Waidi, Paul and Marcus

are bar leaders of Benin, Ghana and Liberia respectively while Ogugua is the out-going second assistant Secretary of the Nigeria Bar Association.

The association is also to see the provision of improved legal service in the public including efficient legal aid services to the poor in the sub-region.

Bar leaders from West African sub-region at the weekend, gathered in Abuja, to work out the possible extradition of the former Liberian Head Of State, Charles Ghangay Taylor from Nigeria where he is currently staying on exile to stand trial before the Special Court in Sierra Leone, reports allAfrica.com. The bar leaders including the President of African Bar Association cum Speaker of Republic of Ghana Parliament, Peter Ala Adjetey, are also to establish a West African Bar Association (WABA) for the promotion of the rule of law, fundamental human rights and democracy in West Africa. The association delegates which met in Abuja last Saturday also

The Independent
August 25th, 2004



Obasanjo May Surrender Taylor

Concord Times (Freetown)

NEWS

April 20, 0823

Posted to the web August 23, 2004

By Chernoh Alpha M. Bah
Freetown

Pressure is building on Obasanjo to surrender former Liberian President Charles Taylor to the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Two Nigerian businessmen amputated by RUF rebels in Sierra Leone and the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) have filed separate suits in the Abuja High Court challenging the asylum granted to Taylor by the Nigerian government a year ago.

"We want Taylor face the music in Sierra Leone and realize the consequences of his actions when he was Liberian head of state", NUJ president Smart Adeyemi said.

The Court is expected to rule on the NUJ vs Taylor suit by the end of the month.

Obasanjo expressed disapproval to hand Taylor over to the Special Court on the grounds that his continued exile in Calabar is vital to the continuing peace process in Liberia.

But US Ambassador to Nigeria John Campbell says the United States is continuing dialogue with Obasanjo on how to create the context in which Taylor's extradition may happen.

"The US is grateful to Obasanjo for the role he and Nigeria's peacekeeping troops have played in Liberia, and Washington has been careful not to be seen to be bullying its ally," Campbell said.

Taylor is indicted by the Special Court for bearing "the greatest responsibility" for crimes committed during Sierra Leone's civil conflict.

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08/22/2004 08:22:43

Al-Qaeda, Charles Taylor partners in blood diamonds, says Sierra Leone war court

by Lauren Gelfand

DAKAR, Aug 22 (AFP) - Former Liberian president Charles Taylor sold conflict diamonds to known al-Qaeda operatives that may have been used to finance the September 11 attacks on the United States, according to a confidential report from the UN-backed war crimes court in Sierra Leone.

"It is clear that al-Qaeda had been in west Africa since September 1998 and maintained a continuous presence in the area through 2002," said the document, produced by the office of prosecutor David Crane.

The document, gleaned from press reports, witnesses to sightings of al-Qaeda operatives in Liberia and interviews with a single, unnamed source, is the latest effort to link the global terror network to conflict diamonds mined during the civil war that ravaged the west African state for a decade.

But more tellingly, according to Washington Post reporter Douglas Farah, who first revealed many of the links between Taylor and the terror group, it shows the flagrant intelligence shortfalls in truly understanding al-Qaeda's connections to Africa.

"The United States has not perceived itself to have a strategic interest in sub-Saharan Africa on the terrorism front until very recently," Farah said in an August 5 interview with allAfrica.com.

"The development not only in Liberia of a functioning criminal state is not a secret to anyone who has been to the region or who lives in the region. The whole scenario is part of the neglect by the outside world."

What it is not, said former US ambassador to Sierra Leone Joseph Melrose, is a smoking gun.

"You can't say it hasn't happened, but you can't prove evidence in court because it is circumstantial evidence," he told AFP by telephone from Pennsylvania.

"But there is a long tradition in the diamond sector (of shady dealings) and they have to acknowledge that some of these blood diamonds could be terror diamonds."

Taylor, a warlord who rose to the presidency in 1997 after a seven-year rebellion, is at the center of the intricate relations between al-Qaeda and Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front rebels.

Citing the watchdog group Global Witness, the document states that Taylor's government "facilitated access for al-Qaeda operatives into Sierra Leone and Liberia in exchange for diamonds and weapons."

According to US officials quoted in an August 4 article by the Boston Globe, Taylor was also paid protection money by al-Qaeda operatives, among them Ahmed Khalfan

Ghailani, a Tanzanian national who was arrested July 25 in Pakistan after a blazing gunbattle.

Ghailani, a key planner in Osama bin Laden's network, is accused of masterminding the 1998 US embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania.

The court dossier alleges he met several times in 1999 with Charles Taylor at his residence in Monrovia, around the time of an armed uprising to rid Liberia of Taylor that finally ended in August last year.

Another top al-Qaeda player with connections to Liberia is Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah, a senior financial officer included on the US Federal Bureau of Investigation's most wanted list.

Witnesses told the Washington Post that he arrived in Liberia in September 2000 and established a good relationship with Ibrahim Bah, a top RUF commander who served as a go-between between the RUF leadership and Taylor.

The dossier's most voluble source, who remains unidentified, said that it was Bah who arranged for Abdullah to buy millions of dollars worth of diamonds from Taylor that had been mined in Sierra Leone.

Those diamonds were smuggled out through channels arranged by Taylor or Samih Ossaily and Aziz Nassour, both of whom are in custody in Belgium awaiting trial for their shady dealings in Sierra Leone.

Taylor, a US-educated preacher who has long boasted that he was an agent of the US Central Intelligence Agency, has so far eluded trial at the war crimes court on charges he trained and armed the rebels who launched their uprising from Liberia in 1991.

Massive international pressure sent Taylor into exile in Nigeria, where President Olusegun Obasanjo has steadfastly resolved to keep him until Liberia itself reclaims the former warlord for trial at its own war crimes court.

Court observers say the dossier presented by Crane to the US commission investigating the September 11 attacks was a bid to boost pressure on the US government to force Nigeria to hand Taylor over for trial.

But the commission did not heed the report, going so far as to deny that there was "no persuasive evidence that al-Qaeda funded itself by trading in African conflict diamonds."

"Try as they might, they just can't get Taylor," a Western diplomat told AFP. "They even throw out the al-Qaeda connection and they still can't get him."

On sexual assault case...

Special Court Investigator bailed Le10 million

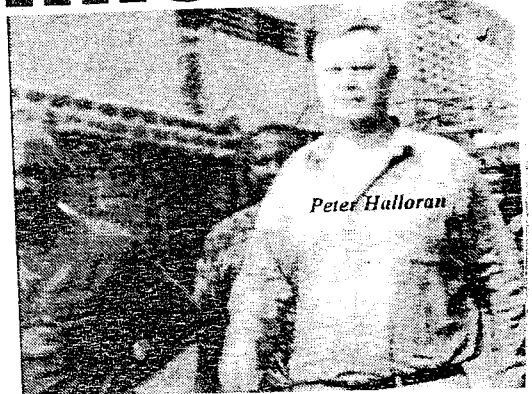
By Ophaniel Gooding
Special Court
Australian Investigator-
Peter Halloran and two
other accused persons-
Sheku Fofanah and
Abdul Fofanah were
yesterday granted a bail
of Le10 million each,
including two sureties

who are senior citizens of
Sierra Leone permanently
resident in the Western
Area. Also, the accused
persons must report to the
nearest Police station at
7am everyday. Magistrate
Shyllon made these
pronouncements at the
Freetown Magistrate

Court No.3, after a
testimony by the Special
Court Associate Criminal
investigator- Mandy
Cordwell. In Cordwell's
testimony, she identified
the first and second
accused persons- Peter
Halloran and Sheku
Fofanah respectively, the

third accused she said, "I
do not know..." She
explained that she had
known the first accused-
Peter Halloran since
March this year when they
were recruited for
employment at the
Special Court on the same

Contd. Page 2



"We are not engaged in child

Special Court Investigator

From Front Page

day and that the Peter
Halloran is his boss and are
of the same nationality. She
went on, "we arrived in
Sierra Leone the same day
and Mr. Halloran and I
subsequently agreed to
share a house in Freetown."
She stated that they took a
residence at the beginning
of March this year. With
respect to the second
accused person - Sheku
Fofanah, she explained that
that she had known him
since March this year,
adding that they first met at
the house of one of her
Special Court colleagues
located at Foday Sankoh
Drive. She went on to say
that the second accused
was then employed at that
residence as the generator
attendant. She further
explained that the second
accused- Sheku Fofanah
agreed to take them around
to find accommodation and
that he later asked her
whether he could be
employed as a
housekeeper. She went on,
"I discussed the matter with
Ralph Lapierre and
Charren Holt" who also
live in the same house. The
second accused she
explained commenced
work at the beginning of
May this year. Cordwell
recalled the evening of
May this year when she a
discussion with the first
accused in the living room
of their residence, wherein
the first accused disclosed
that the second accused had
asked him to give
consideration in employing

his other family members.
She stated, "specifically,
the second accused had
asked the first accused if
he would employ his
younger brother as a
security guard in the
house and to give
consideration to
employing the younger
sister as a nanny." She
further explained, "I had
been aware previously
that the first accused was
looking for a nanny to
take care of his
girlfriend's three-year-old
son, who both were
expected to arrive in this
country sometime in
June." She explained
further that sometime in
May at around 1400
hours, she went home and
found the first accused,
second accused together
with the second accused's
two younger sisters and
younger brother sitting in
the living room engaged
in a discussion. She
further explained that on
Monday 31st May leaving
the house with the first
accused, she saw a small
girl sitting on a chair near
the door of the residence
and that later this little
girl, walked into the rear
door and go into the
house. The first accused
she stated told her that it
is the second accused's
sister and that he had
already employed her as
nanny, adding that the girl
was at the house to be
taught sign language. She
further explained that he
cautioned the first
accused to be mindful of

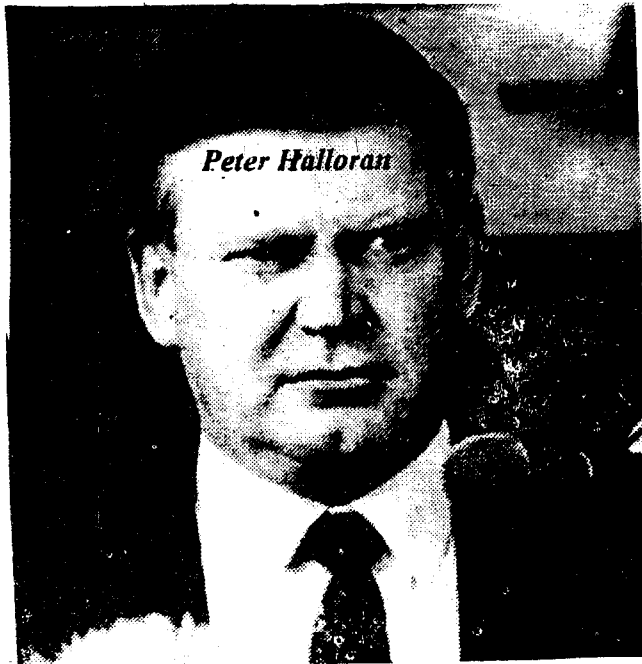
security and privacy. She said he
replied that she was a bit
extreme, as none of the other
colleagues had complained
about the girl. On the 2nd of June
she stated, upon arriving home,
one of the ground staff asked her
to ensure that all of the water
pumps in each of the bedrooms
are locked. Entering the room of
the first accused she explained,
"I saw the younger sister of the
second accused sitting beside
the bed eating cassava leaves."
After checking the pump at the
bathroom, she said that she then
asked the girl how long had she
been there and that she replied
since Monday. Shortly latter, the
first accused arrived and went
upstairs. She explained that
when she went up stairs to
collect her mobile phone, she
noticed that the lights were out
in the room of the first accused.
On the 3rd of June she stated, at
about 07:05 hours, she was
speaking with Mr. Ralph in the
Kitchen when the first accused
came in, explaining further that
she went up stairs, opened the
door of the first accused and saw
the younger sister of the second
accused without the girl noticing
her. At this stage the State
Council- S.A. Bah called for an
adjournment. Defence Lawyer-
Jenkins Johnston for the first
accused, renewed his bail
application, which was followed
by A. Kargbo and M.S. Turay's
application for bail for the
second and third accused
persons respectively. State
Council raised no objection to
the bail but stated issues the
bench should take into
consideration if bail is granted.
However, the bail was granted
the matter was adjourned for
further hearing.

AWOKO

August 25th

2004

LE 10M BAIL FOR PROBER HALLORAN!



HALLORAN: fell into bad times in Sierra Leone believed to be a sound cop

THE UN'S Special Court police investigator Peter Halloran was yestaerday granted a ten million bail at the Freetown Magistrate Court No 3 presided over by Magistrate Shyllion.

Halloran is standing trial for alleged sexual abuse of a 13 year-old girl, the Australian special court police had employed as a nanny at his Wilberforce residence.

Special Court associate criminal investigator, Nandi Cordwell testified in court that he had met the 13 year-old girl after he returned from job on Monday May 31 this year

and upon inquiry. Halloran had told him that he had employed the girl as a nanny through her brother.

He testified also that he had met the 13 year-old sitting on Halloran's bed and eating together from the same plate.

**FM CAREW
AGAIN!**

See Page 2 And More!

For d. People
August 25th, 2004

UN's Halloran, two Sierra

See page 2

Leoneans Charged

Demba Kanji Daramy Reports

It will be recalled that Peter Halloran an Australian and employee of the U.N. backed Special Court in Sierra Leone was charged to court last week for allegedly raping a girl under the age fifteen.

The presiding magistrate C.B. Shyllon refused him bail on the ground that the case was serious and it is not normal for the court in Sierra Leone to grant bail to

accused persons on first appearance in court.

Yesterday, August 24, the case against the U.N. Investigator Peter Halloran took a dramatic turn perhaps for the worst because two other people, Sheku Fofannah and Abdul Eofannah were brought to court as Peter's accomplices and the three of them were slammed with four count charges against the previous three charges against Halloran last week. The charges are, conspiracy, procuring a girl under age of 14, unlawful canal

knowledge, and indecent assault.

On the same day, the first witness in the case Mandi Lee Cordwell an Australian and Special Court employee herself like first accused. Peter Halloran testified in court.

Madam Cordwell explained that on the 29th of May this year she saw the second accused, Sheku Fofannah taking the victim to Peter for employment as a domestic servant.

The Australian woman also explained in court

that on a particular day when she returned to the flat, which she shares with the first accused, Peter, after work, she met the victim in Peters Bedroom eating some food.

She further testified that on that day Peter
See page 2



Peter Halloran

Halloran

met her down stairs and made his way upstairs and returned later for dinner and again left for his room at around 22:00 Hrs pm. for bed.

According to madam Cordwell, she met the room of Peter in darkness when she went up stairs to collect her cell phone and did not see the victim coming down stair since she met her in Peter's room earlier on that day.

The first witness, madam Cordwell also explained that the following morning she left the first accused, Peter at about 07:00 Hrs in the kitchen and on arrival again. She met the victim arranging the bed of Peter but maintained that there was no eye contact between her and the victim so she then shut the door slowly.

The case was adjourned for Wednesday 25th August.

Peep Magazine

August 25th, 2004

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See page 2

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The case was adjourned for Wednesday 25th August.

New Vision
August 25th, 2004

Rape trial of Special Court official starts

Isata Lebbie

The man, who came to prosecute people indicted for bearing the greatest responsibility for war crimes in Sierra Leon, has found himself being tried on allegations of rape.

Peter Hollowan an Australian prosecutor in the Special Court for war crimes in Freetown is alleged to have raped a fourteen-year-old girl. Under Sierra Leonean law, any girl under 16 is presumed not to have attained the age of consent. Sexual intercourse with a girl under sixteen is regarded as rape.

Peter Hollowan appeared for the second time Tuesday before magistrate Bankole Shyllon presiding over court No. 3 in Freetown. Also, on Tuesday, he, Sheka Fofana and Abdul Fofana, two brothers of the girl allegedly raped, was

Contd. Page 2

Rape trial

From Front Page

When Hollowan appeared for the first time last Thursday, he was refused bail and sent to Pademba Road maximum Prison

in the city.

When the trial commenced Tuesday, a Sierra Leonean woman, Mandy Lee Cordwell, who is a criminal investigator of the Special Court of Sierra Leone, was the first to

testify against him. She told the court that Mr. Peter Hollowan was her boss. She said she and Peter Hollowan, a supervising investigation commander of the Special Court, lived in the same building. "We

were four living in the same house and I recall May 29, 2004. It was in the evening hours on Saturday", she recalled. Mandy said, adding that she had a discussion with Abdul Fofana one of the accused, who is a brother of the girl. She said he revealed to her that Hollowan asked him to find a girl to serve as a "maid" in his home. According to

her, the second accused said Hollowan told him that the maid would take care of his three-year-old son. Mandy said she later saw the girl and offered her lift and dropped her at Mamba Point, an entertainment center and guest house at Wilberforce West of the capital Freetown. "I asked her what she

would like to be in the future, she said. She would like to be a nurse", Mandy said in court. She said on May 31, she was reversing her car and noticed that the girl who was sitting in front of the apartment. Peter Hollowan, had entered it. She said she enquired and was told

Contd. Page 5

Rape trial

From Page 2

Hollowan that the girl went to collect his mobile phone. "I went around and observed the bedroom and I discovered that the bed was in disarray", she said, adding that the girl by then was eating rice inside the house.

Her testimony was stopped at this stage.

The prosecuting attorney S. K. Bah unlike the first time said he was not against bail.

Mr. J. B. Jenkins-Johnston, the lawyer defending Peter Hollowan, also pleaded with magistrate Bankole Shyllon to consider granting bail. The magistrate granted Hollowan and Abdul

Fofana bail in the sum of Le 10 million. The magistrate ordered the both sureties for the accused should be reporting to the nearest police station every morning at 7:30 am.

The Independent

August 25th, 2004

Herald Sun

[Print this page](#)

Officer bailed in sex case

25aug04

THE former head of Victoria's homicide squad facing child sex charges in Africa was last night free on bail.

Superintendent Peter Halloran, a special police investigator for the UN-backed Special Court in Sierra Leone, was granted bail of \$5765 when he appeared at Freetown Magistrates' Court.

The 30-year Victoria Police veteran faces charges related to indecently assaulting a 13-year-old girl.

He has previously denied the charge.

Hundreds filled the court and its corridor for the proceedings.

Supt Halloran appeared listless as his lawyer, Blyden Jenkins-Johnston, asked magistrate Bankole Shyllon to allow bail, which was not opposed by the prosecution.

The prosecution scrapped three charges and filed four new one against Supt Halloran.

Two brothers of the girl alleged to have been indecently assaulted were also charged.

The new charges include procuring an under-age girl to have unlawful carnal knowledge, indecent assault and conspiracy.

The incidents were alleged to have occurred between May and June this year.

First to give evidence was an assistant criminal investigator with the Special Court and fellow Australian Manley Cordwell. She told the court Supt Halloran was her boss and the pair rented a house with two other court officials.

She recalled returning home on June 2 when she was told by a member of the ground staff to ensure that all the water pumps in the building were turned off.

"I entered the house and went to the bedroom of the first accused to check the water pumps in the bathroom," she said.

"I saw a young girl sitting on Peter's (Halloran) bed eating rice.

"I asked the girl how long she had been staying in the apartment and she replied for some days.

"Later that day, I returned home in the evening and noticed that the bedroom of Halloran was in darkness."

Ms Cordwell is to continue her testimony tomorrow.

Charged with Supt Halloran were the girl's brothers, Sheka and Abdul Fofana.

Supt Halloran took up his post in Sierra Leone in January after taking unpaid leave from

the Victoria Police force.

The Special Court deals with war atrocities committed during the west African country's civil war from November, 1996.

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ABC Online

Vic officer faces Sierra Leone court. 25/08/2004. ABC News Online

[This is the print version of story <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200408/sl184411.htm>]

Last Update: Wednesday, August 25, 2004. 6:10am (AEST)

Vic officer faces Sierra Leone court

An Australian police officer charged with sex offences has appeared in court in Sierra Leone.

The former head of the Victorian homicide squad is accused of sexually abusing a teenage girl.

The court was told that Superintendent Peter Halloran had sexual contact with a 13-year-old girl.

The senior Victorian police officer has denied the charges.

Halloran was working as a war crimes investigator with the United Nations-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Court officials say they will cooperate with the police investigation.

An internal inquiry found there was not enough evidence to support the allegations.

But, Halloran was suspended from his position and was arrested by police.

The case is scheduled to resume tomorrow.

Halloran is expected to be released on bail.

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THE AUSTRALIAN

[Print this page](#)

Officer's child sex trial opens

From correspondents in Freetown
25aug04

THE sexual assault trial of a senior Australian police officer working as an investigator for the UN-backed war crimes court for Sierra Leone opened today.

Peter Halloran, a superintendent from the Victoria Police, faces an amended four-count indictment of abuse, conspiracy and procuring a minor for unlawful carnal relations for his alleged sexual relationship with a 13-year-old Freetown schoolgirl.

Brothers of the girl, whose name was not released, each face two counts of procuring a minor for unlawful carnal relations and conspiracy, according to the indictment read out by state prosecutor Suleiman Allieu Bah.

The war crimes court had conducted its own internal investigation in June, following a complaint filed by Manley Cordwell, Halloran's housemate and colleague.

Tribunal spokesman Peter Andersen told AFP last week that there had been no evidence to support any charges against Halloran but that the war court would cooperate fully with the Sierra Leone police investigation.

In brief testimony today, Cordwell told the court she first saw the girl on May 30, when she was brought to the house shared by Cordwell and Halloran to work as a nanny for the toddler son of Halloran's girlfriend.

She saw the girl three days later in Halloran's room.

"She was seated on the bed eating rice and cassava sauce and I asked her how long she had been there and she said for some days," Cordwell said. "After I went down the hall, I saw the lights go off in his room."

Halloran, 56, has been in custody since August 18 and his passport revoked. An order denying him bail was rescinded today by magistrate Bankole Shyllon and bail was set at 10 million leones (\$5200).

Defence lawyer Blyden Jenkins-Johnston said bail would likely be paid today to speed Halloran's release from Freetown's maximum security prison.

"His employers (the war crimes court) have undertaken in writing that he will come to court whenever it is required," Jenkins-Johnston said following the hearing, which adjourned until tomorrow.

Halloran is in Sierra Leone on a UN contract as a prosecution investigator for the war court, which is judging those who bear the "greatest responsibility" for the decade of civil war that ravaged Sierra Leone until 2001.

His lawyer, Jenkins-Johnston, had served as lead counsel for one of the tribunal's highest profile defendants - former government minister Sam Hinga Norman.

Norman, who faces an eight-count indictment as head of the pro-government Civil Defence Forces militia, jettisoned his team of Sierra Leone and international lawyers on the first day of his trial in June.



VOICE of AMERICA

West Africa Investigation of 9/11 Attacks Challenged*Cindy Shiner**Washington**24 Aug 2004, 13:28 UTC*

U-S Congresswoman Sue Kelly Monday challenged the 9-11 commission about its investigation of reported links between al-Qaida and West African "blood diamonds." The commission's findings were discussed at a hearing of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Financial Services about identifying and preventing terrorist financing. The 9-11 commission is an independent, bipartisan commission created by Congress.

Ms. Kelly read from the report by the commission investigating the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington D.C. on September 11, 2001:

"The sentence is: We have seen no persuasive evidence that al-Qaida funded itself by trading in African conflict diamonds."

Ms. Kelly asked members of the 9-11 commission how they came to that decision. She noted that a number of sources reached conclusions different than those of the Central Intelligence Agency and the Federal Bureau of Investigation cited in the 9-11 report.

Lee Hamilton, vice chairman of the 9-11 commission, noted that the report was the product of an ongoing investigation:

"There is some evidence that specific al Qaida operators may have dabbled in or maybe just expressed an interest in precious stones at some point. But what we're not able to do is to take that evidence and extrapolate from it and conclude that al Qaida funded itself in that manner."

Ms. Kelly listed a number of sources that have documented a link between al Qaida and diamonds from Sierra Leone. They include the U.S. and United Nations-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone and former Washington Post journalist Doug Farah, who wrote "Blood from Stones: The Secret Financial Network of Terror." The deputy commander of U.S.-European command, General Charles Wald, has also confirmed a link.

Ms. Kelly asked why two witnesses offered by the Sierra Leone special court in June were not interviewed. U.N. investigators said the informants could have shed light on the presence of al Qaida operatives involved in the diamond trade while based in Liberia, Sierra Leone's neighbor, prior to 9-11.

Mr. Hamilton said based on the available evidence the claims could not be substantiated. "But obviously you have to maintain an open mind here as I think the commission tried to do. We evaluated the sources of information for these various public reports. We checked the FBI records; we checked the CIA records. They came to the conclusion as you suggest in your question that there was no credible evidence ..."

Ms. Kelly says she simply wanted to know why Mr. Hamilton chose certain people chosen to interview, but others seem to have been left out such as two men that were suggested to him by the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Mr. Hamilton responded:

"I'll simply have to check that. I think we have checked either all of them directly or indirectly. But one of the things we were careful about was not to accept the word of anybody. We always looked for corroboration and we didn't find it in these cases."

The Sierra Leone Special Court witnesses might have been able to provide testimony about Khalfan Ghailani and Fazul Abdullah Mohamed. Both were implicated in the U.S. embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998. Mr. Mohamed was also implicated in the bombing of a tourist hotel and an attempt to shoot down an Israeli airliner in Mombassa in 2002.

Mr. Hamilton said it was necessary to draw a distinction between al Qaida and al Qaida operatives:

"If you have evidence that al Qaida, not al Qaida associated people. But if you have evidence that al Qaida itself was funded by conflict diamonds we're certainly open to that."

But U.S. officials said Mr. Ghailani is a senior al Qaida operative. He was arrested recently in Pakistan.

Mr. Mohamed is on the FBI's most wanted list.



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RESEARCH MATERIALS

CONGRESSWOMAN QUESTIONS LACK OF EVIDENCE OF AL-QAEDA BEING FUNDED BY DIAMONDS

August 25, 2004

During a hearing of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Financial Services about identifying and preventing terrorist financing, Sue Kelly, a United States Congresswoman, has questioned members of the 9/11 commission investigating the terror attacks on the country as to how they concluded that they found “no persuasive evidence that al Qaeda funded itself by trading in African conflict diamonds”, citing a number of sources that reached different conclusions from the sources used in the 9/11 commission report.

“There is some evidence that specific al Qaeda operators may have dabbled in or maybe just expressed an interest in precious stones at some point. But what we’re not able to do is to take that evidence and extrapolate from it and conclude that al Qaeda funded itself in that manner. We evaluated the sources of information for these various public reports. We checked the FBI records. We checked the CIA records. They came to the conclusion that there was no credible evidence,” explains Lee Hamilton, Vice Chairman of the bipartisan 9/11 commission, according to the *Voice of America*.

Kelly expressed a particular interest in finding out why two witnesses offered by the Sierra Leone special court in June that could have shed light on the presence of al Qaeda operatives involved in the diamond trade while based in Liberia according to U.N. investigators, were not interviewed.



Tacy

West Africa Investigation of 9/11 Attacks Challenged

Cindy Shiner
Washington
24 Aug 2004, 13:28 UTC



U-S Congresswoman Sue Kelly Monday challenged the 9-11 commission about its investigation of reported links between al-Qaida and West African "blood diamonds." The commission's findings were discussed at a hearing of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Financial Services about identifying and preventing terrorist financing. The 9-11 commission is an independent, bipartisan commission created by Congress.

Ms. Kelly read from the report by the commission investigating the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington D.C. on September 11, 2001:

"The sentence is: We have seen no persuasive evidence that al-Qaida funded itself by trading in African conflict diamonds."

Ms. Kelly asked members of the 9-11 commission how they came to that decision. She noted that a number of sources reached conclusions different than those of the Central Intelligence Agency and the Federal Bureau of Investigation cited in the 9-11 report.

Lee Hamilton, vice chairman of the 9-11 commission, noted that the report was the product of an ongoing investigation:

"There is some evidence that specific al Qaida operators may have dabbled in or maybe just expressed an interest in precious stones at some point. But what we're not able to do is to take that evidence and extrapolate from it and conclude that al Qaida funded itself in that manner."

Ms. Kelly listed a number of sources that have documented a link between al Qaida and diamonds from Sierra Leone. They include the U.S. and United Nations-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone and former Washington Post journalist Doug Farah, who wrote "Blood from Stones: The Secret Financial Network of Terror." The deputy commander of U.S.-European command, General Charles Wald, has also confirmed a link.

Ms. Kelly asked why two witnesses offered by the Sierra Leone special court in June were not interviewed. U.N. investigators said the informants could have shed light on the presence of al Qaida operatives involved in the diamond trade while based in Liberia, Sierra Leone's neighbor, prior to 9-11.

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Aussie cop denies abuse

From Freetown

25aug04

AN Australian senior investigator at Sierra Leone's UN-backed war crimes tribunal today pleaded not guilty in a Freetown court to sexually abusing a young teenage girl.

Peter Halloran, a Victoria Police superintendent on secondment to the war crimes tribunal, is accused of "unlawful carnal knowledge, indecent assault and procuring a girl under 14 years". He faces up to 15 years in prison if found guilty.

Local magistrate Bankole Shyllon granted bail to Halloran and two Sierra Leoneans charged in connection with the alleged crime. However, he confiscated their passports and told them to report to the police every day.

Halloran, 56, had been in custody since August 18. Bail was set at 10 million leones (\$5200).

The case against Halloran is an embarrassment for the West African country's war crimes tribunal, set up to bring to justice those bearing the greatest responsibility for atrocities committed during its 10-year civil war.

Hidden behind wire-topped concrete walls in the centre of the sprawling capital and defended by UN troops, the special court is the first such tribunal to be held where the war crimes were committed. It is trumpeted as a model for other countries.

Manley Cordwell, a fellow Australian war crimes investigator who shared a house with Halloran, told the court the alleged victim had visited their home in the capital.

"I asked Halloran who the girl walking into our house was," she said. Halloran replied that he had employed the girl as a nanny, Cordwell said.

"She was seated on the bed eating rice and cassava sauce and I asked her how long she had been there and she said for some days," Cordwell said. "After I went down the hall, I saw the lights go off in his room."

Cordwell saw Halloran go into the room many times that night and never saw the girl leave the bedroom, she said. The following morning, she said she saw the girl making Halloran's bed.

Cordwell did not say today if she had witnessed any actual crime. Her testimony is expected to continue.

Defence lawyer Blyden Jenkins-Johnston said bail would likely be paid today to speed Halloran's release from Freetown's maximum security prison.

"His employers (the war crimes court) have undertaken in writing that he will come to court whenever it is required," Jenkins-Johnston said following the hearing, which adjourned until tomorrow.

Halloran is in Sierra Leone on a UN contract as a prosecution investigator for the war court, which is judging those who bear the "greatest responsibility" for the decade of civil war that ravaged Sierra Leone until 2001.

The special court suspended Halloran in June as soon as it became aware of the allegations against him, but an internal inquiry found insufficient evidence to support the accusation.

War in the former British colony - ranked bottom of the UN Human Development Index in 2004 - shocked the world with images of drugged up young gunmen and their mutilated victims.

The conflict was declared over in 2002 after some 50,000 people had been killed and a UN peacekeeping force numbering 17,500 people had disarmed 47,000 fighters.

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ABC Online

Vic officer faces Sierra Leone court. 25/08/2004. ABC News Online

[This is the print version of story <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200408/s1184411.htm>]

Last Update: Wednesday, August 25, 2004. 6:10am (AEST)

Vic officer faces Sierra Leone court

An Australian police officer charged with sex offences has appeared in court in Sierra Leone.

The former head of the Victorian homicide squad is accused of sexually abusing a teenage girl.

The court was told that Superintendent Peter Halloran had sexual contact with a 13-year-old girl.

The senior Victorian police officer has denied the charges.

Halloran was working as a war crimes investigator with the United Nations-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Court officials say they will cooperate with the police investigation.

An internal inquiry found there was not enough evidence to support the allegations.

But, Halloran was suspended from his position and was arrested by police.

The case is scheduled to resume tomorrow.

Halloran is expected to be released on bail.

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Sierra Leone boosts police force ahead of UN troop reduction

FREETOWN, Aug 23 (AFP) - Sierra Leone has added 600 new officers to its 7,000-member police force in a bid to fill any security vacuum being left by the departing UN mission in the west African state, officials said Monday.

Police chief Brima Acha Kamara said officers were deploying around the country, most recently into the eastern diamond-rich Tongo Fields area, from where a battalion of Zambian soldiers withdrew last week.

At its peak, the UN operation in Sierra Leone following a decade of savage conflict was the world's largest, involving more than 17,000 peacekeepers in the disarmament and stabilization of the country no bigger than Scotland.

Five years and billions of dollars (euros) later, the mission, known as UNAMSIL, is winding down and set to include just 3,200 soldiers from Ghana, Pakistan and Nigeria assuring security come December.

Troops from former colonial power Britain are also forecast to remain in the Atlantic coastal country for an undetermined period.

UNAMSIL has assisted in the recruitment and training of new police cadets and military servicemembers, who are to ensure both border and internal security once the peacekeepers pull out completely.

"As a result of the UNAMSIL drawdown from the north, south and east of the country, we have taken full responsibility of the internal security in those areas," Kamara said Monday.

Sierra Leone's police force, which is expected to number 9,500 by the end of the year, plans to move into the Western area around the capital Freetown in late September, with an official handover of all responsibilities for security set for October.

Despite assurances from UN and Sierra Leone officials that there will be no security vacuum when UNAMSIL finally pulls stakes, citizens are wary about the challenges that will be confronting their as-yet untested law enforcement agencies.

Of particular concern are the border regions and diamond-mining areas that have been a lure not only for Sierra Leone's insurgents but also groups such as Hezbollah and al-Qaeda, according to documents from Western intelligence agencies and the UN-backed war crimes court currently operating in Freetown.