



Case No. SCSL-2003-01-T

THE PROSECUTOR OF
THE SPECIAL COURT
V.
CHARLES GHANKAY TAYLOR

MONDAY, 19 MAY 2008
9.30 A.M.
TRIAL

TRIAL CHAMBER II

Before the Judges:

Justice Teresa Doherty, Presiding
Justice Richard Lussick
Justice Julia Sebutinde
Justice Al Hadji Malick Sow, Alternate

For Chambers:

Mr William Romans
Ms Carolyn Buff

For the Registry:

Ms Rachel Irura

For the Prosecution:

Mr Stephen Rapp
Ms Brenda J Hollis
Ms Maja Dimitrova

**For the accused Charles Ghankay
Taylor:**

Mr Courtenay Griffiths QC
Mr Terry Munyard
Mr Morris Anyah
Ms Logan Hambrick

1 Monday, 19 May 2008

2 [The accused present]

3 [Open session]

4 [Upon commencing at 9.30 a.m.]

09:30:56 5 PRESIDING JUDGE: Good morning. Unless there are some
6 preliminary matters I will remind the witness of his oath.

7 MR GRIFFITHS: Very well, your Honour.

8 PRESIDING JUDGE: Appearances appear to be as Friday, am
9 I correct, Mr Rapp?

09:31:11 10 MR RAPP: That is correct, your Honour.

11 PRESIDING JUDGE: Mr Griffiths, appearances as before?

12 MR GRIFFITHS: Your Honour, yes.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE: Mr Witness, I remind you again this
14 morning as I have done on other mornings that you took the oath
09:31:24 15 to tell the truth. That oath is still binding on you, you must
16 answer questions truthfully. Counsel for the Defence will have
17 some questions.

18 THE WITNESS: Your Honour.

19 WITNESS: MOSES ZEH BLAH [On former oath]

09:31:34 20 PRESIDING JUDGE: Please proceed, Mr Griffiths.

21 MR GRIFFITHS: May it please your Honour.

22 CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR GRIFFITHS:

23 Q. Former President Blah, you didn't want to attend this Court
24 voluntarily, did you?

09:31:58 25 A. No. Yes, yes.

26 Q. You were quite happy to attend here and give evidence, were
27 you?

28 A. Yes, under condition that if I was subpoenaed I was going
29 to come to testify.

1 Q. You understand what a subpoena means, don't you? A
2 subpoena is normally used where a witness is reluctant to attend
3 court and so therefore the Court has to in effect force that
4 witness through threats to attend. You understand that, don't
09:32:36 5 you?

6 A. Yes, I understand that.

7 Q. So can I start with my first question again then, former
8 President, and it is this: You did not want to attend this Court
9 voluntarily, did you?

09:32:50 10 A. Yes, I wanted to attend, but it should be through subpoena
11 because what we said was that there were a lot of delays that
12 I had to go to the hospital and even to the hospital I went, the
13 things that I went through and if I was subpoenaed I will accept
14 to come to the Court.

09:33:14 15 Q. That is exactly the point I am trying to make, you see,
16 former President. That you were willing to attend on condition
17 that you were subpoenaed by the Court?

18 A. No, I was willing to attend the Court under condition and
19 that I did because there were a lot of delays, I had to go to the
09:33:43 20 hospital, I went for a press conference for over two days and
21 I came. I was willing to come and I was willing to come after
22 the last discussion.

23 Q. Let me approach the topic differently then. Were you at
24 any stage concerned that the people of Liberia might think if you
09:34:04 25 appeared at court voluntarily giving evidence against your former
26 comrade in arms and fellow President Charles Taylor that you had
27 betrayed him? Were you concerned about that?

28 A. Under condition again I will say this: That there were
29 just rumours all around that if I came to testify here I will be

1 killed, my people will be destroyed, my house will be burnt down
2 and those were intimidations on my part and that I did not mind,
3 so I came.

4 Q. I am trying to ask a very simple question.

09:34:48 5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Were you concerned that the people of Liberia might
7 consider it a betrayal if you came voluntarily to give evidence
8 against your former comrade in arms?

9 A. Well, how will I know if somebody was thinking about me as
09:35:08 10 such that I was coming to betray the former President? It was
11 not openly said to me. It was rumoured around and I had to
12 address the issue and I said that I was only coming to say the
13 truth and nothing but the truth.

14 Q. And it's right, is it not, that prior to attending at this
09:35:28 15 Court you held a press conference in Monrovia, didn't you?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. I wonder, please, if the witness could be shown - and, your
18 Honours, I have prepared a bundle of documents which your Honours
19 should have before you. That is the bundle, your Honour, yes.
09:35:50 20 I am going to invite the witness's attention behind divider 1,
21 please, and page 1. You will see that here we have a press
22 report, dated 7 April 2008, and it reads as follows:

23 "Monrovia: Liberia's former Vice-President Moses Blah said
24 Monday that he has been called to testify in the trial of
09:36:41 25 Charles Taylor, the first African leader to face an international
26 tribunal for war crimes. Blah said that the United Nations
27 Special Court for Sierra Leone, which is trying Liberia's
28 ex-President Taylor in The Hague for his alleged key part in a
29 brutal civil war in the neighbouring country, had sent him a

1 subpoena for April 14."

2 Then it quotes you as saying:

3 "'I will speak the truth. That is why I am surprised that
4 some people are worried that there is the possibility of me
09:37:18 5 testifying' said Blah, who served as Vice-President under Taylor
6 and then briefly took over when he was ousted."

7 Can I pause there, please. Did you say that?

8 A. Yes, I said it.

9 Q. It continues:

09:37:38 10 "Blah said that he would tell the Court in The Hague about
11 the death of Sam Bockarie."

12 Then can I miss a couple of paragraphs and now can we go
13 over the page to page 2, please. This is another press report of
14 that press conference, dated 8 April 2008, and if I could invite
09:38:14 15 your attention, please, to the fourth paragraph from the bottom
16 of the page where the report reads as follows:

17 "Asked whether he would say the truth if he faces his
18 former chief Mr Blah said, 'I swear on the Bible I will say the
19 truth and nothing but the truth. I will not be there to testify
09:38:39 20 for or against, but answer whatever questions truthfully."

21 Can I pause there. Did you say that?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. So can I take it then, former President, that you are not
24 here taking sides either for the Prosecution or the Defence. You
09:39:03 25 are here playing with a straight bat, straight down the middle,
26 concerned merely to tell the truth? Would that be a fair
27 assessment?

28 A. Yes, and that I have done.

29 Q. It continues in the penultimate paragraph on that page:

1 "In a subpoena testificandum dated March 7, 2008 with
2 reference number 155/2008, Mr Blah, a one time inspector general
3 of the defunct National Patriotic Front of Liberia, has been
4 ordered to appear voluntarily before the Special Court for Sierra
09:39:46 5 Leone next Monday April 14, 2008, at 9.30 am or show good cause
6 why he cannot comply with this subpoena. The subpoena placed in
7 the hands of Mr Blah said any willful failure on the part of the
8 former President constitutes contempt of the Special Court
9 pursuant to Rule 77 of the rules. The subpoena: 'Should you
09:40:17 10 fail to comply the Trial Chamber may deal with the matter
11 summarily itself, refer the matter to the appropriate authorities
12 of Sierra Leone, or if there are sufficient grounds to proceed
13 against you for contempt issue an order in lieu of an indictment
14 and direct independent counsel to prosecute the matter.'"

09:40:40 15 The subpoena states, adding:

16 "If you are convicted for contempt of the Special Court you
17 may be imprisoned for up to 7 years or fined up to 2 million
18 Leones or both."

19 Now so far as that threat of sanction is concerned,
09:40:59 20 Mr Blah, did that concern you?

21 A. No, that was what was written in the subpoena and so I took
22 it that way.

23 Q. Did that threat concern you?

24 A. That is what was written in the subpoena and so I took it
09:41:20 25 as it is.

26 Q. Can I try my question just one more time. Did it concern
27 you?

28 A. That was written in the subpoena and I was not the one who
29 wrote the subpoena, so I took it as that.

1 Q. Well I am sure you appreciate, former President, my
2 question is very different and I will try it one last time to see
3 if I can get an answer to it. Did that threat concern you?

4 A. That was written in the subpoena and I took it as such.

09:41:56 5 PRESIDING JUDGE: Do you understand the question? The
6 question is not directed exactly at what is written in the
7 subpoena, but how you reacted to what was written in the
8 subpoena. Am I correct, Mr Griffiths?

9 MR GRIFFITHS: Your Honour yes.

09:42:11 10 THE WITNESS: But what happened was I took the subpoena
11 serious. This is why I am insisting that I took it as it is.

12 MR GRIFFITHS:

13 Q. Can we go, please, to the fourth page of that bundle. If
14 we look at the last two lines on that page you are quoted as
09:42:48 15 saying:

16 "Mr Blah said he could not actually say who killed
17 Bockarie, but was sure he saw the Sierra Leonean rebel leader in
18 the company of Yeaten before his death."

19 Is that the truth?

09:43:06 20 A. That is the truth.

21 JUDGE LUSSICK: Where did you just read from, Mr Griffiths?

22 MR GRIFFITHS: Page 4 of that bundle, your Honour. Do you
23 see there is a box at the bottom of the page?

24 JUDGE LUSSICK: I have got it.

09:43:34 25 MR GRIFFITHS: I am just above the box, your Honour.

26 JUDGE LUSSICK: Thank you.

27 MR GRIFFITHS:

28 Q. And you confirm, Mr Blah, that sentence I read out to you
29 is the truth?

1 A. Yes, it is the truth. It is the truth.

2 Q. And, you see, I am only interested in the truth, nothing
3 else.

4 A. Exactly so.

09:43:57 5 Q. Now I make it plain at the outset, former President, I will
6 always endeavour to ask simple questions. If you have any
7 difficulty understanding my question, please let me know and
8 I will try and rephrase it in a way which you can understand.
9 Will you do that for me?

09:44:19 10 A. Thank you, I will.

11 Q. And can I also make it plain that there may well be
12 occasions when your recollection of events may differ from that
13 of your fellow former President, Charles Taylor, in certain
14 respects, but I am only interested in the facts of what occurred

09:44:41 15 and your knowledge of them. Do you follow me?

16 A. I am listening.

17 Q. Now would you agree, former President, that you have been a
18 colleague of Charles Taylor since about 1986?

19 A. Is that a question? Please come in again.

09:45:14 20 Q. Do you agree that you have been a colleague of
21 Charles Taylor since about 1986?

22 A. What does the "colleague" mean? He had been my boss since
23 the start of the revolution. He was the chief of my
24 organisation.

09:45:39 25 Q. But in due course you became his adjutant. Is that
26 correct?

27 A. I became his adjutant, correct.

28 Q. You later became his inspector general, correct?

29 A. Under his command, correct.

1 Q. You later became his ambassador, correct?

2 A. Correct. You are correct.

3 Q. You later became his Vice-President?

4 A. You are correct.

09:46:01 5 Q. And would you agree that as a Vice-President the President
6 would be your colleague?

7 A. He was my boss, because I was not President at that time.
8 I was Vice-President and I took direct instructions from the
9 President.

09:46:22 10 Q. Very well. Let me put my question differently then. Do
11 you agree that since about the mid-1980s you have worked quite
12 closely with Charles Taylor?

13 A. Yes, I worked as Vice-President, but please come in with
14 your question again.

09:46:49 15 Q. Would you agree that since the mid-1980s you have worked
16 closely with Charles Taylor?

17 A. Yes, at the latter part of 1980. We are talking from
18 '85/'86 up to 2003.

19 Q. Because you were there by his side right to the bitter end
09:47:17 20 in August 2003, weren't you?

21 A. Yes, I was there as President of the Liberian senate and
22 Vice-President of Liberia at that time.

23 Q. Even though on his orders you were twice arrested and
24 detained you nonetheless stuck by him, didn't you?

09:47:41 25 A. Exactly so. Yes, I agree.

26 Q. And would it be fair to say, former President, that you
27 regarded Charles Taylor as a friend?

28 A. Yes, he is a friend of mine. He is a friend. He was my
29 former boss and I am only here to say the truth and nothing but

1 the truth. That will not destroy the friendship between him and
2 I.

3 Q. I am sure you are and that is why I am seeking to ask very
4 simple questions to elicit that truth. Would it be fair to say
09:48:19 5 that you were also a revolutionary brother to Charles Taylor?

6 A. Exactly so.

7 Q. And would you agree that like you former President Taylor
8 cared for the people of Liberia?

9 A. Well that question is up to the President, whether he cared
09:48:48 10 for the people or not, but I cannot say what was in the mind of
11 the former President.

12 Q. Let me ask you when you were President did you care for the
13 people of Liberia?

14 A. Exactly so. I cared for the people of Liberia.

09:48:59 15 Q. When you were fighting in that civil war from 1989 all the
16 way down to 2003 when LURD and MODEL were knocking on the doors
17 of Monrovia, did you care for the people of Liberia?

18 A. Exactly. I cared for the people of Liberia.

19 Q. Would you have continued fighting for the NPFL for all
09:49:26 20 those years if you did not care for the people of Liberia?

21 A. No, I cared for them. That was why I stuck with the
22 revolution up to the end. I care for the people of Liberia.

23 Q. And you were fighting for their welfare all of those years,
24 weren't you?

09:49:44 25 A. Yes, I was trying to protect them from danger.

26 Q. And it was precisely because you were seeking to achieve
27 that noble purpose why you stuck by Charles Taylor right to the
28 bitter end, would you agree?

29 A. Yes, I agree.

1 Q. In fact, former President, do you recall being interviewed
2 by the media when you took up the reins of the presidency in
3 August 2003 and asked about your attitude towards your former
4 President Charles Taylor? Do you remember that?

09:50:34 5 A. No, I can't remember.

6 Q. Let me try and assist you then. Do you recall being asked
7 whether you thought Charles Taylor was guilty of war crimes in
8 Sierra Leone and your reply was, "I don't think so." Do you
9 remember that?

09:51:01 10 A. That I cannot remember. I cannot remember that.

11 Q. Let me assist you then, because I appreciate it is often
12 difficult to remember these things. Please go to page 15 in that
13 bundle.

14 PRESIDING JUDGE: Is that tab 1, Mr Griffiths?

09:51:18 15 MR GRIFFITHS: The same tab, your Honour, yes:

16 Q. The middle of the page:

17 "Liberian President Moses Blah on whether he thought Taylor
18 guilty of war crimes in Sierra Leone 'I don't think so.'"

19 PRESIDING JUDGE: What page is that, Mr Griffiths?

09:51:52 20 MR GRIFFITHS: Page 15, your Honour, middle of the page.

21 PRESIDING JUDGE: Thank you.

22 MR GRIFFITHS:

23 Q. Do you remember saying that to the press?

24 A. I say again I cannot remember, because the press will
09:52:06 25 misquote you and will say something that you did not say and they
26 can say anything that they will want to say.

27 Q. This is taken from the Sierra Leonean news archives dated
28 August 2003 and you will see that the phrase "I don't think so"
29 appears in speech marks which suggests that it's a direct quote

1 from you.

2 A. What I will understand is that I was in Sierra Leone and
3 I had a press conference there and a question was asked whether
4 the former President was guilty, whether President Taylor was
09:52:44 5 guilty of the crime of fighting in Sierra Leone, and I said that
6 cannot be concluded until he was investigated because I would not
7 prejudge the President. So that was what I said in the press
8 conference.

9 Q. I am grateful that your memory of the occasion is coming
09:52:58 10 back.

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Consequently let me try the question again, or put it
13 differently. Can you think why any journalist would want to
14 misquote you speaking in Sierra Leone on a topic as dear to the
09:53:15 15 heart of the Sierra Leonean people as that? Could you think of
16 any reason why they would want to misquote you?

17 A. Maybe they wanted to pass judgment on to Taylor, you know.

18 Q. Well, if they were seeking to pass judgment on Mr Taylor
19 one would expect them to have quoted you as saying quite the
09:53:37 20 opposite. So that's why I am trying to test, you see, why a
21 Sierra Leonean newspaper interviewing a President of Liberia at a
22 time when people are concerned at the support the Liberian
23 Government gave to an organisation responsible for many deaths in
24 Sierra Leone - can you think of any reason why a journalist from
09:54:05 25 a country sharing that experience would misquote you in this way?

26 A. I will repeat my answer to you. I said Mr Taylor is not
27 guilty until he is proven guilty at the time I was in Sierra
28 Leone and I did not say that Mr Taylor was guilty, or that
29 I thought he was not guilty of the crime. I said that we cannot

1 prejudge the former President and if judgment was passed on him
2 and that they proved that he was guilty then that was just it.

3 Q. Just so that we're sure what the situation is, are you
4 saying that this newspaper report has misquoted you?

09:54:49 5 A. Yes, because I have remembered exactly what I said and what
6 is written here has been twisted.

7 Q. So your case is - I just want to be sure what your case is
8 - "I never said this"?

9 A. No, I said what I said and I cannot say I didn't say that.
09:55:10 10 I said it in a very different term, but it has been twisted here
11 in the newspaper.

12 Q. Can I try this one last time please. Did you utter those
13 words, former President?

14 A. I did not. I did not. But it has also been twisted. What
09:55:28 15 I said is what I have said to you, but here it has been twisted
16 in a different term.

17 Q. I will ask you for one last time: Can you give us a
18 credible reason why a Sierra Leonean journalist would want to
19 misquote you?

09:55:44 20 A. This I wouldn't say for the journalist. Maybe the
21 journalist thought their own way and I think my own way as the
22 President of Liberia.

23 Q. Tell me, please, have you been following this trial in
24 Liberia?

09:56:11 25 A. Well, sometimes I followed the trial, but I have been busy.
26 I have been sick for some time and sometimes I listen to it and
27 sometimes I went to hospital for days and sometimes I came back,
28 I went to my farm for some days. But whenever I was in Monrovia
29 I listened to the trial.

1 Q. Did you, for example, follow the evidence of one Varmuyan
2 Sherri f?

3 A. No.

4 Q. You didn't follow it?

09:56:46 5 A. No, I didn't follow it.

6 Q. Do you know that man?

7 A. Varmuyan Sherri f, no.

8 Q. You were Vice-President of Liberia, wasn't he one of the
9 insiders who knew everything that was going on within the Taylor
10 government, somebody close to you?

09:57:05

11 A. This I wouldn't know. It was not everybody that was close
12 to Taylor that I was compelled to know. Certain people I did not
13 know.

14 Q. I ask you because you were at the centre of government.

09:57:21

15 Was not Mr Sherri f a very important person within the Liberian
16 establishment?

17 A. I wouldn't know.

18 Q. Did you not know the man?

19 A. No.

09:57:33

20 Q. Does the name ring any bells with you?

21 A. Yes, I know the Sherri f. The Sherri f is a popular name in
22 Liberia.

23 Q. But do you know this particular Sherri f?

24 A. I don't know Sherri f and Sherri f does not know me.

09:57:49

25 Q. I am talking about a Mr Sherri f who came to this Court and
26 gave evidence. Do you know of that man?

27 A. I don't know Sherri f.

28 Q. Was he not a regular round the Executive Mansion, White
29 Flower and other places where you used to frequent?

1 A. No, I can't say that. I don't know this man.

2 Q. Do you know someone called Zigzag Marzah?

3 A. Yes, I know Zigzag Marzah.

4 Q. Are you aware that Mr Marzah gave evidence before this
09:58:27 5 Court.

6 A. Yes, I heard that. I followed his case close.

7 Q. So you listened with care to his evidence, did you?

8 A. Yes, I listened to his testimony.

9 Q. I will come back to Mr Marzah in due course.

09:58:51 10 THE WITNESS: Your Honours, sir, I want to use the
11 restroom.

12 PRESIDING JUDGE: Please assist the witness.

13 THE WITNESS: I'm sorry. Today, your Honours, I am not too
14 well because of the change of weather so I took some medication.

09:59:09 15 Even though I can still go along, it is just a reminder, your
16 Honours.

17 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Mr Griffiths, I suppose the issue of
18 overlapping speakers has been addressed to you.

19 MR GRIFFITHS: [Microphone not activated].

10:03:20 20 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Okay.

21 THE WITNESS: Thank you, your Honours.

22 PRESIDING JUDGE: If you are comfortable we will proceed,
23 Mr Griffiths, please.

24 MR GRIFFITHS:

10:03:40 25 Q. The next topic I would like to address, former President,
26 is this: Can you help me, please, with how it is you came to
27 speak to the Prosecutors in this case?

28 A. How was I approached? I was approached at my residence
29 with some investigators from the Special Court. That was how it

1 all started.

2 Q. So they came to you?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Can you help us, please, as to when that was?

10:04:30 5 A. That was in - I recall the event, but the date, I will come
6 to that later.

7 Q. Let me try and help you. I wonder, please, if the witness
8 can be given MFI-20. Now can I explain my purpose in putting up
9 this document, former President.

10:05:40 10 A. Yes.

11 Q. I have the dates of the occasions when you were seen by
12 investigators from the Office of the Prosecutor. Do you follow
13 me?

14 A. I am following you.

10:05:54 15 Q. What I want to do is to use this document as a matrix to
16 set out the chronology of contact between you and them. Do you
17 follow me?

18 A. I am following. I am listening.

19 Q. We see on this document that the first payment of 50 US
10:06:15 20 dollars was made to you on 31 October 2006. Now, what we know is
21 this. According to the documentation I have before me you were
22 first interviewed on 26 September 2006, so those who have this
23 document might want to write in the date 26 September 2006. You
24 were then seen again on 6 October 2006 and then on 30 October
10:07:01 25 2006 you were provided with a letter of immunity from
26 prosecution, okay?

27 A. Yes, I am listening.

28 Q. Do you recall that?

29 A. Yes, I recall them.

1 Q. Now that letter, which is our MFI-19 - I wonder if we could
2 put that up on the screen, please. That letter reads as follows:

3 "Dear Mr Moses Blah, as the Prosecutor for the Special
4 Court for Sierra Leone I would like to take this opportunity to
10:08:12 5 assure you that I have not laid any criminal charges nor do
6 I intend to lay any charges against you because of your
7 affiliation with any parties that have been charged by this
8 Court. I trust that this letter may help put your mind at ease
9 with regards to this matter."

10:08:35 10 Pause there. Do you remember receiving that letter?

11 A. I remember.

12 Q. Did you have discussions with the Prosecutors prior to that
13 letter being sent?

14 A. No.

10:08:56 15 Q. Did you, for example, say to the Prosecutors, "I need your
16 assurance that I will not be charged"?

17 A. No, I did not ask.

18 Q. Did this letter follow any discussion between you and the
19 Prosecutors?

10:09:20 20 A. Not directly. I had not spoken to the Prosecutors.
21 I talked to the investigators - let me just make it clear to you.
22 The investigators came in and started asking me all types of
23 questions on matters regarding the NPFL, matters regarding the
24 presidency of me and other people, so that was where my question
10:09:48 25 came in. I had asked that, "When I would be in court I will be
26 asked to answer all these questions that you are asking me to
27 answer", and after that the letter came.

28 Q. Help me, please, because I didn't follow what you just
29 said.

1 A. I said this letter came after a conversation with one of
2 the investigators that I must answer few questions about which
3 I might know and I told the investigators that whether I am in
4 court, or he wanted me to talk, the real thing he wants to hear
10:10:29 5 from me. He said, "No, you are not in court and we want you to
6 say the things you know, what is right, that you are not
7 compelled, you are not forced to say anything against anybody",
8 and after a month this letter came to me.

9 Q. What did you mean by, "If I am in court"?

10:10:48 10 A. There were a lot of questions. I mean they wanted to know
11 things that happened in the years during the NPFL fighting, how
12 the NPFL came into being and some other questions which I cannot
13 tell you now.

14 Q. Were you concerned that you might be charged?

10:11:13 15 A. No, no, I was not frightened. I was not frightened. I was
16 only concerned to know whether I was in court, or whether I was
17 just talking to an investigator.

18 Q. What I am trying to understand, you see, is why a letter
19 like this would be sent to you, to quote, "To put your mind at
10:11:39 20 ease", if you were not concerned?

21 A. What happened was that you just cannot tell my position in
22 the National Patriotic Front of Liberia. You counted my
23 positions in the government at that time and so I must have been
24 concerned. And this question came about because of my
10:12:06 25 involvement with President Taylor's government, my involvement in
26 President Taylor's National Patriotic Front and so this question
27 must come. So I just wanted to know whether I was in court to
28 take a position, but the investigator said, "No, you are not in
29 court. We are just trying to find out things from you that you

1 might know, but if you didn't know then it was not a problem",
2 and so I was not too concerned.

3 Q. Did this letter come as a surprise to you?

10:12:45

4 A. Yes, because I was not expecting this letter. It was not a
5 surprise, but I was not expecting the letter and the - but the
6 letter came in and I accepted it.

7 Q. Let me put it this way. This letter - and I hope you
8 understand this word - was totally unsolicited by you?

9 A. No.

10:13:03

10 Q. Is that no, you did not solicit it?

11 A. No I did not.

12 Q. You did not request it?

13 A. No, I did not.

14 Q. You did not know it was to come?

10:13:19

15 A. No, I did not.

16 Q. It came as a complete surprise to you when it landed on
17 your doorstep?

18 A. Yes, when it landed at my doorstep I accepted it, but I did
19 not request it. I did not negotiate for it, but it came as it
20 came.

10:13:38

21 Q. In any event, would it be fair to say that when this
22 surprise letter turned up you were very grateful to receive it?

23 A. When you say "grateful", I don't know what terms you are
24 talking about?

10:13:55

25 Q. Grateful as in, "Thank you very much, Mr Johnson"?

26 A. No, when the letter came I accepted it at least. I was not
27 afraid. I was not frightened. I accepted the letter and I added
28 it into my file.

29 Q. So, you were grateful to receive it?

1 A. I was not grateful to receive it. I appreciated the letter
2 in the sense that this was a letter of - or that maybe the Court
3 has been trying to trap me to say my involvement with the
4 National Patriotic Front, or President Taylor's government, and
10:14:34 5 that they were just simply telling me that I was not associated
6 with anything that could put me into any trouble with them.
7 I mean that was how it came.

8 Q. Because, of course, if I understand your evidence you would
9 have no need for a letter like this because you had not been
10:14:54 10 involved in any criminality during your association with
11 Charles Taylor, had you?

12 A. No.

13 Q. At no stage during the, what, from mid-1980s until 2003,
14 almost two decades, at no stage during that time whilst you were
10:15:20 15 associated with Charles Taylor were you, Moses Blah, involved in
16 any criminal activity?

17 A. No, that I don't know about.

18 Q. You have never done anything which you would regard as
19 being criminal?

10:15:36 20 A. No, not that I know of.

21 Q. And equally would it be fair to say that being a baptist,
22 as you are, you would not have associated with anyone involved in
23 criminal activities?

24 A. Well, I wouldn't know. I wouldn't know. I have a lot of
10:16:09 25 friends and a lot of relatives and likewise in Taylor's
26 government how would I know whether they are criminal or not?
27 I am not a police to investigate.

28 Q. You would not knowingly associate with criminals for a 20
29 year period, would you?

1 A. How would I know when someone is criminal? Not until you
2 are caught and been investigated. If I would associate myself
3 with somebody who is a criminal --

4 Q. You wouldn't do that, would you?

10:16:42 5 A. I wouldn't. I wouldn't. And if you are criminal and it is
6 proven that you are criminal, I would not associate myself with
7 you if it is proven that you are a criminal.

8 Q. Because if during that 20 year period you were aware of any
9 criminal activity you would want to put as much distance between
10:17:08 10 yourself and any individual involved in such criminal acts,
11 wouldn't you?

12 A. Yes, if I knew you to be a criminal and you have been
13 investigated and guilty that is what I will do.

14 Q. Can we go back to MFI-20, please. Now, just so that we
10:17:37 15 have the chronology well in mind, 26 September first contact, 6
16 October second contact, 30 October letter and the day after you
17 receive that letter we see that you received two payments
18 totalling 100 US dollars. That is correct, isn't it?

19 A. That is correct.

10:18:12 20 Q. Now, we need to put matters in perspective. Now in 2006,
21 former President, did you still have your farm in Nimba County?

22 A. Yes, that is the farm that I normally go to visit. I don't
23 just stay on the farm. If I stayed there for a week, I will come
24 back to Monrovia and another weekend I will go there.

10:18:39 25 Q. And this is the farm to which you had taken the ram you had
26 brought back from Burkina Faso?

27 A. Yes.

28 Q. Tell me, is the ram still alive?

29 A. Yes, the ram - no, the ram died not too long ago. It was

1 hit by one of the cows on my farm and they broke its leg.
2 I hated to see it suffering and so I ordered that they should
3 have it killed because it had been hit by the cow on the hip of
4 the ram.

10:19:14 5 Q. I am sad to hear that, because I was going to enquire if
6 the ram was now a grandfather?

7 A. He is a very old ram. I have a cow there that had been
8 there before you were born. I am sorry to say that. I don't
9 know when you were born.

10:19:32 10 Q. And the ram was now speaking Liberian Krio?

11 A. No, it was from Burkina Faso and so it should be speaking
12 Liberian English instead of Krio.

13 Q. All right, because I thought given the length of time it
14 lived in Liberia it might have changed its accent?

10:19:47 15 A. The fact is that the ram is dead. It was hit on the side
16 and it is now dead.

17 Q. Anyway, so you had the farm and you also had a shop in
18 Monrovia, didn't you?

19 A. Yes, I had a shop in Monrovia when - I shop in Monrovia
10:20:09 20 when I go to the farm and all the shopping was done in Monrovia
21 before I go to the farm.

22 Q. And your wife owns a shop in Monrovia, doesn't she?

23 A. Yes, yes, she owns a boutique in Monrovia.

24 Q. And you also own a shop in Monrovia?

10:20:22 25 A. My own shop in Monrovia is not too far from my house.

26 Q. So would it be fair to say, former President, that by
27 Liberian standards you are quite a wealthy man?

28 A. I am not. I am a very poor man. If I were rich, my wife
29 wouldn't have been in a boutique selling. As former first lady

1 of Liberia and as former President of my country, I wouldn't be
2 selling behind a counter. I will be having a huge supermarket,
3 or doing some other big business to earn a living, but I am a
4 very poor man and that is why I am standing behind the counter.

10:21:04 5 Q. I am asking you because I would like to put these payments
6 you received in some kind of realistic context. 50 US dollars is
7 3,000 Liberian dollars, isn't it?

8 A. Yes, it is.

9 Q. And the average wage in Liberia is something like 1,000 US
10:21:27 10 dollars per annum, isn't it?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. So when you received 100 US dollars on 31 October by
13 Liberian standards that is a lot of money, isn't it?

14 A. This is nothing to me. I own more than that in my shop.
10:21:54 15 I make my money, but except that you have not seen the shop that
16 you are talking about. I sell more than that, but that doesn't
17 mean that I am rich. I know what it means when someone is rich.

18 Q. Just so that we can complete the picture, when we see that
19 on 1 November you received a further sum of 550 US dollars that
10:22:25 20 again is quite a substantial amount of money, isn't it?

21 A. Yes, this is when I was --

22 MR RAPP: Excuse me, I believe this misstates the record.

23 It is 450.

24 MR GRIFFITHS:

10:22:37 25 Q. It is 450 on 1 November and a further \$100 on 24 November,
26 yes? But it would be fair to say, former President, that is
27 quite a substantial sum by Liberian standard, isn't it?

28 A. Yes, it has been specified on the document you are
29 referring to. That was when I was sick and I am not somebody

1 that is well. I am sick, I have a cardiac problem. When you are
2 visiting me and I ask you that I am sick and you are willing to
3 assist I wouldn't say no at that time. I have been sick, sick
4 and as I am sitting here I am not too well. You heard me
10:23:19 5 requesting the judge that I am not too well. I am suffering from
6 the change of weather and I have been sick. I have not been too
7 well for a long time ago.

8 Q. I just want to concentrate for a moment, please, former
9 President, on that third payment of 450 US dollars, only to this
10:23:36 10 extent: That was a payment made to you in order to enable you to
11 travel upcountry to retrieve documents from your property, yes?
12 You can see that on the record?

13 A. Yes, I have seen it.

14 Q. Tell me, what documents were they?

10:24:02 15 A. It was not my property. What happened was I went upcountry
16 to retrieve a document that was questioned and that was some
17 papers that I would look at so that I would not mislead the
18 investigators, so I wanted to get some reference from the
19 document and my home was quite far from Monrovia. And I also
10:24:27 20 said that I was driving two jeeps upcountry. I had my back-up
21 jeep for the securities and I was driving my personal car, so it
22 was difficult to go to my village. That was why I did not go
23 there all the time.

24 Q. Don't misunderstand me, former President, for the moment
10:24:47 25 I am not asking about the money, I am asking about the document.
26 I would like to know what documents they were.

27 A. Those were documents referred to from the time of National
28 Patriotic Front of Liberia and coming up to my presidency and
29 those documents were on my farm and they were kept in a safe

1 place, so when I was answering questions referring to these
2 documents I said I must go upcountry to bring them to Monrovia.

3 Q. Was it a large quantity of documents?

4 A. No, not very large, but the distance involved was a
5 problem.

10:25:35

6 Q. What I want to know is did you give those documents to the
7 investigator?

8 A. These documents are documents that I had to refer to. They
9 were my personal documents, but I must look through them before
10 I answer any question.

10:25:50

11 PRESIDING JUDGE: Mr Witness, I don't think you really
12 answered the question. The question was whether you had given
13 them.

14 THE WITNESS: I did not.

10:26:02

15 MR GRIFFITHS:

16 Q. So you kept those documents?

17 A. The documents are mine.

18 Q. Are the documents still in Liberia?

19 A. Yes, they are.

10:26:11

20 Q. Are they documents which refer to your time within the
21 National Patriotic Front of Liberia?

22 A. Yes, sir.

23 Q. Are they important documents?

24 A. Yes, they are.

10:26:27

25 Q. Would you be prepared to let me see them?

26 A. Well, they are not with me now.

27 Q. I appreciate that, but I am patient and I am willing to
28 wait for somebody to go back to Liberia and at some stage bring
29 those documents to The Hague so that I can inspect them. Would

1 you be happy for that to happen?

2 A. Yes, provided where the documents are somebody will be able
3 to go there, because where the documents are they are far away
4 and to get them to you takes time. These are my personal

10:27:07 5 documents and while we didn't request for them I am thinking --

6 Q. It might help us in the search for truth because those kind
7 of contemporary records could prove to be vitally important in
8 proceedings like these, don't you think?

9 A. These documents are my documents, personal documents. They
10:27:27 10 were not documents for the National Patriotic Front, they were my
11 own documents, my own notes that I was taking at certain points,
12 certain times, and these documents must be referred to at all
13 times and even when I will be dead my children will have to look
14 through it. They will see, well, this is where Mr Blah was,

10:27:48 15 these are the things he did and they will say these are the
16 things, the X, Y, Z he did.

17 Q. And what kind of things are written in those documents?

18 A. I cannot recall as I am sitting here with you. It takes -
19 they are not things I have off head in those documents.

10:28:05 20 Q. Were they personal notes that you made during your time
21 with the NPFL?

22 A. They are personal notes, yes.

23 Q. Are were they also personal notes that you made when you
24 were, for example, ambassador to Libya?

10:28:19 25 A. They are all personal notes.

26 Q. Would they, for example, record conversations you might
27 have had with Colonel Gaddafi?

28 A. No, I did not take notes on the conversations with Colonel
29 Gaddafi. I remember that. I remember the conversations with

1 him. I remember the conversations with other leaders I have met.
2 They are not on document.

3 Q. I am just trying to work out, you see, former President,
4 how important these documents might be. Do they, for example,
10:28:47 5 relate to the arms shipment which came with the ram?

6 A. No, these are things that I can remember because I am not
7 making up stories. I am talking the facts and these are recorded
8 right now in my head.

9 Q. Do they, for example, deal with the investigation and
10:29:09 10 disciplining of NPFL soldiers when you were inspector general?

11 A. Some of the documents I have has to do with that, but the
12 idea is that the things that happened at a particular point and
13 what happened at a particular point, but they are not documents
14 to be kept by the NPFL. They are my personal documents.

10:29:35 15 Q. So those documents may tell us details of investigations
16 you carried out during your time as inspector general. They
17 could help us with that, could they?

18 A. Everything I am saying here I will repeat. These are not
19 documents that I have to comply with in court. Everything I am
10:29:57 20 saying in this Court are coming from my head. These documents
21 were documents that at the time the investigators came I wanted
22 to tell them certain things that I will recall, so these are the
23 documents I am talking about. They are not documents to be
24 brought to court, except if you open my head maybe you try to use
10:30:15 25 some kind of electronic machine to see what is in my brain, but
26 everything I am saying here are things that I recall off head.

27 Q. I take it, former President, that you don't want me to see
28 them?

29 A. No, I mean these are documents, they are my personal

1 documents. If there is a procedure that you must force me to see
2 my documents I have no objection to that, but these are not
3 documents that I should report to you. These are my personal
4 notes. They are not even documents. They were notes taken.

10:30:47 5 Q. I hoped we could do this voluntarily without the need for
6 another subpoena.

7 A. No, we cannot do this with a subpoena. These are not
8 documents for the Court. These are notes that I had taken from
9 time to time, what things happen at this place during NPFL days,
10:31:13 10 and these are not documents that I will have to present in court
11 because there is nothing in them that I cannot say except I refer
12 to documents.

13 Q. Very well. Can we turn to the next page in MFI-20, please.
14 I will be corrected if I am wrong, but if one looks at item 7, 8,
10:31:52 15 9, 10, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, there is a total of some about 5,000
16 US dollars spent on medical treatment for you, former President,
17 would you agree?

18 A. Yes, I agree.

19 Q. Now help me, please, with this: If the Office of the
10:32:33 20 Prosecutor had not stepped in to subsidise your medical care in
21 that way how would you have paid for it?

22 A. I will pay my medical bills. I have been sick, like I told
23 you for about a year - pretty close to 20 years and I have been
24 paying my bills. So I am capable of paying my bills.

10:32:58 25 Q. So you were perfectly capable of paying for your own
26 medical attention, were you?

27 A. Yes, yes.

28 Q. So we can take it then that the 5,000 US dollars spent on
29 your medical care was money you were able to save as a result?

1 A. No, it was not meant to be saved. It was to pay for my
2 medical bills and which I did. The only money that I did not pay
3 was for the ticket. There was a visit pending for me to go to
4 Abidjan.

10:33:30 5 Q. What I mean is this, you see: Had those bills not been
6 paid by the Prosecutors you would have had to put your hand in
7 your own pocket and take out 5,000 US dollars. By them paying
8 that for you, your money stayed in your pocket, didn't it?

9 A. Yes, I had money with me, but when I am in - when I am hard
10:33:58 10 up and I don't have the equivalent to pay my bills this was why
11 I requested that - we were talking and I was sick and they didn't
12 want me to get sick while the conversation was going on with
13 them. That was a goodwill gesture that was done to me. That was
14 the money I paid for.

10:34:16 15 Q. So it was a goodwill gesture?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. In order to what?

18 A. To assist. To assist me to keeping me up - to upkeep me is
19 my sole responsibility. When I am sick at least I am poor, but
10:34:37 20 I can go to hospital myself. I am capable of doing that.

21 Q. But you would agree, wouldn't you, former President, that
22 you are much better off than the average Liberian?

23 A. I don't know in terms of what, because some Liberians are
24 better off than I am when it comes to being able to eat every
10:35:01 25 day. There are some people who are very, very far off. They are
26 living a better life and even went to a better school than me in
27 terms of that.

28 Q. That trip to Abidjan, former President, what was your
29 reason in going?

1 A. I was going to do some check-up with my hospital, with my
2 doctor. There were some electrical machines and some instruments
3 that were not available in Monrovia at the time, so I had to go
4 to see my doctor, my long-term doctor.

10:36:20 5 Q. And who paid for the airline ticket?

6 A. The airline ticket was paid for by the Special Court.

7 Q. And who paid for the treatment once you got there?

8 A. I haven't gone there. What they wanted me to do was to go
9 to the doctor and when I am with the doctor after the examination
10 they will come in to pay. This has not been done.

10:36:40

11 Q. Because on my calculations - and I will be corrected if
12 I am wrong - between the Office of the Prosecutor and Witness
13 Support you received somewhere in the region of 13,233 US
14 dollars, which when translated into Liberian terms comes to
15 almost 800,000 Liberian dollars. That is a lot of money, isn't
16 it?

10:37:08

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And that was paid to you over, what, a period of just over
19 one year? That is right, isn't it?

10:37:30

20 A. Yes, I can also show you a bill where I paid 9,000 US
21 dollars to the hospital where I stayed for about three months.
22 You are talking about a year; that which I paid myself.

23 Q. And just so that I can complete this part of the questions
24 I want to ask you, I have already filled in the dates of 26
25 September, 6 October, 30 October and then the first payment on 31
26 October. We also know that on 1 November, when you received 450
27 US dollars, you were again interviewed on that day.

10:37:55

28 A. No.

29 Q. Well, from the records I have got you were.

1 A. No.

2 Q. And then your next interview was on 2 January 2007 and on
3 that day you received 60 US dollars; on the day after that, the
4 3rd, you received a further 60 US dollars; and the day after
10:38:47 5 that, the 4th, when you were again interviewed, you received a
6 further 100 US dollars. So over the course of a three day
7 period, beginning of 2007, you received 220 US dollars. Do you
8 remember that?

9 A. Yes, these bills they were remaining bills that were
10:39:19 10 presented to them, but even that my last one was a medical
11 treatment required and documents for these monies paid were
12 presented to receive medical - what should I say? The receipts
13 from the pharmacy that these medicines have been paid for.
14 I don't know what the question is about.

10:39:49 15 Q. You see, I am just trying to work out the correlation
16 between these payments and the occasions on which you were
17 interviewed, because when we move on to item 8 on that page 2, 22
18 February, on that day you received 370 US dollars and you were
19 again interviewed. Do you remember that?

10:40:15 20 A. Well, they had bills to be paid and I must pay these bills.
21 That day you are referring to, that was the day I went to the
22 hospital and paid what I had to pay, the remaining balance that
23 was due to pay, and there were receipts to that effect.

24 Q. And when we go over the page to page 3, this covers a
10:40:41 25 period from 21 March 2007 until 26 April 2007. Over that period,
26 when no interviews were being conducted with you, your medical
27 bills were being covered, you were being provided with assistance
28 for your family and also with transport and lodging. Can you
29 help us as to why you were receiving those payments when you

1 weren't being seen by the Prosecutors and you weren't being
2 interviewed?

3 A. Except for the medication that they had to pay and for the
4 family assistance that you mentioned about, these were - this was
10:41:36 5 assistance that was needed at the time. My security, as I told
6 you, is at risk right now, so I had an extra security guard at my
7 house to protect my home, my environment, and this had to be paid
8 for.

9 Q. Can that really be right back in April 2007 when the
10:42:01 10 Witness Victims Support paid a sum of 2,700 this year? Can that
11 really be right?

12 A. I cannot remember. Let me see what you are talking about.

13 Q. Because let's go over to page 4, shall we? You see, from
14 the records I have during the period covered by the payments made
10:42:39 15 on this page you were only interviewed on two occasions: on 5
16 October and 9 October. What I am trying to understand is this;
17 why throughout this period from May through to January 2008 you
18 were being provided with this level of support when there is
19 limited contact between you and the Prosecutors? Can you help us
10:43:13 20 as to why that is?

21 A. I was always in contact. From the first visit by the
22 Special Court investigators who visited my residence I had been
23 under serious threats and for that reason - and for that occasion
24 they were there trying to talk to me, they would call me, we had
10:43:40 25 telephone bills, we had a whole lot of things to be paid for and
26 the security was enforced at the highest level. All of these
27 things had to be paid for, because I didn't have money to put my
28 hands into my pockets and pay security personnel to protect me at
29 the time.

1 Q. Because just to complete the picture, starting with item 16
2 on page 4 --

3 A. It is not here.

10:44:23

4 Q. -- a payment dated 7 January of this year when the sum of
5 2,150 US dollars was paid for your medical treatment in January.

6 A. This is not a treatment alone. At this juncture, I was in
7 hospital. I was hospitalised for 14 days. Lots of tests were
8 done on me. I almost got paralysed with mild stroke. This was a
9 dangerous period for me.

10:44:50

10 Q. And when we go to the next page, page 5, we see a number of
11 payments throughout January for transport, medical, family and
12 again transport, throughout January of this year at a time when
13 you would have been saying, "I don't want to go to The Hague to
14 give evidence. You have got to subpoena me." So you, a

10:45:24

15 reluctant witness, was nonetheless benefitting in this way
16 throughout January. Can you explain why?

17 A. No, these are periods I have been sick. I have told you
18 that the money was paid when I decided to come to The Hague and
19 for security for transportation for moving men from one point to
20 the other. I had security, as I am talking to you, on my farm
21 who are taking care of my cattle and other farm materials on my
22 farm. So it was not just a support - a free support - that was
23 received from the Court. These are monies paid for reasons.

10:45:50

24 Medical, hospital bills and some were - I was on and off going to
25 hospital, stayed there for a week, go to hospital for another
26 time for three days. These are all monies paid, but there were
27 receipts from the hospital.

10:46:16

28 Q. Was this money used to pay for other things like school
29 fees and things like that?

1 A. No, no, no school fees have been paid.

2 Q. Now just so that I can understand the full picture about
3 this, when did you first become aware of the indictment which had
4 been laid against Charles Taylor?

10:47:01 5 A. It was in Ghana, when former President Charles Taylor had
6 gone there for peace conference, and the indictment was laid on
7 him - served on him.

8 Q. That was in June 2003, wasn't it?

9 A. Yes.

10:47:15 10 Q. Were you surprised by that?

11 A. Yes, I was surprised because I was not expecting that from
12 the Court. I was not informed previously and so I should be
13 surprised. He has been my boss.

14 Q. Were you afraid that a similar indictment might be laid
10:47:38 15 against you --

16 A. No.

17 Q. -- you being Vice-President at the time?

18 A. No, no, I had no cause. I had no cause because I was not
19 head of the country. I had no powers to have given any
10:47:52 20 instruction to anybody to do anything in the country. I had a
21 boss and I was strictly under orders from the President.

22 Q. As Vice-President, were you allowed to give any orders?

23 A. No, any orders that I gave would come from the President.

24 I had no right to give orders to anybody in Liberia, even as
10:48:29 25 President of the Liberian senate. When it had to do with my job
26 it is a different issue in the senate, but when it comes to -
27 from the organisational level, NPFL, I had no rights, I had no
28 order. When it came to Vice-President, the level of the
29 executive it was the President who gave orders, not the

1 Vice-President.

2 Q. Because we all want to understand what the situation is,
3 you see? Are you saying then that in effect as Vice-President
4 you were merely a figurehead?

10:49:08 5 A. No, you can't say that to me. A figurehead cannot become a
6 Vice-President. It was in the line of duty according to the
7 constitution of Liberia. That was not - I was not with the
8 authority to give orders to anybody, even for people to go to
9 war. It was the sole responsibility of the President. Then if
10:49:34 10 you talk about figurehead, that goes back to the President who
11 supported me to become Vice-President to him. That means
12 he didn't require anybody who was qualified and it just takes a
13 figureheaded person. So he takes the blame. He takes the
14 responsibility.

10:49:54 15 Q. So, would it be fair to say that you had no authority
16 whatsoever during the Taylor regime?

17 A. I had authority in the sense that when it has to do with my
18 job I would know exactly what to do, but when it comes to State
19 order it was the sole responsibility of the President. I had
10:50:25 20 limited powers as Vice-President.

21 Q. Who, for example, did you have authority over, if anybody?

22 A. I had authorities over the House of Senate. I called them
23 to order if necessary. Even in the senate, I had no right to
24 vote. That is a limited right there. I had a limited job,
10:50:52 25 anyway.

26 Q. So, help me. Why did you take the position then?

27 A. Well because I accepted being the Vice-President of
28 Liberia, second in command of the country.

29 Q. But why take a job where you were totally powerless and in

1 effect had to act at the every whim --

2 THE WITNESS: Excuse me, judge. Just a minute, please.

3 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, Mr Witness?

4 THE WITNESS: I want to go back to the - I am sorry.

10:51:24 5 Sorry.

6 PRESIDING JUDGE: Mr Griffiths, if you wish to have a seat.

7 If you are comfortable we will now continue. Mr Griffiths?

8 MR GRIFFITHS:

9 Q. Former President, are you well? You are well enough to
10:57:51 10 continue, are you?

11 A. Yes, yes, I can try.

12 Q. I want to change the topic now, please, and I would like
13 you, please, to trace with me some of the history of your
14 involvement with the NPFL. Now just so that we can put things in
10:58:38 15 perspective - and I want you to appreciate that the reason why
16 I am adopting this course with you is because of the high
17 position you held within the Liberian Government. Do you follow
18 me? Do you understand?

19 A. Yes, I understand.

10:58:59 20 Q. Now let's just start off, please, with one or two
21 statistics. Would you agree that at about the time that the
22 conflict began in Liberia in 1989 the population of the country
23 was about 2.5 million?

24 A. Yes.

10:59:33 25 Q. Would you also agree that as a result of the civil war,
26 which lasted between 1989 to 1996 and erupted again in 2000 until
27 2003, that something like 1.2 million of the Liberian population
28 were displaced from their homes?

29 A. Yes.

1 Q. Would you agree?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Which is almost 50 per cent of the population were
4 displaced from their homes. Would you agree with that?

11:00:12 5 A. Yes.

6 Q. And that resulted in the mid-1990s in almost half a million
7 Liberian refugees in Guinea, 300 odd thousand Liberian refugees
8 in Cote d'Ivoire and a further 15,000 in Ghana. Would you agree
9 with those kind of figures?

11:00:39 10 A. Well, I remember Liberians being displaced all over West
11 Africa, all over Africa and the world at large.

12 Q. And during that lengthy civil war, a further statistic,
13 some 200,000 people lost their lives. Out of a population of 2.5
14 million that's a lot of people dead, isn't it?

11:01:07 15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And just so that we understand further the context in which
17 this conflict took place, something like 61 per cent of the
18 Liberian population are illiterate, aren't they?

19 A. Yes.

11:01:35 20 Q. Now still trying to look at the context in which this
21 conflict erupted, there was a bloody coup in Liberia on 12 April
22 1980 which led to Master Sergeant Samuel Doe killing the former
23 President Tolbert along with his presidential guard and
24 establishing himself as President. Do you remember that?

11:02:14 25 A. I remember.

26 Q. And upon assuming the presidency in that violent fashion he
27 summarily executed 13 members of the deposed government. Do you
28 remember that?

29 A. I remember that.

1 Q. Now his party, Doe's party, the People's Redemption
2 Council, they were the first leaders of Liberia to come from the
3 indigenous population, weren't they?

4 A. Yes.

11:02:53 5 Q. And Doe's government, and indeed the Liberian army at that
6 time, was largely dominated by Doe's Krahn ethnic group. That's
7 right, isn't it?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. And, in a sense, in taking power Doe established ethnicity
11:03:19 10 as a problem within the governance of Liberian society, would you
11 agree?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Now not to put too fine a point on it, you would agree,
14 wouldn't you, that Doe's period as President was one of the most
11:03:51 15 brutal and corrupt in Liberia's history? Would you agree?

16 A. No.

17 Q. Would you agree that it was brutal?

18 A. It was brutal.

19 Q. Would you agree it was corrupt?

11:04:10 20 A. No.

21 Q. You wouldn't?

22 A. No.

23 Q. But his government was backed by the United States of
24 America, wasn't it?

11:04:21 25 A. Yes.

26 Q. Now there were several attempts to depose Doe, weren't
27 there?

28 A. Yes.

29 Q. The most notable led by your cousin Thomas Quiwonkpa, is

1 that right?

2 A. Come back again, please.

3 Q. One of the most notable attempts to get rid of Doe was led
4 by your cousin Thomas Quiwonkpa.

11:05:00 5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Now he fled to [sic] Liberia in 1983, didn't he, your
7 cousin?

8 A. Fled from where?

9 Q. From Liberia?

11:05:15 10 A. Yes.

11 Q. And then he returned to Liberia in November 1985 and
12 launched a coup attempt?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And some 1,500 people lost their lives during that coup
15 attempt?

11:05:38 16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And it led to the army, the Krahn dominated Liberian army,
18 massacring many of Quiwonkpa's Gio tribes people in Nimba County.
19 That's right, isn't it?

11:05:58 20 A. Yes.

21 Q. In fact, former President, Doe's Liberian army carried out
22 a reign of terror in Nimba County, didn't they?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. And much of the terror that was unleashed by his brutal
25 forces was directed solely at the Gios and the Manos?

11:06:21 26 A. Yes.

27 Q. That's right, isn't it?

28 A. Yes.

29 Q. So that further created a racial divide within Liberian

1 society between the Krahn dominated government and the Gios and
2 the Manos. That's right, isn't it?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And you in fact suffered personal grief during that
11:06:55 5 process, didn't you?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Your first wife was murdered by Doe's soldiers, wasn't she?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. And you were forced to flee the country, weren't you?

11:07:08 10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Having fled the country to Cote d'Ivoire, leaving behind
12 all of your possessions, you resolved that the only way you could
13 go back into Liberia was by taking up the gun.

14 A. Yes.

11:07:28 15 Q. And you resolved to become a revolutionary, didn't you?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. You realised that you would have to fight your way back
18 into Liberia to get rid of Doe. Is that right?

19 A. Yes.

11:07:53 20 Q. In effect, you knew that it would require a revolution to
21 get rid of him?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Now do you recall that in 1985 there was a distinctly
24 corrupt election held by Doe in Liberia, yes?

11:08:27 25 A. Yes.

26 Q. And it was condemned even by Doe's American backers?

27 A. Yes.

28 Q. But just so that we understand your personal and emotional
29 position as an exile from your own land in Cote d'Ivoire in 1985,

1 Let's just put some flesh on the skeleton of that account. You
2 were born on 18 April 1947 in Toweh Town, weren't you?

3 A. Yes.

4 MR GRIFFITHS: Toweh being spelt T-O-W-E-H, your Honours:

11:09:11 5 Q. That means that in about 1985, when you had to flee, you
6 would have been round about 38 years old?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And having fled you spent some two and a half years in the
9 wilderness before you returned to your homeland, didn't you?

11:09:39 10 A. Yes.

11 Q. One and a half years in Libya, is that right?

12 A. Yes, you are correct.

13 Q. A further year in Burkina Faso, is that right?

14 A. You are correct.

11:09:51 15 Q. Now just so that we understand the kind of emotional vacuum
16 somebody in that position must live in, how were you feeling
17 during that two and a half year period, former President? How
18 were you feeling? Just help us to understand.

19 A. This was - the feeling was that of uncertainty. We didn't
11:10:18 20 know what was going on, where we were going to land, what was
21 going to happen. It was a terrible season. We called those the
22 dark days.

23 Q. And tell me, during that period did you still have
24 relatives in Nimba County?

11:10:31 25 A. Yes, they were relatives, but they were in hiding. Some
26 refused to speak their own dialect, more especially the Gios and
27 Manos.

28 Q. And did you, for example, lose touch with members of your
29 immediate family because you were scattered in various countries?

1 A. Yes, we were scattered. This is true.

2 Q. And how did you feel to be separated because of Doe?

3 A. We were feeling uncomfortable. It was not good for a human
4 being.

11:11:06 5 Q. Were you angry?

6 A. I was angry. I was angry. I was angry and I was suffering
7 as well.

8 Q. And just so that we understand the kind of thoughts going
9 through the head of someone in your position, were you thinking

11:11:26 10 about the kind of society you would like to see established in

11 Liberia?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And just so that again we understand, at that stage in your
14 life, your late 30s, were you quite prepared to die in order to

11:11:50 15 establish such a society in Liberia?

16 A. Yes. That is why we took up arms, yes.

17 Q. I now want to ask you, please, a little about that period
18 in Libya. Now, firstly this. As you have told us, in due course
19 the numbers of Liberians in that Camp Tajura grew to about 180.

11:13:01 20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And the Liberian contingent was much larger than either the
22 Gambian or the Sierra Leonean contingent?

23 A. Exactly.

24 Q. Another little detail. The leaders of the various

11:13:19 25 contingents, for example Charles Taylor, did not actually become
26 involved in the training, did they?

27 A. When you say "involved" --

28 Q. Were they living, for example, on the base?

29 A. Yes, he was visiting the base.

1 Q. Yes, but he wasn't living there permanently?

2 A. No, he wasn't. He wasn't, but he was supervising the base
3 from outside the base.

4 Q. He would come and go, wouldn't he?

11:13:51 5 A. Yes, yes.

6 Q. And he didn't physically become involved in the training in
7 the way for example you did, the way that Benjamin Yeaten did,
8 drilling, stripping down weapons, all of that. He was not
9 involved in that, was he?

11:14:12 10 A. I will say again he visited the camp, he stayed with us in
11 the camp and at times he goes to training. He will always come
12 to the camp.

13 Q. Did he not live in an apartment in Tripoli?

14 A. Yes, there is a place called Tajura - no, not Tajura,
11:14:40 15 Mataba, where he usually stayed, but most of the time he spent in
16 the camp when he is in Tripoli to supervise the men and to see
17 how well they were doing.

18 Q. So, you do accept that he had an apartment in Tripoli?

19 A. Yes, he was partly in that apartment and partly in the
11:15:03 20 camp.

21 Q. Now as we know from MFI-16, which is the roster of names,
22 the men who were trained in Libya were called Special Forces,
23 weren't they?

24 A. Yes.

11:15:18 25 Q. And later when they entered Liberia they had full authority
26 throughout the country and answered to no-one. That is right,
27 isn't it?

28 A. That was said in the camp. That was said in the camp
29 before we entered Liberia, before we left the base, that

1 Mr Charles Taylor was the leader of the revolution and we take
2 orders from no-one but he, Mr Taylor, yes.

3 Q. But equally the Special Forces would have authority
4 throughout Liberia?

11:16:02 5 A. It was not only the Special Forces. When we entered the
6 country there were some people called junior commandos, people
7 who voluntarily came into training and some people were
8 conscripted into the training. They got training. Like we would
9 arrest you as a fighter attached, you will come to our side.

11:16:24 10 Like the small children called Small Boys Unit, they were not in
11 full control because they took instructions. There were other
12 people who took instructions from Charles Taylor, who was the
13 head of the revolution. If you dare did that, you would be
14 punished.

11:16:41 15 Q. The simple point I was trying to make was this. When you
16 were in the camp in Libya it was agreed that the Special Forces
17 would have a certain authority once they got back to Liberia?

18 A. Yes, the authority was already given and they were aware
19 that as we go into the revolution you had a boss, you had the
11:17:11 20 leader of the revolution and there were rules and regulations
21 that we were to go by. You did not do X, Y, Z until the
22 commander or the commanding chief of the revolution allows you to
23 do it. So, this was an organisation. This was an organisation
24 that was under control by Mr Charles Taylor.

11:17:32 25 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Mr Griffiths, I am sorry to interrupt.

26 MR GRIFFITHS: I have heard, your Honour.

27 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: There is something the witness is
28 recorded as having said that doesn't make sense to me. He is
29 recorded as having said:

1 "There were other people who took instructions from
2 Charles Taylor who was the head of the revolution. If you dared
3 did that, you would be punished."

4 Is that what the witness said? In other words, if you took
11:18:06 5 instruction from Mr Taylor you would be punished.

6 THE WITNESS: No, I didn't say that. Let me come back.
7 What I said was that Mr Taylor was the sole commander-in-chief of
8 this revolution. If you don't take orders from Taylor but
9 someone else you would be punished, because having been to the
11:18:31 10 training for about six months in the camp when NPFL was named he
11 was the head according to him on the camp. He said nobody else
12 salutes anybody or takes instruction from anybody else but him,
13 Charles Taylor. That was what I was trying to explain. And if
14 you don't take orders from Charles Taylor and you take orders
11:18:56 15 from somebody else, you will be in serious trouble.

16 MR GRIFFITHS:

17 Q. Now Tajura camp was an old United States military training
18 base, wasn't it?

19 A. Yes.

11:19:14 20 Q. And at that camp all the various groups trained together,
21 didn't they?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. That is the Liberians, the Sierra Leoneans, the Gambians,
24 they all trained together?

11:19:32 25 A. No, by the time we entered the camp the Gambians had
26 finished their training. They had gone into the Gambia and put
27 up a coup to overthrow their government. They were to come back.
28 The failed coup caused them to come back to Tripoli. They were
29 only coming to the camp to teach us, to lecture us, to tell us

1 what to do because they had been there earlier.

2 Q. There was no demarcation between the various groups, was
3 there?

4 A. In fact, there were battalions and they will call our
11:20:14 5 battalions - battalions from Liberia - battalion number 1, so if
6 you were calling battalion number 1 it meant that you were
7 talking to Liberians. So you wouldn't just come into a battalion
8 because you had your own battalion, so when battalion number 1 is
9 called you know that you are calling the Liberian battalion. So,
11:20:33 10 there was no training taken together.

11 Q. Now, like Charles Taylor, Dr Manneh, the leader of the
12 Gambians, didn't live on the base, did he?

13 A. No. Dr Manneh at the time that we were in Tripoli he was
14 living in Mataba, both in Mataba Camp and in Burkina Faso.

11:20:59 15 Q. And one other detail. At that time the leader of the
16 Sierra Leoneans was a man called Ali Kabbah, isn't that correct?

17 A. Yes, Ali Kabbah.

18 Q. And he was a tall, slim black man?

19 A. Yes, Ali Kabbah. I remember him.

11:21:22 20 Q. And in fact at that stage Foday Sankoh was little more than
21 a tea boy?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And Ali Kabbah, spelt K-A-B-B-A-H, was in fact the leader
24 of the Sierra Leoneans at that stage, wasn't he?

11:21:45 25 A. Ali Kabbah was not just the leader. Ali Kabbah was in
26 Libya - as I saw him to be, he was like a professor teaching. He
27 will come to the base, back to town and even at a later date he
28 moved to Tripoli and was teaching at the university.

29 Q. But he was the leader of the Sierra Leoneans?

1 A. That was not known to me that he was the Sierra Leonean
2 leader.

3 Q. But you do remember Ali Kabbah?

4 A. I remember Ali Kabbah. He was not a stable person that
11:22:21 5 I can remember. He was in the camp, the next time he was at
6 Mataba he had more experience with Mataba and later he began to
7 teach at the university which I do not know. He was just a big
8 visitor there. He was not stationed like the other Sierra
9 Leoneans.

11:22:40 10 Q. And so far as Foday Sankoh is concerned, it was not until
11 after the NPFL had invaded Liberia and were installed in Gbarnga
12 that you saw Foday Sankoh as any kind of leader. That was the
13 first time, wasn't it?

14 A. Foday Sankoh was known as a leader to me not until when
11:23:17 15 there was a visit to the peace talks in Togo. That was when
16 Foday Sankoh appeared, because we had missed each other for a
17 long time. I called him "Mr Sankoh". He said, "No, I am not
18 just Sankoh. I am the leader of a revolution and you should call
19 me as such. You should salute me as a leader, which I did."

11:23:39 20 I said, "Oh, I am sorry, you are commander-in-chief of the
21 organisation".

22 Q. So, not until Togo did you see him as being important?

23 A. Yes, an important man, well dressed. He looked very
24 responsible. Then when we were in Tajura, I accepted that he was
11:23:59 25 chief of a group.

26 Q. Now naturally the Liberians and the Sierra Leonean men who
27 were training at Camp Tajura became friends, didn't they?

28 A. Yes, they became friends.

29 Q. In some cases life long friends?

1 A. What do you mean by "life long friends"?

2 Q. You maintained contact with them for years afterwards?

3 A. I don't know what you mean by contact, but they were
4 friends, they were together, they played together and they ate
11:24:30 5 together. That I know of.

6 Q. And another detail. The Liberians left Camp Tajura before
7 the Sierra Leoneans, didn't they?

8 A. Yes, we were just concerned about our own group. Yes, we
9 left. I don't know who left first, but I was very concerned
11:24:53 10 about my group leaving to come to Liberia.

11 Q. Yes, but I just want to see if I can tie down this little
12 detail. When you left the Sierra Leoneans were still in Camp
13 Tajura, weren't they?

14 A. Yes, we left earlier. Yes.

11:25:10 15 Q. Now, do you recall that when you were in Liberia you were
16 required to take an oath?

17 A. A note?

18 Q. Oath.

19 A. Oath, yes.

11:25:28 20 Q. What was that oath?

21 A. No, the oath I remember - sorry, I will come back. The
22 oath I remember it was in Tripoli before our graduation. The
23 former leader of the revolution came and said we were to take an
24 oath that we will not betray the cause, or the revolution. If
11:25:53 25 you did that, you will be punished. We all accepted and we took
26 the oath that we will be loyal to the revolution. The oath was
27 taken in Tajura Camp. It was not in Monrovia.

28 Q. No, no, no, I am saying it was in Tajura Camp, wasn't it?

29 A. Yes.

- 1 Q. You took an oath as Special Forces --
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. -- that you would not betray the revolution --
- 4 A. The course of the revolution, yes.
- 11:26:22 5 Q. -- on pain of death?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. That is right, isn't it?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. Now whilst you were in the camp a group of men tried to
- 11:26:43 10 organise a coup against Charles Taylor, didn't they?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. And that group included Prince Johnson? You need to say
- 13 "Yes" to get it on the record?
- 14 A. Yes.
- 11:27:02 15 Q. Samuel Varney?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. Cooper Miller?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. Augustine Wright?
- 11:27:10 20 A. Yes.
- 21 Q. Oliver Varney?
- 22 A. No.
- 23 Q. You disagree with that one?
- 24 A. I disagree with Oliver.
- 11:27:18 25 Q. Yegbeh Megbon [sic]?
- 26 A. Yegbeh Degbon, yes.
- 27 Q. Degbon. Do you agree he was involved as well?
- 28 A. No.
- 29 MR GRIFFITHS: Yegbeh, according to how it is spelt on my

1 instructions, your Honours, is Y-E-G-B-E-H D-E-G-B-O-N:

2 Q. Is that right, former President?

3 A. Yes, that is the spelling. Yegbeh was not involved in the
4 coup.

11:27:48 5 Q. So, you disagree with Yegbeh?

6 A. Yes, Yegbeh was not.

7 Q. And you disagree with Oliver Varney?

8 A. No, they were not.

9 Q. What about Anthony Menquenagbeh?

11:27:58 10 A. Anthony Menquenagbeh.

11 Q. Was he involved?

12 A. No, he was not involved.

13 Q. Was Charles Larwon [sic] involved?

14 A. Charles who, please? Tell me.

11:28:11 15 Q. Charles Tawon?

16 A. Charles Tawon, yes, he was involved.

17 MR GRIFFITHS: And the spelling is T-A-W-O-N:

18 Q. He was involved as well, wasn't he?

19 A. Yes, he was involved.

11:28:22 20 Q. Was Sam Larto also involved?

21 A. Sam Larto, no, he was not involved.

22 Q. But most of the names I have read out were involved?

23 A. Yes. The ones I answered to, yes.

24 Q. And what they were planning to do was to kill

11:28:47 25 Charles Taylor - that is right, isn't it - and take over the
26 newly formed NPFL?

27 A. The name was not NPFL. The intention at the time was not
28 to kill, because Charles Taylor was not on the base.

29 Charles Taylor had gone to Burkina and he was not returning. It

1 had taken long. That was when Cooper Miller as a commander said,
2 "Well, Charles Taylor has gone out and we are just here. Maybe
3 he has deserted us. We do not have a leader. He might not
4 return." That was when Cooper Miller decided that he will be the
11:29:38 5 new head for a group called Revolutionary Council of Liberia. It
6 was not NPFL.

7 PRESIDING JUDGE: Mr Griffiths, I am afraid we are up to
8 our morning time limit on the tape.

9 MR GRIFFITHS: That is as good a point as any, your Honour.

11:29:55 10 PRESIDING JUDGE: That is good.

11 Mr Witness, I think you know the routine now. We have a
12 two hour limit and we are now up to our mid-morning break time.
13 We will be adjourning until 12 o'clock.

14 THE WITNESS: Thank you, your Honour.

11:30:07 15 PRESIDING JUDGE: Please adjourn court until 12 o'clock.

16 [Break taken at 11.30 a.m.]

17 [Upon resuming at 12.00 p.m.]

18 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, Mr Griffiths, please proceed.

19 MR GRIFFITHS: May it please your Honour:

12:00:34 20 Q. Before we adjourned for the break, former President, we
21 were talking about your time in Tajura Camp in Libya and in
22 particular about those individuals involved in the attempted coup
23 against your former President, Charles Taylor, do you remember
24 that? That's what we were talking about.

12:00:57 25 A. Yes, yes, I remember.

26 Q. Now, the intention was, wasn't it, that once the group
27 entered Liberia they would kill Charles Taylor and take over the
28 NPFL?

29 A. No, no.

1 Q. What was the intention then?

2 A. Like I said previously, the intention in the camp, with
3 Cooper Miller and Augustine Wright, the first two commanders,
4 when Mr Taylor went to Burkina and it had taken long for his
12:01:39 5 return, that was when these fellows said that, "Look, if Taylor
6 is not coming what we will do is to give this organisation a name
7 and we will take over from there as commanders -
8 commander-in-chief of the former NPFL", according to them. They
9 had the Revolutionary Council of Liberia at that time, that was
12:02:05 10 the name given by them. So it was not to kill Taylor in Liberia.
11 That was not discussed.

12 Q. Very well. In any event, that group was investigated,
13 wasn't it?

14 A. Yes, they were investigated.

12:02:22 15 Q. And arrested whilst still in Libya?

16 A. Yes, two persons were arrested. There were a lot of
17 involvements, there were more than two persons involved, but two
18 of them were arrested, that was Cooper Miller and Augustine
19 Wright.

12:02:46 20 Q. Both of them were taken to Burkina Faso, weren't they?

21 A. Yes, that's correct.

22 Q. But you later saw them again in Liberia?

23 A. That's right. I later saw - not Augustine Wright, I later
24 saw Cooper Miller in Liberia.

12:03:06 25 Q. Now, I want to move on now from Libya. From Libya the
26 group went to Burkina Faso?

27 A. Yes.

28 Q. And you remained in Burkina Faso for an additional year?

29 A. Yes.

1 Q. At that time the NPFL had no arms?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. That's right, isn't it?

4 A. Yes, you're correct.

12:03:46 5 Q. Eventually, still without arms, the group moved to the Cote
6 d'Ivoire?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Now, the part of the Cote d'Ivoire to which the group moved
9 was a part of the Cote d'Ivoire which shared the same ethnicity
10 as Nimba County.

12:04:08

11 A. You are correct.

12 Q. Because, as we appreciate, former President, in that part
13 of the world frontiers are quite artificial, aren't they? I'm
14 sorry, a nod won't do. You need to say yes or no.

12:04:28

15 A. Yes, sir.

16 Q. By that I mean this, former President: The Cote
17 d'Ivoire-Liberian border cuts right through the middle of one
18 ethnic group, the Gios. That's right, isn't it?

19 A. You are correct.

12:04:45

20 Q. And so you have Gios on one side of the border, Gios on the
21 Liberian side of the border and it effectively could mean that
22 families are divided. That's right, isn't it?

23 A. Exactly so.

24 Q. Likewise on the Sierra Leone-Liberian border, you have
25 Mandingos on one side and Mandingos on the other and equally in
26 Guinea.

12:05:05

27 A. Yes, with Guinea and Liberia the same. Mandingo on Guinea
28 side and Mandingo on the Liberian side.

29 Q. And so effectively --

1 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: What about the Sierra Leone border? Does
2 the witness agree?

3 MR GRIFFITHS:

4 Q. What about the Sierra Leonean border?

12:05:28 5 A. I disagree with Mandingos being on the Sierra Leone side.
6 That side is not a Mandingo side.

7 Q. What would you call that side?

8 A. That is where the Mendes, the Mendes and the - the Mendes
9 on both sides, Mendes on the Sierra Leone side and on the Liberia
10 side, not Mandingo. Mandingo is on the Guinea side.

11 Q. And I'm pausing, former President, to deal with this
12 geographical and historical reality for this reason: There has
13 for centuries been a great deal of fluidity of movement across
14 those borders, hasn't there?

12:06:13 15 A. Yes.

16 Q. You have traders from Sierra Leone going to Liberia to shop
17 and vice versa, likewise into Guinea, likewise into Cote
18 d'Ivoire.

19 A. That's correct.

12:06:25 20 Q. And it's virtually impossible to police those borders,
21 isn't it, to stop that movement, because it's been going on for
22 so long?

23 A. You are correct.

24 Q. So the idea that any one of those countries could monitor
12:06:49 25 its borders to prevent ingress and egress is complete nonsense,
26 isn't it?

27 A. Well, for modern days it could be possible because the
28 modern police, the modern immigration, modern gendarmeries are
29 trained for that. But years back it was not possible, that I

1 agree with you.

2 Q. Thank you very much. So bearing that in mind we now have
3 those Libyan trained NPFL fighters, in Gio territory around
4 Danane in the Cote d'Ivoire. Do you agree?

12:07:39 5 A. I agree with you.

6 Q. This is round about the beginning of 1989.

7 A. I agree.

8 Q. Now, after all those years of exile people were getting
9 restless, weren't they? They wanted to go home?

12:07:58 10 A. Yes, I agree with you.

11 Q. But at the same time there weren't sufficient arms to
12 conduct a proper invasion, was there, because you didn't have
13 any?

14 A. Yes, I agree with that.

12:08:16 15 Q. Finally, on 24 December 1989, an attack was mounted on
16 Butuo, is that right?

17 A. I agree with that.

18 MR GRIFFITHS: I don't if I pronounced it correctly, your
19 Honours, but it is spelt G-B-U-T-U-O:

12:08:39 20 Q. Do you agree with that spelling?

21 A. No, B-U-T-U-O, no "G".

22 Q. B-U-T-U-O. Thank you very much.

23 A. You're welcome.

24 Q. Now, the NPFL soldiers who crossed the border at that time
12:08:54 25 were armed with shotguns and single bore weapons, weren't they?

26 A. Yes.

27 Q. Machetes and cutlasses. That's right, isn't it?

28 A. Yes, yes.

29 Q. And for those who claim that Charles Taylor was a puppet of

1 Colonel Gaddafi, that invasion took place without the Libyans
2 being informed. That's right, isn't it?

3 A. Yes, that's correct.

12:09:26

4 Q. In fact, Colonel Gaddafi was quite angry that
5 Charles Taylor had mounted that operation without telling him.
6 That's right, isn't it?

7 A. Yes, correct.

12:09:50

8 Q. And having entered the country, the NPFL forces at the
9 beginning were reliant on capturing weapons from the Liberian
10 army.

11 A. You are correct.

12 Q. Now, let's just develop the picture a little further.
13 Nimba County had been chosen as the point of entry for good
14 reason, wasn't it?

12:10:18

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. For the simple reason that the citizens of Nimba County,
17 given their treatment by the Doe regime, would be more receptive
18 to a revolutionary force. That's right, isn't it?

19 A. You are correct.

12:10:37

20 Q. And support for the NPFL developed very quickly in Nimba
21 County, didn't it?

22 A. You are correct.

23 Q. In fact, very rapid advances were made by the NPFL in
24 Nimba.

12:10:58

25 A. You are correct.

26 Q. And the army of Liberia, composed of mostly Krahn, were
27 forced to retreat?

28 A. You are correct.

29 Q. But one further consequence of that invasion was a major

1 exodus of Liberians into Guinea, that's right, refugees?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Now, the war quickly escalated beyond Nimba County, didn't
4 it?

12:12:01 5 A. You are correct.

6 Q. But this is also right, isn't it, former President: The
7 war also started to take on a distinctly ethnic tribal nature?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. So that, for example, Doe's Krahn dominated forces allied
12:12:32 10 with the Mandingo tribe massacred other ethnic groups, didn't
11 they, during this period?

12 A. Yes, yes.

13 Q. Particularly the Gio and the Mano?

14 A. Yes.

12:12:46 15 Q. And there were on occasions, it has to be admitted, revenge
16 attacks by Gios on Krahns, would you agree?

17 A. Yes. Gio and Mandingo - Krahn and Mandingo, I agree.

18 Q. And quite frankly, former President, it was very difficult
19 to control some of the emotion which had been unleashed by that
12:13:18 20 invasion, wasn't it?

21 A. I agree.

22 Q. Because it's as if the Doe regime had been sitting on this
23 boiling pot and all of a sudden the lid had been taken off and a
24 lot of pent up emotions poured out. That's right, isn't it?

12:13:40 25 A. Come in again.

26 Q. What I said was it's as if the Doe regime with its
27 brutality --

28 A. Yes.

29 Q. -- had been keeping the lid down on a boiling pot and now

1 the lid had been taken off and all that emotion had been
2 released, would you agree?

3 A. Yes.

12:14:12

4 Q. But, in any event, the NPFL came very quickly to control
5 large areas of the country?

6 A. Yes, I agree.

7 Q. And in time came to control all of the country, with the
8 exception of Monrovia and the immediate area around Monrovia?

9 A. I agree.

12:14:30

10 Q. Now from a fairly early stage ECOWAS tried to intervene to
11 bring about peace, didn't they?

12 A. Yes, according to them. Yes.

13 Q. But equally the idea behind the revolution wasn't to broker
14 any peace with Doe. It was to get rid of him. That's right,

12:15:05

15 isn't it?

16 A. Yes, to bring peace to the Liberian people. Yes.

17 Q. And it was felt that the only way that could be achieved
18 was to get rid of Doe. That's right, isn't it?

19 A. Yes, that's correct.

12:15:19

20 Q. Now by about July of 1990 - I just want to get the global
21 picture then we'll come back and deal with one or two details,
22 but by July 1990 Doe was effectively besieged in the Executive
23 Mansion, wasn't he?

24 A. Yes.

12:15:53

25 Q. And it's around that time that your former President,
26 Charles Taylor, established the National Patriotic Reconstruction
27 Assembly based in Gbarnga, Bong County. That's right, isn't it?

28 A. You are correct.

29 Q. Now, one or two other little details. Firstly, the first

1 training camp for the NPFL was set up at Tiaplay?

2 A. You are correct.

3 Q. T-I-A-P-L-A-Y?

4 A. You are correct.

12:16:39 5 Q. And beginning there the Special Forces trained recruits and
6 volunteers who in turn were called junior commandos. That's
7 right, isn't it?

8 A. You are correct.

9 Q. So the hierarchy was Special Forces Libyan trained, junior
12:17:08 10 commandos Liberian trained. That's right, isn't it?

11 A. You are correct.

12 Q. Now, the other major development at this early stage was
13 the establishment of the Independent NPFL by Prince Johnson.
14 That's right, isn't it?

12:17:25 15 A. You are correct.

16 Q. Now just to put Johnson's career together in a snapshot,
17 Prince Johnson had already in Tajura Camp in Libya demonstrated
18 that he was willing to mount a coup against Charles Taylor,
19 hadn't he?

12:17:51 20 A. Yes, he was willing. Yes.

21 Q. But at the same time Prince Johnson was a very courageous
22 soldier, wasn't he?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. And when the initial attack by NPFL forces led by Musa
12:18:10 25 Cisse was repelled because he - Isaac Musa, sorry, my fault,
26 because he was a coward, wasn't he?

27 A. Yes, Isaac Musa ran back.

28 Q. And it was Prince Johnson who led the NPFL victoriously
29 into Liberia?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. But then Prince Johnson killed some civilians in Bluntuo,
3 didn't he?

4 A. You are correct.

12:18:53 5 MR GRIFFITHS: B-L-U-N-T-U-O, your Honours.

6 THE WITNESS: Yes, Bluntuo, you are correct.

7 MR GRIFFITHS:

8 Q. And part of the reason why he'd killed those people was
9 because he'd had a personal family dispute with them, is that
10 right?

12:19:13

11 A. Yes. The civilians, yes. That was why he killed the
12 civilians, yes.

13 Q. Because he had a family dispute with them?

14 A. Yes, with civilians. Yes, I agree.

12:19:25

15 Q. Now Taylor, because of that, ordered Prince Johnson to be
16 arrested, didn't he?

17 A. You are correct.

18 Q. Prince Johnson in order to save his own hide decided to set
19 up this breakaway faction, is that right?

12:19:53

20 A. You are correct.

21 Q. And thereafter Prince Johnson's forces, although on the
22 face of it they pretended to stick to the revolutionary code,
23 they were really just a mercenary force out for themselves,
24 weren't they?

12:20:16

25 A. Yes, with Prince Johnson and his forces. Yes.

26 Q. And effectively from then on he was a wanted man by the
27 NPFL, wasn't he?

28 A. Yes, he was a wanted man and he was still fighting.

29 Q. And effectively the NPFL was chasing him across Liberia?

1 A. Yes, they were fighting side by side. Yes.

2 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: What does that mean? He's saying the
3 exact opposite of what you're saying.

4 MR GRIFFITHS:

12:20:58 5 Q. Were they fighting side by side, former President, or was
6 the NPFL out to destroy Prince Johnson's forces?

7 A. Let me explain, if you allow me to elaborate. The Prince
8 Johnson's forces had the intention to go to Monrovia about
9 several times. When Prince was attacked he will say, "No, I will
10 not attack any NPFL. We are all going to Monrovia. That group
11 should leave me alone. We are fighting to capture Doe and not
12 the Taylor forces." That was what Prince Johnson said.

13 Q. But effectively he was trying to avoid a fight with the
14 NPFL, wasn't he?

12:21:49 15 A. Yes, he was trying to avoid it. Yes.

16 Q. But in contrast former President Taylor wanted him arrested
17 and tried, didn't he?

18 A. Exactly so.

19 Q. Now it's in this context, with the NPFL controlling 90 per
12:22:19 20 cent of Liberia apart from Monrovia, that I want to discuss with
21 you the topic of discipline. Do you follow me?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Now, let's first contextualise the situation. The 180
24 Special Forces who came back from Libya --

12:22:45 25 A. Yes.

26 Q. -- had been well trained and were well disciplined, weren't
27 they?

28 A. Yes.

29 Q. Because you had had lengthy training of the highest level

1 in Libya?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. That's right?

4 A. Yes, you are correct.

12:23:04 5 Q. When NPFL forces entered Liberia those forces recruited and
6 swelled in numbers rapidly, didn't they?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Until the NPFL came to a complement of somewhere in the
9 region of 70,000?

12:23:26 10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Now one consequence of that rapid enlargement of the force
12 was that discipline was not as strict as amongst the Special
13 Forces, was it? It just wasn't possible?

14 A. No.

12:23:47 15 Q. By that I mean this, former President. You just didn't
16 have the time in places like Tiaplay to train recruits for a year
17 and a half the way you had been trained in Libya. There just
18 wasn't the time, was there?

19 A. There was no time. I agree with you.

12:24:09 20 Q. So there was just no way that these forces recruited in
21 Liberia could be as well disciplined and organised as the 180 of
22 you who returned from Libya. That's right, isn't it?

23 A. I agree with you.

12:24:31 24 Q. On top of that there were these additional difficulties,
25 weren't there? Were NPFL soldiers ever paid?

26 A. No.

27 Q. Is it right that for the most part they were illiterate,
28 couldn't read and write?

29 A. I agree with you.

1 Q. Would you also agree that for the most part they'd been
2 drawn out of the most dire poverty?

3 A. I disagree with that.

4 Q. A lot of them came from the poor, didn't they?

12:25:16 5 A. Yes, they came from the poor and some of them had money,
6 some of them had education. A typical example, Yegbeh Degbon had
7 a Master's in geology and he was well trained and well educated
8 and he had money too.

9 Q. But, former President, how typical was he of the 70,000
12:25:41 10 recruits of the NPFL? How typical was he?

11 A. Well if it comes to Degbon, Degbon and some other people
12 whose names I cannot call off head, they had good standing, they
13 had money. Degbon had worked for Liberian government, he was
14 married to a European. He was a man with good standing.

12:26:11 15 Q. Very well. But you do agree with the general proposition,
16 don't you, that for the most part the recruits were drawn from
17 the poor?

18 A. Yes, I agree with that.

19 Q. Do you also agree, former President, that for the most part
12:26:29 20 there was very little logistical support for the fighters?

21 A. I agree with that as well.

22 Q. So that for the most part they were forced to live off the
23 land?

24 A. They were forced to do what?

12:26:50 25 Q. To live off the land?

26 A. What does that mean?

27 Q. By that I mean this: They didn't have convoys of trucks
28 following behind them as they advanced, packed with sacks of
29 rice, with chefs waiting to set up field kitchens and feed them

1 at the end of each day. It wasn't like that, was it?

2 A. No, it wasn't, but as they captured any area they were able
3 to feed themselves from whatsoever was captured.

12:27:36

4 Q. Precisely. Now remember, this force is operating in a
5 country where a large part of the population has been displaced,
6 is that right?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. In a country where communications are often difficult, is
9 that right?

12:27:54

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. In a country where transport at times, particularly during
12 the rainy season, was virtually impossible.

13 A. I agree with you.

12:28:17

14 Q. Now, in general terms, in that kind of environment it's
15 very difficult to keep control of every single fighter on the
16 ground, isn't it?

17 A. Yes, it is difficult to do that, yes.

12:28:42

18 Q. Because if we just pause and think about it for a minute,
19 you take a man out of the field who has no money, you train him
20 for a few weeks and you put an AK-47 in his hand and he sees a TV
21 set, what do you think he's going to do? Do you understand the
22 point I'm making, former President?

23 A. Yes, yes, I'm listening, yes.

12:29:07

24 Q. That was the dilemma which you had as inspector general in
25 Liberia. That's right, isn't it?

26 A. That was the problem I had, yes.

27 Q. And bear in mind, of course, that this is a situation where
28 old ethnic tribal family problems and rivalries were already
29 pre-existing. That's right, isn't it?

1 A. Yes, yes.

2 Q. And some unscrupulous individuals would take advantage of
3 the situation to settle old scores. You agree, don't you?

4 A. You are correct.

12:29:44 5 Q. So now that we've established the environment in which
6 issues of discipline had to be addressed, let us have a look at
7 what was actually done in order to deal with that situation.
8 Now, let's start first of all at the level of ideology. You'd
9 been taught ideology in Libya, at Mataba, hadn't you?

12:30:12 10 A. Yes.

11 Q. And one of the founding principles of that ideology was
12 this, wasn't it: As a revolutionary force you have to win the
13 masses onto your side?

14 A. Yes.

12:30:27 15 Q. It was understood by all of you that at all costs nothing
16 should be done to alienate the masses from the cause. That's
17 right, isn't it?

18 A. You are correct.

12:30:47 19 Q. And it was appreciated by the leadership that
20 indiscriminate killing, looting and so on would alienate the
21 populace.

22 A. You are correct.

23 Q. And, as a consequence, at the leadership of the NPFL, at
24 that macro level, it was understood that indiscipline on the
12:31:08 25 ground could endanger the cause. I'm right, aren't I?

26 A. You are correct.

27 Q. And indeed you recognised, did you not, that Charles Taylor
28 cared about the welfare of civilians in Liberia?

29 A. Yes, at the beginning, like you said, at the beginning that

1 was the intention of the revolution and it was followed until the
2 junior commandos were enlisted into the NPFL and the majority of
3 the junior commandos that were enlisted, some were even
4 hand-picked and put under a special guard called the Executive
12:32:07 5 Mansion Guard unit and they were an indisciplined group and they
6 had everything under them and they only took orders from the
7 President. So that made things very, very difficult for
8 especially me as inspector general.

9 Q. Because let me just remind you of something you told us
12:32:29 10 last Wednesday when you began your evidence.

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. I'm looking at page 9850 of the transcript. This was just
13 after 3 o'clock on the afternoon of what must have been a long
14 day for you:

12:32:44 15 "A. Some women were coming from the market on one
16 occasion, from the Cote d'Ivoire, with the alcohol - you
17 don't know what cane juice is, a local alcohol called cane
18 juice - and I had to stop them and put them in my pick-up
19 and took them away to the main road because this happened
12:33:03 20 in the bush.

21 Q. You said cane juice. I'm not sure it is really
22 relevant, but it is cane juice as in like sugar cane
23 juice?"

24 A. Yes.

12:33:17 25 Q. "Q. Did your efforts to take care of civilians in this way
26 ever come to Taylor's attention?

27 A. On many occasions. A lot of civilians. He should know
28 in Grand Gedeh, in other areas, I took care of civilians
29 and cared for them."

1 And then this:

2 "Q. What was Taylor's reaction to those occasions?

3 A. Well, at one time he congratulated me, he was doing
4 well, and he said I was doing well and I was taking care of
12:33:47 5 the civilians."

6 Do you remember telling us that?

7 A. Yes. Yes, I remember.

8 Q. Now, does the name Macdonald Boam, spelt B-O-A-M, mean
9 anything to you?

12:34:31 10 A. Macdonald Boam, yes.

11 Q. He was a lieutenant general in the NPFL, wasn't he?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. He's from your part of Liberia, Nimba County, isn't he?

14 A. Yes.

12:34:49 15 Q. And he was one of the original members of the NPFL, wasn't
16 he?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Who went into exile in the Cote d'Ivoire, yes?

19 A. Yes.

12:34:58 20 Q. And trained in Libya?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Now, do you remember that at the end of the training in
23 Libya, that Taylor set up a board not only to investigate, but
24 also to recommend ways and means of putting the NPFL together?

12:35:27 25 Do you remember that?

26 A. That I cannot remember. In Libya, no. It was out of
27 Libya.

28 Q. Very well. Where did that take place?

29 A. This took place in Ouagadougou.

1 Q. Is that right?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Well, I won't quibble over details like that with you,
4 former President.

12:35:57 5 A. Yes.

6 Q. But do you recall now that the original board members were
7 Macdonald Boam, who was the chairman, is that right?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Cooper Miller, who was the co-chairman?

12:36:12 10 A. Yes.

11 Q. And just pausing there for a minute, Cooper Miller was a
12 former member of the army of Liberia, wasn't he?

13 A. Yes, Cooper Miller was.

14 Q. Now, another member of this board was Augustus Wright.

12:36:32 15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Anthony Menquenagbeh?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Spel t M-A-Q-U-I-N-A-G-B-E. He was also a member, wasn't
19 he, of the board?

12:36:47 20 A. Yes. Anthony Menquenagbeh.

21 Q. Now, he was a former police officer, wasn't he?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Also on the board was Paul B Harris, is that right?

24 A. Yes, Paul B Harris.

12:37:10 25 Q. Again he was a former member of the Liberian army?

26 A. Yes.

27 Q. Also on that board was Paul Nimely?

28 A. Yes, Paul Nimely.

29 Q. Isaac Musan? Isaac Musa?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And William Obeh [phon]?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Now, do you remember that after the NPFL entered Liberia
12:37:58 5 and set up an alternative capital in Gborplay, that the board was
6 reorganised? This was in 1989, late 1989. Do you remember this?

7 A. This is the board that I can remember, because when you
8 talk about a board in Libya, we were in the process of moving
9 back home and I was not part of the board. I did not tell you
12:38:30 10 what my job was in Libya. Before I became adjutant I was in the
11 kitchen washing dishes, so I wouldn't know some of the important
12 things that you are talking about.

13 Q. Very well, but, in any event, there came a time when such a
14 board was established in Gborplay, yes?

12:38:53 15 A. Yes, Gborplay.

16 Q. Macdonald Boam remained the chairman of the board, is that
17 right?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Samuel Dokie was the co-chair, is that right?

12:39:14 20 A. I don't know the members of this board you are mentioning
21 about, but I recall Macdonald Boam becoming a tribunal chair man
22 to investigate any illegal act that would happen in NPFL
23 controlled areas.

24 Q. That's precisely what was I coming on to ask you about, you
12:39:38 25 see?

26 A. Okay, that's good.

27 Q. Because it's right, isn't it --

28 A. That's right.

29 Q. -- that a tribunal was set up to try individuals accused of

1 criminal activities in NPFL controlled territories?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. And I just want to run through the tribunal members to see
4 if you remember. Macdonald Boam you remember, yes?

12:40:05 5 A. Yes, I remember Macdonald Boam.

6 Q. Do you remember Samuel Dokie being a member of that
7 tribunal?

8 A. That I cannot remember. Dokie was - he was very close to
9 the President, the leader of the revolution at that time, and all

12:40:26 10 I remember is that he had been very close to Mr Taylor at that
11 time, but I remember Macdonald being the chairman of the
12 tribunal.

13 Q. Do you remember there being a member of that tribunal
14 called Henry Kharn, K-H-A-R-N?

12:40:45 15 A. Yes, Henry Kharn, the late Henry Kharn.

16 Q. And the same Anthony Menquenagbeh, he was a member, wasn't
17 he?

18 A. Yes, he was a member briefly, yes.

19 Q. Also Anthony Komahun?

12:41:03 20 A. Yes, briefly also.

21 MR GRIFFITHS: Komahun is spelt K-O-M-A-H-U-N, your
22 Honours:

23 Q. What about Putu Major?

24 A. Yes, briefly also.

12:41:18 25 Q. P-U-T-U. The same Paul B Harris that I mentioned earlier,
26 do you remember him being a member?

27 A. Unfortunately for Paul B Harris, Paul B Harris got killed
28 before we could approach Gbarnga. Yes, Gbarnga. He was killed
29 in Kamplay.

1 Q. He was killed in combat, wasn't he?

2 A. Yes, yes, he was killed in combat.

3 Q. And the final name I want to mention to you in this regard
4 is Paul Nimely. He was also involved, wasn't he?

12:42:02 5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Now, let me see if I can jog your memory on one or two
7 details. Do you remember that the very first case tried by this
8 tribunal was the trial of a Special Forces soldier called Sam
9 Tozey?

12:42:27 10 A. Yes, yes.

11 Q. Do you remember that man?

12 A. Yes, Sam Tozey.

13 Q. T-O-Z-E-Y. Now he was investigated, tried and found
14 guilty, wasn't he?

12:42:45 15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And he was executed at the board's first sitting in
17 Gborplay in Nimba County in early 1990, do you remember that?

18 A. You are correct.

19 Q. When that tribunal switched from Gborplay to Gbarnga, it
12:43:09 20 was reorganised again in Gbarnga, wasn't it?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And it was established in Gbarnga in 1990, do you remember?

23 A. Yes, you are correct.

24 Q. And the reason for it being reorganised was that other
12:43:28 25 professional people had now joined and were assisting the
26 tribunal, including lawyers. That's right, isn't it?

27 A. You are correct.

28 Q. And in fact the board was guided by statutory laws, wasn't
29 it?

1 A. You are correct.

2 Q. Macdonald Boam remained the chairman of the tribunal?

3 A. You are correct.

4 Q. Cooper Bi ah, B-I -A-H your Honours, was the co-chair, is
12:44:18 5 that right?

6 A. You are correct.

7 Q. Counsellor Gabriel Bona Sargbeh was the law officer.
8 That's right, isn't it?

9 A. I heard the name, you are correct.

12:44:37 10 Q. And that is spelt Gabriel, as in the angel, Bona B-0-N-A
11 and Sargbeh S-A-R-G-B-E-H. Now he was a former president of the
12 Liberian Bar Association, wasn't he?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And there were also lawyers appointed for the Defence and
12:45:02 15 for the Prosecution. Do you remember counsellor Richard Flomo, a
16 Defence lawyer?

17 A. Yes.

18 MR GRIFFITHS: Flomo is spelt F-L-0-M-0, your Honours:

19 Q. And counsellor Managborlor, a Prosecution lawyer? I don't
12:45:21 20 know if I've pronounced it correctly. The spelling is
21 M-A-N-A-G-B-0-R-L-0-R. Does that name ring a bell, former
22 President?

23 A. Call the name again, please.

24 Q. Managborlor?

12:45:42 25 A. Oh, God. It could be true, but the spelling, Managborlor,
26 no, I cannot remember.

27 Q. All right. What about an attorney called Prince C Johnson?

28 A. Yes, I remember.

29 Q. And another attorney called John Flomo?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And do you remember that the judge advocate general, a
3 former Armed Forces of Liberia personnel, was a person called
4 Sompon?

12:46:28 5 A. Counsellor Sompon, yes.

6 Q. And then the head Defence counsel for the tribunal was
7 counsellor Francis Garlawolo?

8 A. Yes, that I remember.

9 Q. Spelt G-A-R-L-A-W-O-L-O. Pausing there --

12:46:50 10 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: The spelling of Sompon, please?

11 MR GRIFFITHS: S-O-M-P-O-N, your Honour, I'm sorry:

12 Q. Now pausing there, what is quite clear from the short
13 discussion we've had, former President, is that efforts were
14 being made to establish the NPFL on a legal, professional

12:47:14 15 footing. That's right, isn't it?

16 A. Yes, you are correct.

17 Q. In effect, the NPFL was seeking to establish the rule of
18 law in those territories it controlled. That's right, isn't it?

19 A. You are correct.

12:47:32 20 Q. Despite the many difficulties and obstacles in their way
21 that was the ideal everyone was aiming for, am I right?

22 A. You are correct.

23 Q. And that tribunal endeavoured within its limitations of
24 resources and personnel to investigate thoroughly and to try and
12:48:05 25 to meet out punishment according to the law. They did, didn't
26 they?

27 A. Yes, that's right.

28 Q. So the idea which some people may have had that the NPFL
29 was this lawless organisation who just shoved people up against a

1 wall and shot them, it's complete rubbish, isn't it?

2 A. Well, I cannot say for other people. I am talking for
3 NPFL. It was an organised organisation, but as time went on
4 other things went wrong. At that time there were no longer
12:48:50 5 tribunals and everything was done and he - the full
6 responsibility was on the commander-in-chief and later the
7 tribunal was dissolved and other organisational plans were
8 dissolved, so there were changes on the way.

9 Q. Yes, but in due course following the elections the normal
12:49:18 10 court system was put back into operation, wasn't it, within
11 Liberia, following the elections in 1997?

12 A. Well, there was election and the government was in place
13 and there was no longer NPFL organisation.

14 Q. Now, as you've indicated to us, in your role as inspector
12:50:11 15 general you were in charge of overall discipline, weren't you?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And can you help us with this, please. What was your
18 structural relationship with the tribunal we've just been
19 discussing?

12:50:25 20 A. Well, as inspector general of the NPFL I never reported to
21 the tribunal. The day to day activities in the field, when they
22 were suspected that there was grave consequence I will report
23 directly to the commander-in-chief. That was how I was
24 instructed. I was not to go to tribunal. I directly reported,
12:50:54 25 when I became inspector general, and the instruction was that,
26 "You are inspector general and so you report directly to the
27 commander-in-chief of this organisation and to no tribunal."

28 Q. But you also told us on Wednesday last that apart from you
29 as inspector general - I'm looking at page 9843, your Honours.

1 Apart from you as inspector general, the commander-in-chief had
2 also set up other units which were responsible for investigating
3 wrongdoing and disciplining those who committed such wrongs.

4 That's right, isn't it?

12:51:39 5 A. No, no. No, no.

6 Q. Do you remember telling us this? This was at 2.46 on
7 Wednesday afternoon:

8 "Apart from being inspector general, he ...", that being
9 Charles Taylor, "... had other units that were to deal with such
10 matters, that is complaints."

12:51:56

11 Do you remember telling us that?

12 A. No, no, that is misquoted. If you want me to do so, I will
13 repeat. There were other fighting units, like the Executive
14 Mansion Guards and the brigade and there was the marine unit.

12:52:16

15 They were not to be investigated. They were strictly fighting
16 forces and I did not have control over them as inspector general.
17 They reported directly to the President. That was what I said.

18 Q. I think maybe we're at cross-purposes. My point is very
19 simple. My point is this. Apart from yourself as inspector
20 general, there were other groups within the NPFL charged with
21 imposing discipline?

12:52:36

22 A. I would disagree again. What I am trying to explain,
23 except if you are to agree with me, there were units headed by
24 their commanders and they were all two star generals. If you
25 were in that unit and you commit crime within your unit it was
26 your head in the unit that had the right to investigate you until
27 I come in and except you wanted me to, but he will use his own
28 disciplinary measures that you will take from him under his
29 command.

12:53:03

1 Q. Very well. I'm not going to delay over that. Now, I want
2 to deal with some of the cases that were dealt with by the
3 tribunal. Sam Larto was reported to the tribunal for that
4 massacre, wasn't he?

12:53:44 5 A. Not by me.

6 Q. Was he not being investigated for that massacre when he
7 committed the murder of that man for the television?

8 A. It was not reported by me, but I knew that he killed
9 somebody and the commander-in-chief was informed that Sam Larto
10 had committed murder and he was arrested.

12:54:07

11 Q. Well, let's see if we can put the picture together from
12 what you told us last week. I'm looking first, your Honours, at
13 page 9929 of Thursday's transcript when you told us this:

14 "President said 'I will have him brought here to be
15 investigated'".

12:54:43

16 This after you reported to the President about the 70
17 people who had been killed:

18 "It was not until I was in Gbarnga that I heard that he had
19 been arrested for killing another person. It was then that
20 President Taylor ordered that he be executed.

12:54:58

21 Q. So between the time of him being detained for that
22 first allegation that you brought, had he been freed?

23 A. Yes, he had been freed. He was not arrested in my
24 presence when I brought this first report. The second time
25 I saw him, that was the time that he was executed. He was
26 in jail for shooting the man with the television set."

12:55:17

27 Do you remember telling us that on Thursday?

28 A. Yes, I remember that, but I did not call tribunal. I
29 didn't know who conducted that investigation, but I saw him. In

1 fact I said I saw him before he was executed, that he was
2 detained and the next day - the following day he was executed.
3 According to the news he was investigated, after being
4 investigated and found guilty before he was executed, but I did
12:56:04 5 not say who conducted the investigation because I did not know.

6 Q. Let me give you another instance, former President. Do you
7 remember a General John Namayan being tried for raping a 13 year
8 old girl called Ewana Johnson?

9 A. Well this is another instance that I wouldn't know about,
12:56:32 10 because as inspector general I was not stationed at any
11 particular place. I was just up and down. I heard by NPFL radio
12 that John Namayan had raped a woman, but I did not know who
13 investigated that case.

14 Q. But do you remember him being investigated for it?

12:56:54 15 A. Yes, I heard that he was being investigated.

16 Q. And he was a general?

17 A. Yes, he was a general.

18 Q. And do you recall that it involved the rape of a 13 year
19 old girl?

12:57:07 20 A. I remember that too.

21 MR GRIFFITHS: Now the spelling, your Honours. John,
22 normal English spelling, Namayan is N-A-M-A-Y-A-N. The name of
23 the victim of that allegation was Ewana, E-W-A-N-A, Johnson.

24 THE WITNESS: Excuse me, judge, your Honour.

12:57:38 25 PRESIDING JUDGE: Please assist the witness.

26 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

27 PRESIDING JUDGE: When you feel comfortable, Mr Witness, we
28 will continue. Mr Griffiths, please proceed.

29 MR GRIFFITHS: May it please your Honour:

1 Q. Former president, let me just deal with one or two other
2 instances. Do you recall an investigation into the late Luka
3 Zulu who was a commander at Camp Naama base?

4 A. Luka Zulu, yes, I remember.

13:03:15 5 Q. L-U-K-A Z-U-L-U?

6 A. Yes, Zulu, that I remember.

7 Q. He was actually commander of the camp, wasn't he?

8 A. He Zulu? Yes, Zulu was a commander.

9 Q. Of Camp Naama?

13:03:34 10 A. Yes.

11 Q. And again he was arrested and investigated for wrongdoing,
12 wasn't he?

13 A. Yes, I remember.

14 Q. Do you remember also a General John Warner being put on
15 trial?

13:03:55 16 A. John Warner, I can't remember that.

17 Q. Wonnah. John Wonnah?

18 A. Wonnah. I know John Wonnah.

19 Q. He was a general?

13:04:16 20 A. I cannot remember. I might be somewhere in the field, I
21 know who John Wonnah is, but I don't know whether he has been
22 arrested and tried.

23 Q. Very well, but you do accept, don't you, that there was a
24 system of discipline and law and order in NPFL territories?

13:04:47 25 A. Yes, there was.

26 Q. And that board was not dissolved until after the elections
27 in 1997, is that right?

28 A. Yes.

29 Q. Now, in similar vein let me ask you about something else.

1 What was Black Gadaffa?

2 A. What was the real name?

3 Q. What was Black Gadaffa?

4 A. Except if you come - except you come with the real name
13:05:35 5 then I will know who that Black Gadaffa is or was. I cannot
6 remember.

7 Q. I'm talking about Black Gadaffa.

8 A. I can't remember.

9 MR GRIFFITHS: Can the witness be shown MFI-16, please.

13:06:23 10 Can we start with the second page of that document, please, which
11 begins with number 27, Prince Leo:

12 Q. Now, do you see, at number 51 on that page, John Wonnah?

13 That was the person I was asking you about a moment ago. Do you
14 remember?

13:06:52 15 A. I know John Wonnah, but do not know when he was being
16 investigated.

17 Q. In any event, what I'm now asking you about - could we go
18 back to page 1, please, first of all. Number 11 on that page,
19 Yegbeh Degbon, he was a member of the Black Gadaffa coup, wasn't
13:07:30 20 he?

21 A. This I cannot remember. What I knew was that this man was
22 executed. I know of that.

23 Q. Was he executed for his involvement in a coup attempt?

24 A. I cannot remember this. All I know was that he was
13:07:43 25 executed. Most of the executed people, I was told that they were
26 executed. You know, I told you about my assignment. It was not
27 a stationary assignment. I had been up and down, wherever NPFL
28 was in control of, so I wouldn't know most of these things
29 happening.

1 Q. Were you not aware of a coup attempt by a group called
2 Black Gadaffa which involved Yegbeh Degbon, Oliver Varney,
3 Anthony Menquenagbeh and others?

4 A. Well, this is a very difficult thing to say. These were
13:08:33 5 people who had been assigned to different areas at the time.
6 Menquenagbeh was by Kakata and the people you are calling, like
7 Oliver Varney was at Bomi Hills and I wouldn't know what happens
8 in Kakata, what happens in Bomi Hills, or what happens in some
9 other places at the same time. I think when these things
13:08:55 10 happened I was being in Cape Palmas, but I know that they were
11 executed for their role in the revolution.

12 Q. For their role in what revolution?

13 A. In NPFL when you are executed - if you were investigated
14 and found guilty you would be executed if you deserved that
13:09:34 15 punishment, or if you were to go to jail you would go to jail,
16 that I know of, but at that particular time I cannot say I was
17 there and do not know about them, this investigation.

18 Q. Very well. I am not going to delay over that. Now, we're
19 still on the topic of discipline, former President, and I want to
13:10:07 20 deal with one particularly distasteful practice which was brought
21 up for the first time in this Court by Zigzag Marzah. You know,
22 don't you, that when that man gave evidence he spoke about eating
23 people, cannibalism? You know that, don't you?

24 A. I listened to that.

13:10:34 25 Q. And you heard what he said about that, didn't you?

26 A. I heard what he said.

27 Q. Now, as we went through this morning you had been spoken to
28 by the Prosecution on 26 September 2006, in October of that year,
29 in November of that year, in January and February of 2007 and

1 again in October of 2007 and on none of those occasions was any
2 mention made of cannibalism. Yet when you arrived here in The
3 Hague and you were being proofed, as it's called, on 9 May, for
4 the first time you brought up the topic of cannibalism. This
13:11:38 5 being, of course, shortly after Zigzag Marzah had given his
6 evidence. Help me first of all with this: Who raised that
7 topic, was it you or were you asked a question about it?

8 A. The question was clear and you were here. Why would I talk
9 about Zigzag Marzah? Zigzag Marzah has spoken at his own level.

13:12:10 10 What I said is that he was a fellow who was one of the commanders
11 at rubber plantation.

12 PRESIDING JUDGE: Mr Witness, I have to clarify. Are you
13 referring to the evidence you gave in court as you're answering?

14 THE WITNESS: Yes.

13:12:24 15 PRESIDING JUDGE: My understanding is that counsel is
16 referring to a different time and I will ask counsel to clarify
17 that.

18 MR GRIFFITHS: Your Honour, yes:

19 Q. My question is this. I know from the documents in front of
13:12:35 20 me that you mentioned cannibalism for the first time in May of
21 this year in this country. What I want to know is this. Who
22 raised the topic with you? Did you volunteer that information,
23 or did someone come to you and say, "I want to talk to you about
24 cannibalism"? Which of those occurred?

13:13:02 25 A. That's what I was trying to explain to you. That the name
26 of a fellow came out and this name was asked how do I know this
27 fellow and what was he doing. That was when this name came up.
28 That he has been arrested because he's been connected with Dokie,
29 he left Monrovia - I mean, he left his assignment and went to

1 Monrovia and upon his return he was arrested. This is - if this
2 is the fellow we're referring to. Besides that, I do not know
3 any other cannibalism. It is this fellow that I have seen eating
4 human hand. Besides that I don't think anybody and myself had
13:13:56 5 discussed cannibalism.

6 Q. I just want to --

7 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Mr Griffiths, I'm not sure which fellow
8 the witness is talking about.

9 MR GRIFFITHS: I'm going to ask him:

13:14:19 10 Q. Which fellow are you talking about?

11 A. I am talking about - oh God, I have forgotten his name
12 again. I will come back to his name, please.

13 Q. Let me put it to you bluntly.

14 A. Yes.

13:14:37 15 Q. When you arrived here in The Hague did someone come to you
16 and say, "This hot topic has come up, cannibalism. Do you know
17 anything about it?" Did a conversation like that occur?

18 A. No, no.

19 Q. Are you sure?

13:14:54 20 A. I am only saying that it is in this Court that the question
21 was asked about a particular person and this person was executed,
22 he was investigated for desertion, he left his post and went to
23 Monrovia and upon his return he was questioned by the NPFL
24 command why he had left and gone to Monrovia, for what reason.

13:15:24 25 He couldn't answer that, he was investigated and it was found out
26 that he had gone to talk to Dokie and he had taken instructions
27 and he was executed. This is the fellow I was referring to. I
28 was not referring to Zigzag Marzah about his killing or eating
29 human beings that I know of.

1 Q. I think we're at cross-purposes, former President. You
2 see, the first thing I want to establish is this; whether it's
3 just pure coincidence that shortly after Zigzag Marzah introduces
4 this topic into this tribunal all of a sudden yourself and
13:16:04 5 another person called Mr Kanneh suddenly start talking about
6 cannibalism. I want to know whether this is a new hot
7 Prosecution topic which was introduced to you. Can you help me?

8 A. I am saying no. It is a question about a particular person
9 that that name will come to me. That's the question I was
13:16:30 10 answering. That this fellow was involved in that and I saw him
11 eating a human being. I was not referring to anybody that I know
12 of within this organisation who was an eater of another human
13 being.

14 Q. Well I am going to have to ask you one or two questions
13:16:49 15 about this, you see? Now, firstly this. Let's set a context for
16 it. The practice of cannibalism is long established in certain
17 parts of Liberia, isn't it, former President?

18 A. That was a long time ago. Very, very long time. I wasn't
19 even born at the time.

13:17:24 20 Q. For example, between the Gio, the Mano and the Krahn it's
21 something which has been practised historically, isn't it?

22 A. I am saying it, yes. In the older days, in the Gio region
23 they don't have a grave. People joke with the Gios saying they
24 do not have a grave. They eat their dead. Of course, some was
13:17:54 25 not correct. It was a mere joke.

26 Q. Now I'm seeking to put it in context, you see? By way of
27 example when your cousin, Samuel Quiwonkpa, was - Thomas
28 Quiwonkpa was killed in Monrovia, his body was cut up and eaten
29 by Krahn soldiers, wasn't it?

1 A. Yes, that was done openly.

2 Q. So it's not that far into history because we're talking
3 about when, 1985? Is that right?

4 A. Yes.

13:18:31 5 Q. And it was soldiers of former President Doe who carried out
6 that horrible practice. That's right, isn't it?

7 A. Yes, you're correct.

8 Q. Now you would agree with this, wouldn't you: That that
9 kind of behaviour was never ordered or condoned by Charles Taylor
10 or the leadership of the NPFL. That's right, isn't it?

13:18:58

11 A. That is not to my knowledge. That is what I said. Eating
12 of human beings I agree that people were being arrested,
13 investigated and executed, but I was never on the scene that an
14 order was given to eat another human being. Not in my presence.

13:19:24

15 Q. You have never heard of such an order, have you?

16 A. I have never heard of such an order from Taylor, the
17 commander-in-chief of the NPFL, to order anybody to eat another
18 human being.

13:19:43

19 Q. Not only that, but commanders were warned not to encourage
20 it. Isn't that right?

21 A. Well, that is not to my knowledge. Not to my knowledge.
22 But he has not ordered in my presence, nor given an order in my
23 presence, nor seen him giving an order to another soldier to eat
24 another human being, nor to see himself eating another human
13:20:07 25 being. That I have not seen, not in my presence.

26 Q. In fact, Mr Blah, do you recall making a statement on 16
27 August in the year 2000 on behalf of Mr Charles Taylor? Do you
28 remember?

29 A. What is the statement?

1 Q. It was on the issue of cannibalism. Do you remember
2 certain publishers were suggesting that Charles Taylor was in the
3 habit of drinking people's blood and eating human flesh and you
4 made a statement in the High Court of Justice, Queen's Bench
13:21:29 5 Division, in the cause of Charles Taylor v Times Newspapers
6 Limited, Peter Stothard, David Dynes, Stephen Ellis who gave
7 expert evidence in this case and C Hurst & Co Publishers. Do you
8 remember making that statement?

9 A. And said what, that I saw Taylor eating a human being?
13:21:59 10 What did I say?

11 Q. You said, "I also consider the allegations against the
12 claimant ...", that being Charles Taylor, "... of the drinking of
13 the blood of his opponents, ritual sacrifice and cannibalism to
14 be totally false." Do you remember making such a statement?

13:22:19 15 A. I can remember that statement.

16 Q. I apologise. I only have the one copy. I'd like you to be
17 shown this, please, and identify your signature at the end and I
18 will endeavour over the short adjournment to see if we can get
19 copies. Have a look right at the last page, please.

13:22:49 20 A. Last page?

21 Q. Is that your signature?

22 A. Yes, this is my signature.

23 Q. Do you recall making that statement for proceedings in the
24 High Court in London?

13:23:16 25 A. I remember and the statement goes like this. Let me say
26 what I said. The question was like, "Have you seen your
27 President Taylor drinking blood and eating human flesh?" I said,
28 "No, I have not seen him." That's what I said. "Not in my
29 presence have I seen Taylor eating flesh or drinking blood of

1 another human being." That was what I said at that time. I have
2 not been in his company and seen him drinking - eating a human
3 being or drinking human blood.

13:23:57 4 MR GRIFFITHS: Madam Court Officer, I wonder if I could
5 have that statement back, please. Put that up, the last
6 paragraph, please:

7 Q. I want you to look, please, carefully at the wording of the
8 last paragraph on that page:

9 "I also consider the allegations against the claimant of
13:24:44 10 the drinking of the blood of his opponents, ritual sacrifice and
11 cannibalism to be totally false."

12 Is that the statement you signed?

13 A. I was speaking - I was speaking my own view that I have not
14 seen these things. I have not seen Mr Taylor doing it. You can
13:25:10 15 understand what I'm saying. That means Taylor has not been
16 drinking blood or eating human being in my presence.

17 Q. No, you see, former President, I'm not going to accept that
18 answer, because you see the way you are answering the question
19 now leaves open the possibility that it might have happened when
13:25:31 20 you weren't around. What you're saying in that paragraph, I
21 suggest, is quite different, "totally false"?

22 A. No, you cannot say so. It's totally false in the sense
23 that I do not sleep with Mr Taylor. We do not sleep together. I
24 don't know, maybe when he sleeps he will start doing what he's
13:25:57 25 doing. You too can understand my point of view. I will not sit
26 down even with my child - even with my child I cannot say my
27 child did not kick this person yesterday and put my neck on the
28 block for that. I am saying it is clear that I have not seen
29 Mr Taylor doing this thing. Under no circumstances have I seen

1 Mr Taylor. We have worked together, we have moved together, we
2 have fought together and I have not on any occasion seen him
3 drinking blood - drinking the blood of another human being, or
4 eating the flesh of another human being. That's what I'm saying.

13:26:33 5 Q. Let's just read the full paragraph then please:

6 "I also consider the allegations against the claimant of
7 the drinking of the blood of his opponents, ritual sacrifice and
8 cannibalism to be totally false." Do you remember making such a
9 statement?

13:22:19 10 A. I can remember that statement.

11 Q. I apologise, I only have the one copy. I'd like you to be
12 shown this, please, and identify your signature at the end and I
13 will endeavour over the short adjournment to see if we can get
14 copies. Have a look right at the last page, please.

13:22:49 15 A. Last page?

16 Q. Is that your signature?

17 A. Yes, this is my signature.

18 Q. Do you recall making that statement for proceedings in the
19 High Court in London?

13:23:16 20 A. I remember and the statement goes like this - let me say
21 what I said. The question was like, "Have you seen your
22 President Taylor drinking blood and eating human flesh?" I said,
23 "No, I have not seen him." That's what I said. Not in my
24 presence have I seen Taylor eating flesh, or drinking blood of
13:23:41 25 another human being. That was what I said at that time. I have
26 not been in his company and seen him drinking - eating a human
27 being, or drinking human blood.

28 MR GRIFFITHS: Madam Court Officer, I wonder if I could
29 have that statement back, please. Put that up, the last

1 paragraph, please:

2 Q. I want you to look, please, carefully at the wording of the
3 last paragraph on that page, "I also consider the allegations
4 against the claimant of the drinking of the blood of his
13:24:47 5 opponents, ritual sacrifice and cannibalism to be totally false."
6 Is that the statement you signed?

7 A. I was speaking my own view, that I have not seen these
8 things. I have not seen Mr Taylor doing it. You can understand
9 what I'm saying. That means Taylor has not been drinking blood,
13:25:14 10 or eating human being in my presence.

11 Q. You see, former President, I'm not going to accept that
12 answer, because, you see, the way you are answering the question
13 now leaves open the possibility that it might have happened when
14 you weren't around. What you're saying in that paragraph, I
13:25:34 15 suggest, is quite different, "totally false".

16 A. No, you cannot say so. It's totally false in the sense
17 that I do not sleep with Mr Taylor, we do not sleep together, I
18 don't know, maybe when he sleeps he will start doing what he's
19 doing. You too can understand my point of view. I will not sit
13:26:01 20 down even with my child - even with my child, I cannot say my
21 child did not kick this person yesterday and put my neck on the
22 block for that. I am saying it is clear that I have not seen
23 Mr Taylor doing this thing. Under no circumstances have I seen
24 Mr Taylor - we have worked together, we have moved together, we
13:26:21 25 have fought together. I have not on any occasion seen him
26 drinking blood - drinking the blood of another human being, or
27 eating the flesh of another human being. That's what I'm saying.

28 Q. Let's just read the full paragraph then, please:

29 "I also consider the allegations against the claimant of

1 the drinking of the blood of his opponents, ritual sacrifice and
2 cannibalism to be totally false. Given the nature of my
3 relationship with the claimant and the necessity for us to know
4 and trust each other during the war, it would not have been
13:27:09 5 possible for the claimant to have conducted himself as alleged
6 without my knowledge: I have no such knowledge."

7 A. Good.

8 Q. Signed Moses Blah, 16 August 2010 [sic].

9 A. Good.

13:27:27 10 Q. You notice you go on to say:

11 "I should also say that above all, in my opinion, the
12 claimant by nature is gentle and humane and would not act as
13 alleged. We were engaged in a war against a tyrant. It was a
14 serious war and our country suffered terribly. However, the
13:27:46 15 claimant was at all times anxious that the NPFL should be as
16 disciplined a force as possible. The accusation are in complete
17 conflict with the character of the complainant and the
18 operational objectives of the NPFL."

19 Did you sign that statement?

13:28:08 20 A. I said yes and the condition under which I signed the
21 document I have explained to you over and over. I am saying that
22 I have not seen Mr Taylor eating a human being, or acting
23 inhumanely to people during the war, cutting flesh and cooking it
24 and eating it. I have not seen him do that. I am talking from
13:28:35 25 my knowledge. What I am saying here is what is to my knowledge.
26 I don't have to tell lies. This is my statement. I am saying
27 that I have not seen Taylor eating and cutting a human being, or
28 drinking the blood of another human being, that's my statement,
29 not to my knowledge at any time. I cannot say further than - I

1 cannot say anything further than that.

2 MR GRIFFITHS: I note the hour, your Honour.

3 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, indeed, Mr Griffiths, if this is a
4 convenient time then this is the normal lunch hour adjournment.

13:29:13 5 MR GRIFFITHS: Your Honour, yes.

6 PRESIDING JUDGE: Mr Witness, as you know we take an hour
7 at lunch time and it is now up to our lunch time break.

8 THE WITNESS: Your Honours.

9 PRESIDING JUDGE: We will adjourn for one hour and resume
13:29:30 10 at 2.30. Please adjourn court.

11 THE WITNESS: Your Honours.

12 [Lunch break taken at 1.30 p.m.] [Upon
13 resuming at 2.30 p.m.]

14 PRESIDING JUDGE: Yes, please proceed, Mr Griffiths.

14:31:05 15 MR GRIFFITHS: May it please your Honours. Your Honours,
16 can I attend to a matter of housekeeping before we start. The
17 documents that are currently being distributed should have been
18 in the bundle that I handed out this morning, but because of an
19 oversight they were unavailable first thing this morning. Now
14:31:30 20 can I invite your Honours and indeed my learned friends opposite
21 to put the document headed "Autopsy Report" behind divider 3.

22 PRESIDING JUDGE: Have we received the autopsy report? Oh,
23 we are about to receive it.

24 MR GRIFFITHS: Yes. Can I invite you all to place - and,
14:32:08 25 Madam Court Officer, we will need to do the same with the witness
26 bundle - the document headed "Statement of Moses Blah" behind
27 divider 6, please. Can I continue, your Honours?

28 PRESIDING JUDGE: Please do, Mr Griffiths.

29 MR GRIFFITHS: Very well

1 Q. Now, former President, I was dealing just before the
2 luncheon adjournment with that statement you signed in which you
3 made various comments about your comrade in arms, former
4 President Charles Taylor. Do you remember that?

14:33:49 5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Now just to finish off that sequence of questions, firstly
7 do you remember making that statement?

8 A. I said yes.

9 Q. And when you made the statement were you endeavouring to
14:34:14 10 tell the truth?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Because would it be fair to say you would not have signed
13 the statement did it not contain the truth?

14 A. I say yes.

14:34:38 15 Q. I want to move on now, please, and deal with other matters.
16 Now we had dealt with the advance of the NPFL through Liberia. I
17 now want to come on and deal with another development which took
18 place; that is ECOMOG. Now it's right, isn't it, that in August
19 1990, and with the agreement of both President Doe and Prince
14:35:59 20 Johnson, ECOWAS sent a seaborne force of 2,500 West African
21 troops to Monrovia? Is that right?

22 A. Yes, you are correct.

23 Q. That force, the ECOMOG force, entered Monrovia and took
24 control of the port area, is that right?

14:36:29 25 A. Yes, you are correct.

26 Q. And it was quite clear, was it not, that ECOMOG had
27 intervened in the hope of preventing the NPFL from securing an
28 outright victory?

29 A. You are correct.

1 Q. And the NPFL forces were enraged that other African
2 countries had intervened in this way to in effect rescue Doe's
3 government?

4 A. You are correct.

14:37:19 5 Q. Now at the end of August 1990 there was an ECOWAS meeting
6 in Banjul in The Gambia, wasn't there, which was boycotted by the
7 NPFL?

8 A. You are correct.

14:37:39 9 Q. But prominent Liberian political and social dignitaries
10 appointed a Dr Amos Sawyer, formerly head of the Liberian
11 People's Party, as President of an Interim Government of National
12 Unity?

13 A. You are correct.

14 Q. Now the NPFL did not recognise that body, did they?

14:38:03 15 A. No, you are correct.

16 Q. And despite ECOMOG's efforts there continued to be clashes
17 between the Liberian army and the NPFL?

18 A. You are correct.

14:38:32 19 Q. Now on 10 September 1990 Prince Johnson captured Doe and
20 brutally murdered him. That's right, isn't it?

21 A. You are correct. You are correct.

22 Q. Johnson then pronounced himself to be Head of State, is
23 that right?

24 A. You are correct.

14:38:53 25 Q. Now in October 1990 ECOMOG, with the assistance of the
26 Independent NPFL, successfully drove the NPFL beyond the
27 outskirts of Monrovia, didn't they?

28 A. You are correct.

29 Q. But the NPFL nonetheless continued to control the remainder

1 of the country including the port of Buchanan?

2 A. You are correct.

3 Q. Now what was the feeling within the NPFL at that time about
4 cooperating with ECOMOG?

14:39:48 5 A. At that time NPFL felt misled by ECOWAS and the ECOMOG
6 force coming in was not with the NPFL consent. They had asked
7 some delegation from the United States government and other
8 friendly governments that we should cease fire and that they were
9 going to intervene into this matter. Then surprisingly to the
14:40:25 10 NPFL there was a heavy force coming in supporting the other side
11 to attack us, the NPFL, and we were driven from our position. So
12 that made the NPFL feel not to cooperate with the ECOMOG forces.

13 Q. However, do you recall that a ceasefire was signed at
14 Bamako in late November 1990?

14:40:53 15 A. You are correct.

16 Q. And the effect of that Bamako peace ceasefire agreement was
17 effectively to divide the country in two, wasn't it?

18 A. You are correct.

19 Q. And thereafter for a period there was a somewhat uneasy
14:41:14 20 truce between the two parties, wasn't there?

21 A. You are correct.

22 Q. Now, in October 1991 the Independent NPFL surrendered to
23 ECOMOG and was subsequently dissolved in September 1992, wasn't
24 it?

14:41:45 25 A. You are correct.

26 Q. Now, it is at around this time, specifically in June 1991,
27 that a completely different player appears on the scene: ULIMO.
28 That is right, isn't it?

29 A. Yes, ULIMO.

1 Q. Standing for United Liberation Movement for Democracy in
2 Liberia.

3 A. You are correct.

4 Q. And they came out of Sierra Leone, didn't they?

14:42:24 5 A. You are correct.

6 Q. Who supported them?

7 A. Roosevelt Johnson.

8 Q. Who provided them with arms and ammunition to invade
9 Liberia?

14:42:43 10 A. They were joined by ECOMOG.

11 Q. No, no, no, which country provided the support for ULIMO?

12 A. Yes, I have got you now. It was Sierra Leone.

13 Q. So just so that we understand the picture, in June 1991,
14 while there was this uneasy truce in Liberia, the Sierra Leonean

14:43:08 15 government, the neighbouring state, funded a group to invade
16 Liberia. That is right, isn't it?

17 A. You are correct.

18 Q. Now, ULIMO immediately decided to attack the NPFL, didn't
19 it?

14:43:31 20 A. You are correct.

21 Q. And there were fierce battles between ULIMO and the NPFL,
22 particularly in Lofa County?

23 A. You are correct.

24 Q. Now, that fighting with ULIMO continued for some
14:43:56 25 considerable period of time, didn't it?

26 A. You are correct.

27 Q. And effectively it resulted in ULIMO gaining large portions
28 of the western region bordering Sierra Leone.

29 A. You are correct.

1 Q. Now, the ULIMO forces, former President, was mostly made up
2 of former Doe supporters and ex-army, Liberian army, soldiers.
3 Isn't that right?

4 A. You are correct.

14:44:46 5 Q. Now, one consequence of ULIMO's offensive was to
6 effectively cut off the border between Sierra Leone and Liberia.
7 That is right, isn't it?

8 A. You are correct.

9 Q. And that border between Sierra Leone and Liberia was
14:45:08 10 effectively controlled by ULIMO from 1992 until the elections in
11 June 1997. That is right, isn't it?

12 A. You are correct. You are correct.

13 Q. And during that five year period the NPFL did not have
14 access to that part of the Sierra Leonean border, did they?

14:45:36 15 A. You are correct, they never.

16 Q. In late 1992, early 1993, a much larger ECOMOG force
17 entered Liberia, didn't it?

18 A. You are correct.

19 Q. And they began effectively trying to crush the NPFL?

14:46:15 20 A. You are correct.

21 Q. That force, consisting mainly of Nigerians, comprised about
22 15,000 troops, is that right?

23 A. You are correct.

24 Q. And effectively that ECOMOG force which entered Liberia in
14:46:35 25 late 1992/1993 succeeded in imposing a blockade on most of the
26 area controlled by the NPFL.

27 A. You are correct.

28 Q. And that caused food shortages, didn't it, in NPFL
29 controlled territories?

1 A. Yes, you are correct.

2 Q. And effectively prevented the NPFL from securing arms and
3 ammunition to defend itself?

4 A. You are correct.

14:47:15 5 Q. And furthermore, at or about that time the United Nations
6 imposed an arms embargo on all the warring factions in Liberia,
7 excluding ECOMOG.

8 A. You are correct.

9 Q. And appointed a special envoy for Liberia.

14:47:36 10 A. You are correct.

11 Q. Now, it was at or about that time, because the NPFL were so
12 beleaguered, that negotiations began between the NPFL and the
13 ECOMOG led forces. That is right, isn't it?

14 A. Yes, you are correct.

14:48:03 15 Q. And round about that time there occurred a massacre of 500
16 to 600 civilians at a displaced persons camp in Harbel, 50
17 kilometres from Monrovia. Do you remember that?

18 A. I remember that.

19 Q. Do you remember that initially the NPFL were being blamed
14:48:27 20 for that, weren't they?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. But it later turned out, from a UN commission of inquiry,
23 that it was the Liberian army which was in fact responsible.

24 A. Exactly. Exactly. I remember.

14:48:51 25 Q. Now, throughout this period it would be fair to say, would
26 it not, that your leader, Charles Taylor, was making valiant
27 efforts to secure peace leading to democratic elections in
28 Liberia?

29 A. You are correct.

1 Q. And at this time the NPFL hardly had enough weapons to
2 defend itself, would you agree?

3 A. I agree with you.

14:49:33 4 Q. Much less to be providing weapons to anybody else, because
5 you couldn't even find uniforms, food and ammunition to support
6 yourselves, could you?

7 A. No.

8 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Mr Griffiths, is that no they would not
9 provide weapons to anybody else, or no they could not afford
14:50:05 10 uniforms and food for themselves?

11 MR GRIFFITHS: Let me clarify, your Honour:

12 Q. Taking it in stages, former President, during this period
13 we are talking about - and we are talking about from roughly
14 1992/1993 up to the elections - it was a struggle for the NPFL to
14:50:23 15 arm and feed itself, wasn't it?

16 A. It was very difficult, yes.

17 Q. There weren't enough arms to go around within the NPFL,
18 were there?

19 A. You are correct. There was an embargo on the NPFL at the
14:50:44 20 time.

21 Q. And I say that for this reason: The NPFL did not have
22 access to arms to be giving away to other people, did they?

23 A. No, there was no arm at that time.

24 Q. But do you recall - and I am trying to foreshorten things
14:51:09 25 now - that some time in 1994 there was a peace agreement at
26 Akosombo?

27 A. Yes, Akosombo Peace Accord. That actually happened.

28 MR GRIFFITHS: That is A-K-O-S-O-M-B-O, your Honours:

29 Q. And that provided for a ceasefire which took effect on 28

1 December 1994. Do you remember that?

2 A. Yes, I remember that.

3 Q. And also established a timetable for disarmament beginning
4 in April 1995, is that right?

14:51:56 5 A. You are correct.

6 Q. Now, what I would like to do, please, is for us to look
7 together at some of the news reports which were referred to you
8 during your evidence-in-chief, dating from around this time in
9 1994. Do you follow me?

14:52:15 10 A. Yes, I am listening.

11 Q. Can we look first of all, please, at MFI-26. Could we put
12 it up on the screen, please. Okay?

13 A. Yes, I have seen it.

14 Q. Now, immediately one looks at this front page of the daily
14:52:58 15 news dated 3 March 1994, we get an idea of the forces at play in
16 Liberian society at this time. The main story is about ULIMO.
17 Do you see that?

18 A. I have seen it.

19 Q. Who were a major player in Liberia at that time, yes? Do
14:53:22 20 you agree?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. In the middle we see reference to the NPFL and an attack
23 upon a village. Do you see that?

24 A. Yes, I am looking at it.

14:53:35 25 Q. And then we see UNMIL, bottom right-hand corner, deploys in
26 Maryland County. Do you see that?

27 A. Yes.

28 Q. Because at this stage UNMIL were deploying throughout the
29 country, weren't they?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And let's just have a look at that article, because we need
3 to see what was happening on the ground in Liberia at the time
4 and how that might affect, for example, the shipment of arms
14:54:10 5 through that country. So let us just pick up this story about
6 General Opande. Do you see in the bottom right-hand corner?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. "Recently the chief military officer of UNMIL visited
9 Gbarnga, Yekepa, Logatuo, Ganta, Sanniquellie, Butuo, Tapita,
14:54:41 10 among others. In Gbarnga" - over the page it is picked up in the
11 bottom middle - "Tubmanburg, he discussed with the respective
12 authorities on the implementation of the military provisions of
13 the agreement reached on 15 February by parties to the Liberian
14 conflict. The CMO further discussed the submission of essential
14:55:14 15 information regarding numbers of combatants, locations, number of
16 prisoners of war and location of mines. In his visit to other
17 areas, not named in the release, the CMO assessed the state of
18 preparedness of the sites for the deployment of UNMIL and
19 ECOMOG."

14:55:39 20 Yes?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. So effectively what's happening at this time is this, is it
23 not: UNMIL and ECOMOG are deploying throughout the country, is
24 that right?

14:55:55 25 A. Yes.

26 Q. So from some time before March 1994 we have a widespread
27 ECOMOG and UNMIL presence in Liberia, is that right?

28 A. Yes, you are right.

29 Q. And they had set up checkpoints, road blocks on all major

1 routes throughout the country, is that right?

2 A. You are correct.

3 Q. There was equally an UNMIL and ECOMOG presence at Roberts
4 international airfield. That's right, isn't it?

14:56:49 5 A. You are correct.

6 Q. In fact, for much of this period Roberts international
7 airfield wasn't operational because it was bombed. That's right,
8 isn't it?

9 A. You are correct.

14:57:04 10 Q. It wasn't opened to international flights until 2002.

11 That's right, isn't it?

12 A. You are correct.

13 Q. We will come to that again in a bit more detail in a
14 moment. Now let's also have a look, shall we, at - let's also

14:57:29 15 have a look at MFI-27. Now this is January 1994?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And we have a snapshot of what's going on in the country.

18 Main story in The Inquirer, "Three civilians killed, others
19 wounded in ambush" and there is a story about that. But of equal
14:58:33 20 interest, to the right there is an article about "Ethnic politics
21 gains momentum". Do you see that?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And you remember me mentioning to you at an earlier stage
24 today about the development of divisions within Liberian society
14:58:53 25 on ethnic lines following the fall of the Doe government. Do you
26 remember me asking you about that?

27 A. Yes, I remember the question.

28 Q. Because there is something like 27 different tribes in
29 Liberia, isn't there?

1 A. You are correct.

2 Q. And let's just pause for a moment and have a look at this
3 article:

4 "A Liberian sociologist has observed that ethnic politics
14:59:22 5 in Liberia is having far wider ramifications than expected.
6 Mr Steve Jubwe, chairman of the sociology department of the
7 University of Liberia, said it is not far fetched to deduce the
8 inter-ethnic rivalries that are gradually gathering" - over the
9 page. I can't see where this story takes up. I think it has
15:00:16 10 been cut off, but again we have a flavour of what life was like
11 in Liberia at that time.

12 Madam Court Attendant, before you disappear I wonder if you
13 would put MFI-26 back up for me, please. I just want to clarify
14 one or two details about this article. In Liberia in 1994 the
15:01:19 15 NPFL did not control Monrovia, did they?

16 A. No.

17 Q. And most of the newspapers - in fact all of the newspapers
18 printed in Liberia are printed in Monrovia, aren't they?

19 A. Yes, at that time.

15:01:41 20 Q. In fact the only newspaper that was being printed within
21 NPFL controlled territory was The New Patriot?

22 A. Yes, you are correct.

23 Q. And that newspaper only came out - was it twice a month?

24 A. Yes, twice a month.

15:02:03 25 Q. Now I ask you for this reason, you see, because during your
26 evidence-in-chief you were referred to this newspaper, but the
27 thing is you would not have had access to this newspaper in 1994
28 because the NPFL were not in Monrovia. Do you follow me?

29 A. Just a minute. Did I refer to this newspaper saying what?

1 Q. You referred to this newspaper and said that you remembered
2 seeing this newspaper article recording certain events?

3 A. Yes, I saw this newspaper when it was brought to NPFL
4 controlled areas. There were a lot of accusations against the
15:02:53 5 NPFL. The NPFL did this and the NPFL did that. So I saw this
6 paper and read it and I said, "How could NPFL go to kill people
7 in this area when we do not even have guns even to fight with?"
8 So this was pure propaganda. That is what I knew. But I saw it.
9 What I said here was that I saw this paper. I didn't make

15:03:15 10 comments on the paper, but I saw it. I didn't make comments on
11 the killing, I didn't make comments on UNMIL's deployment. I
12 simply said that I saw this document. I have got a lot of
13 documents that I have at that time, newspapers from Monrovia area
14 into our own territory.

15:03:32 15 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Mr Griffiths, are you talking about
16 MFI-26 and is it a copy of The Patriot?

17 MR GRIFFITHS: MFI-20.

18 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: I thought the question you asked was
19 whether the witness ever had a copy of The Patriot, but MFI-26 is
15:03:56 20 not a copy of The Patriot.

21 MR GRIFFITHS: Is that MFI-26?

22 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: This is MFI-26.

23 MR GRIFFITHS: This is the document I want to ask the
24 witness about. It may be we are at cross-purposes. Is this the
15:04:07 25 document on the screen? Now this is the document I wanted to ask
26 the witness about:

27 Q. When you were being asked questions in chief you were shown
28 this paper The Daily News and asked if you recall reading this
29 article?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And my point is this: If this is a newspaper only printed
3 in Monrovia and the NPFL were not in Monrovia, how did you manage
4 to see it?

15:04:35 5 A. I can assure you that I had some papers even during the
6 time there was a checkpoint between Monrovia and Gbarnga. We
7 read newspapers from Monrovia every day. Even food was coming
8 from Monrovia to us and we knew how we got those papers. It is
9 not that I was agreeing with this paper, but the question was if
10 I have seen this paper and I said, "Yes, I saw it".

11 Q. So can I take it then that you disagree with this article
12 "NPFL burns 200 alive"?

13 A. I cannot say yes, because I wasn't there when NPFL burnt
14 these people. So automatically seeing the paper doesn't mean
15:05:22 15 that I was there when NPFL burnt or did not burn, but by looking
16 at this paper, yes, I remember this story.

17 Q. And what were your thoughts about this story at the time;
18 the one about the NPFL burns 200 alive?

19 A. These are papers we read and they had something like this,
15:05:46 20 NPFL did this, NPFL killed, NPFL Firestone massacre, NPFL, all
21 investigations will come and they will say NPFL, it was not NPFL.
22 We look at these things to be pure propaganda at the time,
23 because I was not on the scene where NPFL burned these people
24 alive. When the peace council was very - the peace council was
15:06:13 25 very active more than NPFL, they were supported by ECOMOG.

26 Q. Now this particular newspaper, The Daily News, which
27 faction in Liberia did it support or which faction sponsored it?

28 A. When it was - this peacemaking government, Amos Sawyer's,
29 Bamako came in they had their own papers and their own, you know,

1 write. They could write anything that they wanted to write
2 against NPFL at the time.

15:07:06 3 Q. Because would you agree that much of what was published in
4 those newspapers in Monrovia about the NPFL was the merest
5 propaganda?

6 A. Yes, during those years. During those years NPFL was
7 behind closed doors. We were in Gbarnga. Now the question you
8 asked me, to come back to you, people who were writing this
9 paper, how did they know that people in NPFL territory will kill
15:07:30 10 200 people alive? How? How?

11 Q. Well, exactly, because they weren't there so they were
12 making up these stories, weren't they?

13 A. Yes, by what means when NPFL was behind Gbarnga and you are
14 in Monrovia telling this story just to sell newspapers.

15:07:53 15 Q. Because the bottom line is much of the news reporting at
16 this time was totally inaccurate and propaganda driven, would you
17 agree?

18 A. I agree with that.

19 Q. So we need to take all of these articles, particularly
15:08:07 20 about the NPFL, with a very large pinch of salt? Do you
21 understand that phrase?

22 A. I understand.

23 Q. And would you agree?

24 A. I would agree in instances like they had some papers which
15:08:27 25 were - which are written by some men to make more money. If I
26 tell you some newspapers recently written by the democrats about
27 me here in The Hague, how I am staying hungry without food, how
28 my food is going to be poisoned, I will not survive, I will live
29 here for more than three years, my children in America are very

1 concerned whether I am checking my food properly. Those are
2 lies. I am here feeling good, sleeping well in one of the best
3 hotels in this country. Then why do you come up with such a
4 newspaper?

15:09:08 5 Q. Exactly. Exactly. And the other point to be made, former
6 President, is that - and I am merely quoting something that you
7 said - Liberia is the kind of place where rumours spread like
8 wildfire, don't they?

9 A. Exactly so.

15:09:27 10 Q. And it only takes one set of loose lips to set a story in
11 train and before you know it the whole country is reverberating
12 to the idea that something has gone wrong. That's right, isn't
13 it?

14 A. Yes, that's what happens in Liberia.

15:09:46 15 Q. Because even during this trial the phone connection between
16 The Hague and Liberia went down for a while and there was a huge
17 rumour that Charles Taylor had died. Do you remember that?

18 A. I remember. I was in Monrovia. I heard that.

19 Q. We are talking about just a couple of months ago, aren't
15:10:06 20 we? Weeks ago. That's right, isn't it?

21 A. That was even when I was in Monrovia I heard that he has
22 died.

23 Q. Because someone couldn't get through to him on the phone.
24 That's right, isn't it?

15:10:21 25 A. You are correct.

26 Q. So we need to bear all of that in mind when we are reading
27 these news reports, don't we?

28 A. Yes, you have to be careful whilst reading them.

29 Q. Now, bearing that in mind, let's speak in a little bit more

1 detail about ECOMOG and UNMIL. Now you have told us that from
2 about 1993 they were deployed - well, 1992 they were deployed
3 right throughout Liberia, weren't they?

4 A. Yes.

15:11:02 5 Q. And do you remember a Victor Malu?

6 A. Yes, Victor Malu, a field commander of ECOMOG.

7 Q. Is he a man you knew well?

8 A. No, I don't know Victor Malu very well.

9 Q. Did you not have any dealings with him?

15:11:33 10 A. No, I do not know Victor Malu very well. I do not know
11 him.

12 Q. Were you not the NPFL liaison officer with ECOMOG?

13 A. Yes. I had no direct dealing with Victor Malu at the time.

14 I dealt with some colonels, some lieutenants, who were also

15:11:59 15 responsible for the kind of job they were doing, not directly
16 with Malu.

17 Q. Now, part of the reason why ECOMOG and UNMIL had deployed
18 throughout the country was in order to speed up the disarmament
19 process.

15:12:22 20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Is that right?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And one way in which that was done was that anyone caught
24 at a check point with war materials, that is guns, ammunition and
15:12:44 25 so on, would have it confiscated, wouldn't they, by the ECOMOG
26 and UNMIL troops?

27 A. Yes, that was why they were there.

28 Q. And would you agree that during that period it would have
29 been virtually impossible to transport large quantities of arms

1 and ammunition through the country without it being intercepted
2 by either ECOMOG or UNMIL? Would you all agree?

3 A. Well, ECOMOG was in control of the country militarily, so
4 to just come out and tell you that was impossible, I would not
15:13:34 5 say, because they had the helicopters, they had other means to
6 assist anybody that dropped arms or ammunition to any destination
7 they chose to do. So that is a difficult question to answer.
8 ECOMOG became so powerful that they could take money and do
9 anything at that time and the Nigerians were known for that.

15:14:11 10 Q. I think we are at cross-purposes, former President. What I
11 am saying is because ECOMOG had got so powerful it was impossible
12 for the NPFL to transport large quantities of arms and ammunition
13 through the country. It would have been intercepted by ECOMOG,
14 wouldn't it?

15:14:39 15 A. That is what I am trying to answer. I wouldn't say no or
16 yes, because everybody had money and these people were money
17 making people. They would take money and take sides with anybody
18 at the time. I have got evidence to show, to tell you from what
19 I saw when we were fighting. When they are ready, today they
15:15:07 20 will be on your side and the next day they will be on the other
21 side, as long as you can stretch your hands to them.

22 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Mr Griffiths, sorry to interrupt, but
23 could we have a time frame for this piece of evidence?

24 MR GRIFFITHS:

15:15:22 25 Q. We are talking here, aren't we, for a period between about
26 1992 and 1997, the time of the elections, aren't we? Would you
27 agree?

28 A. Yes, yes, the time for election. Things were not that
29 controlled when these - as I told you, you might not know what

1 was happening in Liberia. These guys could do anything for
2 money. Apparently you can see visibly a check point, you could
3 see them moving with guns, you can see road blocks and sometimes
4 you can penetrate the road block.

15:16:13 5 Q. But bringing things further up to date, a council of State
6 was established involving all the warring parties, wasn't it?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Can you give me a date for that?

9 A. The council of State was just before the election. I
15:16:42 10 cannot be exact, but it was just before election.

11 Q. 1995?

12 A. 1995, 1995/1996. Between 1995 and 1996.

13 Q. Don't worry, that kind of ballpark date is very helpful.

14 All the warring factions were represented on that committee,
15:17:10 15 weren't they, on that council?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. NPFL, yes?

18 A. Yes, NPFL was represented.

19 Q. ULIMOs J and K?

15:17:26 20 A. They were represented, I agree.

21 Q. The Liberian Peace Council?

22 A. Yes, they were represented.

23 Q. And coalition forces?

24 A. Yes, they were represented.

15:17:38 25 Q. And all of those groups ordered their fighters to stand
26 down and ECOMOG took full control of both internal and external
27 security for the Republic of Liberia, is that right?

28 A. Yes, you are correct, but what was happening I will have to
29 enlighten you - your mind. It was you could see there was small

1 fire underneath. Everybody was not sure of what was happening.
2 Everybody had a back kick when ULIMO-K, ULIMO-J, NPFL - everybody
3 was still shaking to see who would become the President of
4 Liberia.

15:18:35 5 Q. And let's just elaborate a little bit more on that.

6 A. What I am saying is that I agree that there were road
7 blocks everywhere, everywhere ECOMOG could be seen, but what
8 equally also happened was that the peace that you are thinking
9 about was holding at the top. There were a lot of factions with
10 equipment. They had secret places. Some disarmed, some did not
11 disarm properly, some disarmed with rotten weapons, old guns. A
12 game was happening, a game was playing. Everybody was waiting to
13 see what was happening. I am telling you the facts.

15:19:05 14 Q. Former President, I fully agree with everything you have
15 said and I just want to elaborate a bit more on it.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Yes, the leaders of the various factions were sitting on
18 this council of State, but at ground level there was still a
19 great deal of tension, wasn't there?

15:19:59 20 A. Yes, I agree with you. Yes.

21 Q. And it wasn't just a great deal of tension, it was a great
22 deal of mistrust?

23 A. Exactly so.

24 Q. So that, for example, let us be frank about this --

15:20:14 25 A. Yes.

26 Q. -- although people were supposed to be giving up their
27 arms, everybody knew that some factions were burying their arms
28 in the jungle --

29 A. Exactly so.

1 Q. -- for some time in the future when they might need them
2 again and what they would do is they would hand over a few rusty
3 weapons in the hope that that would satisfy everyone. I am
4 right, aren't I?

15:20:40 5 A. You are correct. That is what I am telling you.

6 Q. So can we put it in this way: It was a very uneasy peace?

7 A. Yes, the peace was uneasy, people were not certain about
8 what is going to happen. Even during the election people were
9 still worried. People could dance, people could move, but there
10 was a little bit of hesitation, what is going to happen next and
11 trouble started anyway later.

12 Q. But, in any event, there was a degree of goodwill between
13 the people at the top.

14 A. Oh, yes, I agree with that.

15:21:30 15 Q. And the disarmament process continued, is that right?

16 A. Yes, it went on publicly. People saw what was happening.

17 Q. And that disarmament process was effectively completed by
18 the middle of 1996, wasn't it?

19 A. Yes, you are right.

15:21:57 20 Q. And so far as the arms which were collected during that
21 process, some were used to arm the police and the army who were
22 short of weapons, is that right?

23 A. Yes, yes.

24 Q. Some were used for training purposes, is that right?

15:22:19 25 A. You are correct.

26 Q. And also some were burnt?

27 A. Some were useless too. Some were all rusty and rotten.
28 They were no more useful.

29 Q. But some were indeed burnt, were they not?

1 A. They were burnt. They were burnt. They were cut into
2 pieces and burned.

3 Q. But pausing again for a moment and looking at the reality
4 of the situation, ULIMO had control, as we established earlier,
15:23:02 5 of the Liberian-Sierra Leone border.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And we had also established the ethnic links which crossed
8 those borders, yes?

9 A. Yes.

15:23:20 10 Q. And one of the things that was happening during this period
11 was that former ULIMO fighters were making money by selling their
12 arms across the border. That is right, isn't it?

13 A. You are correct. That was what I told you earlier.

14 Q. And there was a fairly brisk cross-border trade between
15:23:45 15 ULIMO and fighters in Sierra Leone, wasn't there?

16 A. I agree with you 100 per cent.

17 Q. And putting it bluntly, former President, we are talking
18 about free enterprise run riot in that part of Liberia at that
19 time. Everybody was out to make a fast buck, weren't they?

15:24:13 20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And in the forefront of that were these former ULIMO
22 fighters who effectively still controlled Lofa County. That is
23 right, isn't it?

24 A. Yes, to control their section, the areas under their
15:24:35 25 control.

26 Q. Now, we need to fit into our chronology of events the Abuja
27 Accord in 1995, don't we?

28 A. Yes.

29 Q. Now, one other detail. In 1996 there was an assassination

1 attempt against Charles Taylor, wasn't there?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Where did that assassination take place?

4 A. At the Executive Mansion in Monrovia.

15:26:16 5 Q. And someone died, didn't they?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Who was that?

8 A. That is General Jackson.

9 Q. And wasn't there a Nigerian soldier who was also injured
15:26:30 10 during that attempt?

11 A. Yes, a lot of people got injured. Some people fell, some
12 people fell from the mansion, from the top floor, and broke legs.

13 A lot of people got wounded.

14 Q. I am talking about a specific officer, a Nigerian called
15:26:50 15 Ali. Do you remember that?

16 A. Yes, he got wounded, yes.

17 Q. And he had to be shipped back to Nigeria for treatment?

18 A. You are correct.

19 MR GRIFFITHS: Would your Honours give me a moment? I am
15:27:29 20 grateful:

21 Q. The Ali I am talking about was a captain in the Nigerian
22 army, wasn't he?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Now eventually then elections were held in July 1997. Did
15:27:54 25 you campaign during that election?

26 A. Yes.

27 Q. Did you campaign throughout the country?

28 A. No, I campaigned in my area. That is to say the Tapita
29 area. And, yes, we supported the NPFL at the time - NPP at the

1 time, National Patriotic Party.

2 Q. Because by that stage that political party had been formed
3 by Charles Taylor --

4 A. Yes.

15:28:25 5 Q. -- in order to get involved in the democratic electoral
6 process, is that right?

7 A. You are correct.

8 Q. Did you join the NPP?

9 A. Yes, I joined the NPP. I am part of the NPP. It is my
15:28:50 10 party.

11 Q. Can I take it then that in the summer of 1997 when these
12 elections took place you remained a staunch supporter of the
13 principles of the NPFL?

14 A. Yes, I agree.

15:29:19 15 Q. And as far as you were concerned there was nothing about
16 the record of the NPFL hitherto which would want to cause you to
17 distance yourself from them?

18 A. Repeat your question, please.

19 Q. We have an invasion in 1989.

15:29:43 20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Eight years later in 1997 we have democratic elections in
22 which a party you support is participating.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Do you agree with that so far?

15:29:59 25 A. Yes.

26 Q. That party had grown out of a movement of which you were
27 one of the founder members?

28 A. Yes, yes.

29 Q. And my question is this: Nothing had occurred during that

1 eight year period for you to become concerned about continuing to
2 support that movement?

3 A. To be frank with you, as I am sitting here I will be frank.
4 I am still a member of the NPP, except that - except if the NPP
15:30:41 5 pushes me away, but I am still a member of the NPP. I have not
6 distanced myself from the National Patriotic Party. If they want
7 to push me out, they can push me out as they are doing. I don't
8 know why they should push me away, so --

9 PRESIDING JUDGE: Mr Griffiths, my understanding was that
15:31:02 10 this question was addressed to the NPFL, rather than the
11 political party. Am I correct?

12 MR GRIFFITHS: Your Honour, yes, and I was coming back to
13 it.

14 PRESIDING JUDGE: I see.

15:31:13 15 MR GRIFFITHS:

16 Q. What I am talking about is during that eight year period
17 there was nothing about the behaviour of the NPFL which would
18 cause you to want to distance yourself from that movement?

19 A. I had been pushed away by the NPFL, but I still belong to
15:31:44 20 the NPP. I have not officially resigned my post as a standard
21 bearer of the NPP when President Taylor left.

22 Q. No, former President, I think we are at cross-purposes.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Let's start again and approach it in stages. You agree,
15:32:07 25 don't you --

26 A. I agree to what?

27 Q. A couple of uninterrupted sentences and it will become
28 clear. You agree, don't you, that between 1989, the time of the
29 invasion, and the summer of 1997, the time of the elections, you

1 remained a staunch supporter of the NPFL?

2 A. Yes. I told you yes, except if I am pushed by the party,
3 but to me I am still a member of the party.

15:33:04

4 Q. I am not interested in what is happening now. I am merely
5 interested in that window of eight years between 1989 and 1997.
6 Believe me, former President, we will come to address the later
7 years later, but I am just concentrating, please, on that eight
8 year period and I would like you to focus your mind just for the
9 purpose of these next few questions on that period, okay?

15:33:34

10 A. I am still a supporter of the National Patriotic Party of
11 Liberia.

12 PRESIDING JUDGE: Mr Witness, it's not for me to tell
13 counsel how to run his question, but my understanding is that
14 counsel is not asking about the political party, but about the
15 NPFL, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia.

15:33:48

16 MR GRIFFITHS: Your Honour, yes.

17 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: And also he is not asking about current
18 status quo. He is asking you --

19 THE WITNESS: NPFL --

15:34:01

20 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Listen. The question relates to a time
21 frame from 1987 to 1997 - 1989 to 1997, not the current status
22 quo. So please focus.

23 THE WITNESS: Your Honour, your Honour, your Honour judge,
24 NPFL dissolved before 1997. There was no more NPFL in Liberia.

15:34:32

25 It had been dissolved. So whosoever belonged to the NPFL at that
26 time, if you still want to be on you considered yourself as NPP,
27 National Patriotic Party. It's the military wing. NPFL was the
28 military wing, it had been dissolved and if you were caught
29 calling yourself NPFL then who would be your leader then, because

1 it had been dissolved?

2 MR GRIFFITHS:

3 Q. My fault entirely, I'm sure. So let me ask the question
4 differently. During that period between 1989 and the elections
15:35:14 5 in 1997 did you still remain a staunch supporter of that movement
6 that you had been fighting for during that period?

7 A. Please come with your question again.

8 Q. Between 1989 and 1997, okay?

9 A. Yes.

15:35:47 10 Q. And I am picking those two parameters quite deliberately.
11 1989, 24 December is the invasion of Liberia by the NPFL?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. July 1997 are elections in Liberia which brings to power
14 President Taylor?

15:36:14 15 A. Yes.

16 Q. During that eight year period did you remain a staunch
17 supporter of the NPFL and the political party it became?

18 A. Yes, I remained with NPFL until it was dissolved.

19 Q. Pause there. And I am still concerned about that eight
15:36:44 20 year period, former President.

21 A. I am saying, yes, I was a member of the NPFL within those
22 eight years until it was dissolved in 1997.

23 Q. And the second part of the question is this: During that
24 eight year period did anything occur in terms of the behaviour of
15:37:13 25 either the NPFL or the NPP which caused you to want to distance
26 yourself from them?

27 A. I don't know. I have told you, yes, I was still a member
28 of the NPFL until it was dissolved. Then I don't know what else
29 do you want? What explanation do you want? When it became NPP

1 it was still a member of the National Patriotic Party. That
2 means I was still there.

3 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: The question Mr Witness remains --

4 THE WITNESS: Yes, can I understand.

15:37:53 5 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Could you listen for a moment. The
6 question relates to the following: During that period was there
7 anything in the behaviour of the movement that would have caused
8 you to want to disassociate yourself, the behaviour?

9 THE WITNESS: Judge, your Honour, within those eight years,
15:38:12 10 the eight years of NPFL before coming to '97?

11 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Yes.

12 THE WITNESS: Is that what he is referring to?

13 JUDGE SEBUTINDE: Yes.

14 THE WITNESS: A lot of things happened. Too many things
15:38:26 15 happened.

16 MR GRIFFITHS:

17 Q. Like what?

18 A. Lots and lots of things happened, the misbehaviour of our
19 soldiers. At that time I told you about the junior commandos
15:38:38 20 coming in, hand picked, they were the Executive Mansion Guards.
21 The ATU, they had no respect for you any more. They had their
22 own, you know, movement. They were saying no more time for NPFL,
23 your time was over. You are not commando from Libya. So a lot
24 of things happened that could even cause you to distance
15:39:03 25 yourself, but we were still on.

26 Q. I honestly think we are at cross-purposes here, former
27 President. I don't think you and I are reading from the same
28 page. Can I try one last time?

29 A. Okay.

1 Q. I see you looking at your watch and I know it has been a
2 long day.

3 A. No, I am not looking at the watch, except I am not too
4 well, but I am okay.

15:39:33 5 Q. Are you okay to carry on?

6 A. I am fine.

7 Q. The ATU and those other groups that you have mentioned,
8 they were formed after the elections, weren't they?

9 A. No, some came in before the election.

15:39:53 10 Q. Like which ones?

11 A. Like the Executive Mansion Guard. We used to call them
12 Executive Mansion Guard even when were still NPFL and they were
13 hand picked, there were a lot of boys, street boys, and the
14 youths were to become useful citizens. They were the closer
15 people to the President at the time, our commander-in-chief at
16 the time, and there were about thousands of them at various
17 locations. There was no more respect for you who had come from
18 Libya and sometimes it's difficult for you to come closer to the
19 residence of the President. And it went on and on and on that
15:40:36 20 could have caused anybody - caused everybody to keep away.

21 Q. What other things upset you?

22 A. Well, I was not upset per se. That was what I told you,
23 that I was still on. After all of these things I stayed on, with
24 the disrespect, with the level of training, the ideology that we
15:41:02 25 learnt from Libya and how could a man who was just hand picked
26 who has not been trained to do anything militarily would just
27 come and disrespect you? You won't be happy. You wouldn't be
28 happy. In fact they kept you away sometimes from your President,
29 from your leader whom you have brought, and he as a junior

1 commando has become so powerful than you who should have been. A
2 lot of things brought dissatisfaction, but we still kept on, we
3 kept going.

15:41:44 4 Q. I was actually talking about a period before he had even
5 become President. I was talking about a period from 1989 when
6 you are in the bush up until July 1997 when you are campaigning
7 as a prelude to a general election in Nimba County. That's the
8 period I'm talking about.

15:42:13 9 A. And I agreed with you. I agreed with you in the sense that
10 these junior commandos things started - they started ever since
11 we started fighting few years when junior commandos came in from
12 voluntary recruitment, people were coming in from Monrovia to
13 join. Some of these people had close contacts with the leader of
14 the organisation and they became so powerful that you cannot
15 penetrate them to even see your own leader. So those things
16 could cause a dissatisfaction to you. I understood your
17 question. It was not before the presidency. This thing had
18 started ever since before the President came into power in 1997.

15:43:02 19 Q. So help me, if you found this behaviour so distasteful why
20 did you campaign for the party in the election?

21 A. Oh, no, as a revolutionary this was not from the President.
22 It was from some individuals who were not learning about the
23 revolution and they could do anything to keep you away. So, I
24 mean, if this person I am talking about, if he had been someone
15:43:27 25 who was trained in Libya I would take it up the way we were
26 supposed to, but if we are talking about people like - I am
27 sorry, we can call them in Liberia gunner boys, they became so -
28 they brought themselves - they presented themselves so powerful
29 and that was very disgraceful to other members of the National

1 Patriotic Front, NPFL members, including me.

2 Q. Now, help me please. What else about what was happening at
3 that time did you find distasteful?

15:44:15

4 A. As far as I am concerned, to my knowledge that distasteful
5 behaviour they put up, you cannot come closer to the leader, we
6 had something called the Special Forces meeting which was
7 previously held at the President's residence where we could sit
8 and discuss. When this group became powerful, all of this cut
9 off. There were no more Special Forces meetings. They were the
10 boss decision makers. We questioned this thing on and on. So I
11 would rather campaign for the President. I mean it had nothing
12 to do with what you are talking about. Some people approached
13 matters differently. We stayed on as revolutionaries, but we
14 were not satisfied.

15:44:41

15 Q. I am going to try and approach this topic completely
16 differently. On Wednesday of last week do you remember telling
17 us this? You were talking about that shipment of arms that you
18 arranged to transport in three or four trucks from Cote d'Ivoire.

15:45:13

19 A. Okay, okay.

15:46:01

20 Q. From Cote d'Ivoire to Liberia. Do you remember?

21 A. Yes, yes.

22 Q. When, because the arms did not arrive immediately, it was
23 alleged that you were in cahoots with Prince Johnson and you were
24 arrested, investigated and then released. Do you remember?

15:46:20

25 A. I remember. That was the early stages of the revolution.
26 That was in 1990.

27 Q. And in that connection, you were asked about where the arms
28 were coming from and you indicated that it was coming from Libya.
29 My learned friend Mr Rapp asked you this, "And how did you know

1 where it was coming from?"

2 A. Did I say from Libya? You have got to bring me back,
3 because I cannot remember. The arms was in Abidjan and parked in
4 the gendarmerie compound and that is where I went to pick them
15:47:09 5 up. How do I know they were coming from Libya when I told you it
6 was in Abidjan?

7 Q. Let me read out the passage to you, "How did you know where
8 it" - that is the arms - "were coming from?" Your answer was
9 this, "Well, being the inspector general of the NPFL I should
15:47:33 10 know the time when and where those things were coming from. It
11 was not anything hidden from me", okay? Now, understand this,
12 former President --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- what I am interested in is the level of your knowledge.
15:47:53 15 Do you follow me?

16 A. Yes, I am understanding you.

17 Q. This is page 9839. So what, in effect, you were telling us
18 was this: Given the high position you enjoyed within the NPFL,
19 you should know certain things because those things were not
15:48:11 20 hidden from you. Do you remember telling us that Wednesday last?

21 A. Yes, you try to understand me too. I am saying that the
22 arms, it was not a secret. "Please go and collect the arms in
23 Abidjan. It is parked at the gendarmerie compound." That is not
24 hidden from me. I was informed directly by the chief and that
15:48:35 25 was where I went for the arms. I was not going to Libya, nor
26 Burkina Faso. I have no cause to lie and that was where we took
27 the arms from. It was in the gendarmerie compound in Abidjan.

28 Q. On that same day, Wednesday last - and I am still dealing
29 with the topic of your access to knowledge.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Page 9857.

3 A. Yes.

15:49:08

4 Q. You told us this, "I had very few field commanders who were
5 reporting to me directly of any happening, any illegal happenings
6 in their area ..."

7 A. Ah, yes, illegal happenings.

8 Q. "... and I was always on the field. I had a communication
9 in my car and a communication in my house.

15:49:28

10 Q. What was the form of this communication in your car?

11 A. It was a long range radio communication.

12 Q. And what kind of communication did you have in your
13 house?

15:49:44

14 A. The same kind of communication. For instance, you can
15 talk to me whilst I am in my house and you can talk to me
16 whilst I am in my car."

17 Pause there. Is that correct?

15:50:06

18 A. Yes, it is correct and I would say again, because I don't
19 want to be misquoted. I said anything in the field that was
20 illegal, that was supposed to be reported to me by any field
21 commander, was reported. I was responsible for crimes committed
22 against civilians, against peaceful people and that was the thing
23 I was referring to. I was not referring to people bringing arms
24 and them telling me arms have come. I accept that - I accept if
15:50:28 25 I am instructed by my chief to go there, but the way you are
26 taking it now it looks like you are going a different way.

27 Q. No, I am not. I will be quite frank with you so you know
28 where I am going. What I am interested in is your knowledge and
29 the first passage I have referred, to that passage says, "I am a

1 senior officer within the NPFL so therefore I should have access
2 to certain kinds of information." Do you agree with that?

3 A. Good, you are correct.

15:51:05

4 Q. This passage I am showing you now, what in effect you are
5 saying is, "I had access to radio communications so I knew what
6 was going on within the organisation." Am I right?

7 A. Whatsoever was put on radio, yes. If it is not on the
8 radio, I wouldn't know.

15:51:25

9 Q. But you had access to the radio and you had your own radio
10 operator?

11 A. Exactly, I had a radio operator. I had my open radio that
12 I listened to when I am driving.

15:51:41

13 Q. Because that is why you were able, through your radio
14 operator, to tell us that you heard that Johnny Paul Koroma had
15 been killed in the forest in Lofa County, over the radio, yes?

15:52:05

16 A. I said this was a rumour that I cannot approve. It was the
17 operator that told me in code that that was the code he heard. I
18 didn't follow it up because he said it was in code. It could be
19 that this thing was happening at this point. I didn't clearly
20 say that he was killed in Lofa County. We are talking about
21 code, if you can recollect that.

22 Q. Talking also about your sources of information, you also
23 told us on Wednesday, page 9871:

15:52:31

24 "We had our own newspaper, the Patriot newspaper, the
25 newspaper we used to read. It was once a month or twice a month.
26 We used to listen to that and it was printed by our own
27 organisation."

28 A. Yes, that is true. You are correct. You are correct.

29 Q. And it is also right, is it not, that you had access to the

1 BBC, CNN and other international broadcast media?

2 A. Yes, you are correct.

3 Q. And also when you were ambassador in Liberia - in Libya for
4 those three years --

15:53:12 5 A. Libya.

6 Q. -- you were coming back regularly to Liberia and
7 consequently, given your high position, you were kept up to date
8 as to what was happening within Liberia, weren't you?

9 A. Yes, what I was supposed to know, I will know.

15:53:48 10 Q. And in relation to another matter that you were asked
11 about, this was then on Thursday, you told us this, page 9972:

12 "I knew about it. This was a particular enemy offensive.
13 I had been Vice-President. I had been inspector general of the
14 organisation. I had been nearly everything. I was not present
15 in the meeting, but I must know. Most of the times I told you,
16 there were informations I received and some happened in my
17 presence myself."

18 Do you agree with that?

19 A. I agree with that 100 per cent.

15:54:41 20 Q. And you would also agree, would you not, that during that
21 time when you were ambassador to Libya --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- that would have been one of the most important foreign
24 appointments within the Liberian government?

15:54:58 25 A. I agree with you.

26 Q. Because, not to put too fine a point on it, Colonel Gaddafi
27 was one of the biggest supporters of Liberia during that time,
28 yes?

29 A. Yes, he is still supporting Liberia.

1 Q. And of course as ambassador it would behove you to keep up
2 to date with events within your own country so that you could
3 discharge your duties as your country's ambassador in Libya.

4 A. You are correct. You are correct.

15:55:43 5 Q. Remember we are still talking about here access to
6 information. Page 9974 of Thursday's transcript, you were being
7 asked about the underground bunker which you told us existed at
8 the back of White Flower and the question was this, "Well, if it
9 was highly restricted, how did you know about it?", and your
10 answer was, "Oh, I should know. I should know. As inspector
11 general, as ambassador, as Vice-President, I must know. I must
12 know. If I was not supposed to know, then I must ask." Do you
13 agree with that?

14 A. Yes, if I don't know I will ask you, "What is this? What
15 is this?" Somebody has to tell me and they won't refuse telling
16 me anything because I had a big post in the NPFL. Like other
17 people too, like any other person.

18 Q. And the final piece of your evidence that I want to remind
19 you about again comes from Thursday, page 10020. This was just
15:57:00 20 before 4 o'clock, about this time last Thursday: "Okay, witness,
21 how did you find out? You just told us this account of Vaye and
22 Yormie going to white Flower, who told you about what happened at
23 White Flower?" This is your answer and I want you to listen
24 carefully.

15:57:24 25 A. Yes.

26 Q. "It was very, very easy to find out. With President Taylor
27 being President, the majority of his bodyguards were from my
28 ethnic group"?

29 A. Yes.

1 Q. "They were from Nimba and as we were working, anything that
2 happened at the mansion, if I wanted to know I would know,
3 because he wouldn't know they were related to me, but they were
4 very close to me and they will tell me that this happened today,
15:57:57 5 that happened yesterday and this was the plan. The President was
6 leaving behind him and he was going to so and so place, so that
7 was how I managed to know and he did not know that the people who
8 were around him, most of them were my tribesmen, so most times
9 they gave me messages and information."

15:58:25 10 Is that right?

11 A. That is correct.

12 Q. So effectively, just to elaborate on that last point a
13 little bit, you effectively had your spies amongst President
14 Taylor's bodyguards, didn't you?

15:58:44 15 A. They were not spies. They were --

16 Q. Not spies in that sense, but you had your sources of
17 information, didn't you?

18 A. Let me tell you further. There were boys of Taylor,
19 discourteous people I told you, they were not trained, they were
15:59:05 20 hand picked, they were not professional. Let me tell you I am
21 only referring to myself, but if President Taylor was leaving
22 today all the girlfriends in Monrovia would know. They would go
23 and sit somewhere and say, "Look, the President is going to The
24 Gambia and I am going on a trip. The President is going to
15:59:23 25 Burkina Faso, I will be on the trip." By the time you get to
26 your house people in your house would tell you that the President
27 is travelling. He is going - he is leaving the country tomorrow
28 at 10 o'clock. Is that how a professional bodyguard is supposed
29 to behave? If they were professional they would keep the

1 President's secret. You don't take it outside. The President -
2 it happens, the person knows that, they will say I am not telling
3 anybody I am going". They just say, look, this time I will just
4 leave. I won't tell anybody.

16:00:02 5 Q. Former President, do you know something --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. -- if you didn't always think I was trying to set a trap
8 for you, you would probably understand my questions a lot better,
9 you know.

16:00:18 10 A. Yes.

11 Q. The only point I am making is this: From the positions you
12 held within the country, from the access you had to certain
13 information, from the fact that you had these contacts within the
14 Executive Mansion as illustrated by this passage, you were

16:00:39 15 someone in the know, weren't you?

16 A. Well, I say yes again because people will come - people
17 will come with stories and they would end up in my hand and I
18 would find out. What happens if I meet a girl walking and she
19 says, "Look, they say your President is travelling tomorrow",
20 then I become concerned. I won't say yes. I will go after that
21 information to make sure that the information is correct, because
22 I didn't know. I should know as Vice-President or as ambassador
23 and the girl in the street would know the movement of my
24 President. If you were there at the time that could be your
25 concern. "How do you know? Who told you?" Then by that you
26 will get the information. Sometimes it is correct.

16:01:22

27 Q. In any event, despite all that we have spent the last ten
28 minutes discussing, you had no direct knowledge concerning arms
29 supplied by Charles Taylor to the AFRC or the RUF. That's right,

1 isn't it?

2 A. Now this is a question I want to answer strictly to you. I
3 am aware that President Taylor had sent people to Sierra Leone
4 with Sierra Leone rebel leader into Sierra Leone, but I did not
16:02:25 5 see arms being shipped. I did not see arms being given to
6 anybody to go into Sierra Leone. But what I did see, I saw men
7 going to Sierra Leone. By his own mouth Dpoe Menkarzon who was
8 one of the commanders, he is my boy, he had worked under me and
9 he will boast that he is coming from Sierra Leone.

16:02:51 10 When I heard before that they were coming from Kuwait and
11 other people told me that Kuwait was Sierra Leone, my radio
12 operator. But besides that when Dpoe returns - returned he told
13 me - there were two persons who told me. There was Dpoe, there
14 was Namayan Kollie who happened to be my last bodyguard, he also
16:03:15 15 was in Sierra Leone. He speaks Krio and he was teaching me Krio
16 and I asked him, "How do you know?" He said, "Look, I have been
17 in Sierra Leone, we were fighting in there". So he did not talk
18 about arms, he did not tell me how many arms he took along. I
19 cannot tell you anything about arms shipment into Sierra Leone,
16:03:33 20 but I would tell you that Liberians were fighting - in Sierra
21 Leone fighting.

22 Q. And I take it from your answer that despite the various
23 sources of knowledge you had, despite the high position you had,
24 you know nothing at all about arms shipments to Sierra Leone?

16:03:58 25 A. I wouldn't know because I was - as inspector general I
26 should know. I am not responsible for arms. I am not in the
27 armoury to know how many arms were leaving the country and going
28 where. What I do know is if you commit a crime I go after you.
29 If you are under my authority I will arrest you. So that is what

1 I should know. But checking the authority or checking commanders
2 going to Sierra Leone to see how many arms you were caring, do
3 you know what trouble I would have got into? What was my
4 concern? What concerned me was what I tried to investigate. I
16:04:37 5 cannot go and say, "Look, you are carrying a truckload of arms to
6 Sierra Leone". No, no, no, no.

7 Q. Let me be quite clear that I understand your evidence.
8 From 1989 inspector general, through ambassador, through
9 Vice-President, at no stage did you know anything about arms
16:05:05 10 shipments to Sierra Leone? I want to be clear. Is the answer
11 yes or no?

12 A. Look, let me enlighten you. Arms shipment going to Sierra
13 Leone is far from my knowledge. The reason is that as inspector
14 general of the NPFL and the NPFL come into being, Mataba says we
16:05:34 15 were coming to Liberia to release the oppressed people, people
16 who have been under siege by Samuel Doe's government and who were
17 not living freely. If I would have known that arms given to us
18 to come and fight to liberate ourselves were for Sierra Leone I
19 would have told you right here and say the arm was going to
16:05:55 20 Sierra Leone.

21 Q. Next topic. Despite your access to knowledge and your high
22 position you have no knowledge regarding cash support from
23 Charles Taylor to the AFRC/RUF?

24 A. No, I wouldn't know.

16:06:23 25 Q. Despite your access to knowledge and your position within
26 the administration, you have no knowledge concerning diamond
27 consignments going to Charles Taylor or Charles Taylor's
28 management of buyers for the AFRC/RUF. Is that right?

29 A. I don't know anything about a piece of rock going to

1 Charles Taylor from RUF to Taylor or from - from RUF to Taylor or
2 from Taylor to RUF.

3 Q. You know nothing at all about any such transactions?

4 A. No. Mostly diamonds, no.

16:07:17 5 Q. By way of example, at no stage did any one of Taylor's
6 bodyguards mention to you as a fellow Nimba County man, "Guess
7 what, chief, I have just seen someone going into White Flower
8 with a mayonnaise jar full of diamonds". Did anyone say anything
9 like that to you?

16:07:43 10 A. No, no, no, no. What I mentioned about mayonnaise jar was
11 that regarding Sam Bockarie that he showed that he had come with
12 and what he had and what he said he had left it. Whether it went
13 left or right or whom he gave it to, no, I do not know about
14 that.

16:08:03 15 Q. The reason I ask, you see, is we have heard so much about
16 mayonnaise jars. There must be a whole warehouse of them in
17 White Flower, because it seems to be the preferred method of
18 transport for diamonds and so that's why I am asking you about
19 mayonnaise jars. Did no-one ever mention to you that, "You know,
16:08:27 20 he's got a stockpile of mayonnaise jars at the back of White
21 Flower"?

22 A. No, no, no, no. Mine is from Sam Bockarie in Cocopa
23 plantation. That was where that jar was disclosed to Harrison
24 Karnwea, the man whose house Sam Bockarie was living in. He saw
16:08:51 25 him with a refugee's bag with US dollars and he said, "This is my
26 life and this is all I am working for and anywhere I went to I
27 will take this with me." He told Harrison that and Harrison told
28 me, but then I did not see somebody handing diamonds to the
29 former President at no time.

1 Q. Moving on to another matter, despite your position and
2 sources of knowledge --

3 A. Yes, your Honours. Your Honours, please.

4 PRESIDING JUDGE: [Microphone not activated].

16:09:35 5 THE WITNESS: I want to - please, I am sorry. I am sorry,
6 Mr Griffiths.

7 MR GRIFFITHS: Not at all.

8 THE WITNESS: I will come to answer your questions.

9 Your Honour, I am sorry.

16:14:12 10 PRESIDING JUDGE: That is all right, Mr Witness. So long
11 as you are comfortable.

12 THE WITNESS: I am very sorry.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE: We will be able to continue.

14 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

16:14:22 15 MR GRIFFITHS:

16 Q. The good news, former President, is you only [overlapping
17 speakers] so just stay with me for another 15 minutes.

18 A. Thank you.

19 Q. Now, we are still talking about the state of your
16:14:41 20 knowledge, okay?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. We have finished speaking about diamonds. Now, would it be
23 fair to say that you have no knowledge concerning radio
24 communications between former President Taylor and the AFRC/RUF?

16:15:03 25 A. No. Concerning what?

26 Q. Any kind of military operations, or anything like that?

27 A. Except things I heard on radios and they were referring to
28 RUF controlled areas as Kuwait, but that besides, nothing as
29 such, nothing.

1 Q. And let's just be clear about this. The period you are
2 talking about, when you heard Sierra Leone being referred to as
3 Kuwait, was when Dpoe Menkarzon was going in and out of Sierra
4 Leone.

16:15:48 5 A. Yes, that was the time.

6 Q. And that was the period between August 1991 and May 1992,
7 wasn't it?

8 A. You are correct.

9 Q. And that is the only period when you heard reference to RUF
16:16:07 10 Kuwait on the radio?

11 A. Yes, yes, that was the initial communication when NPFL, or
12 Taylor's forces, went into Sierra Leone. I was in fact assigned
13 in the southeastern region of Liberia. I was in charge of Sinoe,
14 Maryland, Grand Gedeh, yes, and I will only come to Gbarnga on
16:16:36 15 holidays, or if I had important reports I will come to brief the
16 chief on the matter. But I was not stationed in Gbarnga during
17 the years that the war was fought in the RUF areas in Sierra
18 Leone.

19 Q. Do you know anything, despite your position and access to
16:17:03 20 knowledge, about a military operation called Spare No Soul?

21 A. No, I don't know.

22 Q. You have never heard that phrase?

23 A. I heard a lot of things, but I cannot recollect that - we
24 had other codes like Jungle Fire, No Monkeys and other things,
16:17:43 25 but I had not heard that particular phrase that you are talking
26 about from anybody.

27 Q. Did you ever hear that phrase, "Spare No Soul", on the
28 radio?

29 A. Oh, no, that is not the kind of communication they would

1 put on radio. What they put on radio were the locations of
2 persons, or locations of men, a name of town, but they wouldn't
3 say that, "This is Spare No Soul." If they did, they would be
4 exposing themselves and so I don't think that was necessary to be
16:18:26 5 put on radio.

6 Q. Next, despite your position and access to knowledge, did
7 you ever hear any reference to a military operation called No
8 Living Thing?

9 A. I would say no again.

16:19:03 10 Q. Despite your access to knowledge and position within the
11 administration, do you know anything about any Liberian
12 involvement in the Freetown invasion?

13 A. The invasion of Freetown, no, I wouldn't know. Inside
14 Freetown, no.

16:19:33 15 Q. What I am asking about is this: Despite your position and
16 access to knowledge, did you hear anything about Liberian
17 involvement in the invasion of Freetown?

18 A. The only way I could hear about the Liberian invasion were
19 rumours and communication and accusation that Liberia was
16:20:09 20 involved in the war, that Liberia was declaring war on Freetown.
21 Those were on radios, they were in newspapers, but that besides,
22 I did not hear particular individuals talking about war in
23 Freetown.

24 Q. Were you party to any discussions regarding such a topic in
16:20:29 25 Monrovia, or anywhere else in Liberia?

26 A. Repeat the question, please.

27 Q. Were you involved in discussions with anyone in Liberia or
28 Sierra Leone regarding the invasion of Freetown?

29 A. That I can't remember. Not to my knowledge.

1 Q. Are you aware of any direct instructions given by Charles
2 Taylor to either Foday Sankoh, or any other senior commander
3 within the RUF?

4 A. Well, in my statement what I said was that the only time I
16:21:32 5 saw Foday Sankoh in Gbarnga was when the war was on and he said
6 to me that he had come to talk to President Taylor, Mr Taylor,
7 that his boys were committing atrocities, they were killing
8 people, they were looting and that he went to Sierra Leone to
9 liberate his people, that he did not like the idea and so that
16:21:59 10 was what he came to tell the President and if he did not get the
11 response, he will know what to do. That was how I got to know,
12 because it was the owner of the revolution that was talking and
13 so I actually concluded that they were actually in there
14 fighting.

16:22:19 15 Q. No, my question is very different, you see.

16 A. Yes, what is it?

17 Q. Did you ever hear Charles Taylor giving orders to Foday
18 Sankoh as to what to do in Sierra Leone?

19 A. I said no, no.

16:22:48 20 Q. Did you ever hear Charles Taylor give instructions to any
21 senior RUF commander as to military operations within Sierra
22 Leone?

23 A. No.

24 Q. Did you ever hear Charles Taylor give instructions to any
16:23:33 25 senior RUF commander as to the need to control certain diamond
26 mining areas within Sierra Leone?

27 A. No, I said no. I say no again, no.

28 Q. Are you aware of any regular radio communications between
29 Charles Taylor and any senior RUF commander throughout the period

1 that you were Vice-President, that is from when you became
2 Vice-President until he stepped down and went into exile in
3 Nigeria?

4 A. I will say no.

16:24:44 5 Q. Now, the period when Foday Sankoh made complaint to you
6 about the behaviour of NPFL forces within Sierra Leone, that was
7 in the period August 1991 to May 1992, wasn't it?

8 A. Yes, yes, this was in 1991 when this complaint was made.

9 Q. I am grateful. Help me with this: Who was in direct
16:25:20 10 command during that period, 1991 to 1992, of NPFL soldiers in
11 Sierra Leone?

12 A. This is another thing I have to say. The biggest man at
13 that time in Sierra Leone from the side of the NPFL was Dopoe
14 Menkarzon. That was the only man that I knew, but there were
16:25:52 15 several others in there. There was Dopoe Menkarzon, there was
16 Christopher Varmoh and there was Namayan Kollie, but Namayan
17 Kollie was not in command and he told me that the biggest man
18 they had there at the time was Dopoe Menkarzon who was
19 restricting them not to move, not to do this, he will seize their
16:26:17 20 things when they tried to bring them, when they looted he will
21 jail them, he will tie them up. He said all types of things
22 about the ill-treatment our own commander gave to them and Dopoe
23 Menkarzon was then the head.

24 But in Sierra Leone he further said that the most senior
16:26:38 25 man they reported to at the time Dopoe Menkarzon on this side was
26 Dopoe Menkarzon and in return Dopoe Menkarzon will report to
27 Foday Sankoh and at the time Foday Sankoh was the chief. He was
28 the commander-in-chief at that time.

29 Q. So Foday Sankoh was the commander-in-chief in Sierra Leone

1 at that time?

2 A. Yes, yes.

3 Q. And would it be fair to say after NPFL troops were
4 withdrawn from Sierra Leone in 1992, bearing in mind of course
16:27:13 5 ULIMO's control of the border from 1992 to 1997 - are you
6 following me so far?

7 A. Yes, I am getting you.

8 Q. Would it be fair to say that the only knowledge you have of
9 a link between Liberia and what was happening in Sierra Leone is
16:27:37 10 limited to that period 1991 to 1992? Would you agree?

11 A. Well, I would be lost in the dates, but the events with
12 everything I am saying here, they happened, but the individual
13 dates I cannot recollect.

14 Q. Let me try again.

16:28:01 15 A. Yes.

16 Q. The period when Dpoe Menkarzon was in Sierra Leone was
17 1991 to 1992?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. You agreed with me earlier.

16:28:14 20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Would it be fair to say that so far as you were concerned
22 Sierra Leone, Kuwait its code name, disappeared from your
23 consciousness thereafter?

24 A. Yes.

16:28:32 25 MR GRIFFITHS: Would that be a convenient time, your
26 Honour?

27 PRESIDING JUDGE: Indeed, Mr Griffiths, if that is a good
28 part of your cross-examination, we are almost up to the time.

29 Mr Witness, it is almost the time to close for today. We

1 will be resuming tomorrow morning at 9.30 and I again remind you
2 as I have done on other afternoons that you must not discuss your
3 evidence with any other person.

4 THE WITNESS: Your Honour.

16:29:04 5 PRESIDING JUDGE: Thank you. We will adjourn until 9.30
6 tomorrow morning.

7 [Whereupon the hearing adjourned at 4.30 p.m.
8 to be reconvened on Tuesday, 20 May 2008 at
9 9.30 a.m.]

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WITNESSES FOR THE PROSECUTION:

MOSES ZEH BLAH 10100

CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR GRIFFITHS 10100