

## Chapter Twelve



## Role of the United States



## Chapter Twelve. Role of the United States

Our fathers brought them here, and we are bound if possible to repair the injuries inflicted by our fathers. Could they be sent to Africa, a three-fold benefit would arise. We should be cleared of them; we should send to Africa a population particularly civilized and Christianized for its benefits; our blacks themselves would be put in better condition.<sup>1</sup>

- *Letter from Robert Finley, founding member of the American Colonization Society, dated Feb. 15, 1815, on the subject of "deportation" of "Negros" from America back to Africa*

In 1822, the U.S. government and many of its most prominent citizens became responsible for the creation of the nation known as Liberia. In the decades since, the United States has alternately supported, exploited, welcomed, and abandoned Liberia and Liberians. While the relationship over time has been complex, during several key periods the U.S.' actions and omissions have led to disastrous results for Liberians.

Liberia was one expedient solution to America's domestic crisis concerning slavery. In 1815, prominent whites advocating for a return of America's Negro population to Africa were known as "deportationists."<sup>2</sup> They created an organization called the American Colonization Society (ACS) to coordinate their efforts. They lobbied Congress and solicited the support of faith groups, humanitarians, business leaders, and politicians all in an effort to, as Thomas Jefferson put it, "gradually [draw] off" America's black population.<sup>3</sup> The "deportation," or "colonization," effort received funding from Congress, procured in part through the efforts of James Monroe. American ACS agents selected which settlers would be permitted to travel to establish the colony.

In 1822, a permanent ACS settlement was established at Cape Mesurado<sup>4</sup> in the territory of the indigenous West African Dei tribe.<sup>5</sup> This settlement would later develop into Monrovia. Other settlements supported by colonization societies in several states in the United States (Maryland, Georgia, Pennsylvania, for example) followed the initial settlement, establishing themselves in the traditional territories of other indigenous African ethnic groups such as the Vai, Bassa, Grebo, Gola, and Kru.<sup>6</sup>

For the first 25 years of their existence, the ACS settlements were governed by white agents from the United States.<sup>7</sup> Today in Liberia, landmarks and streets still bear the names of these agents and founding ACS members.<sup>8</sup> But in light of dwindling support from the ACS in the 1840s, and to secure their ability to levy customs and duties on trade routes, the settlers declared Liberia to be a free republic in their Declaration of Independence of 1847.<sup>9</sup>

The new republic established a constitution patterned after the U.S. constitution,<sup>10</sup> and created a

national seal with the motto “The Love Of Liberty Brought Us Here.”<sup>11</sup> When the Liberian settlers declared independence, however, the U.S. government refused to establish diplomatic relations because Southern states objected to the presence of a black ambassador in Washington, DC.<sup>12</sup> Even though other nations, including Great Britain and France, swiftly recognized Liberia, it took 15 years for the United States to do so. Ultimately, in the midst of the Civil War and concerns that Liberia would levy duties and taxes on U.S. commercial shipping if diplomatic recognition were not granted,<sup>13</sup> Abraham Lincoln extended formal recognition in 1862.<sup>14</sup>

### **OUR FAIR SHARE: U.S. COMMERCIAL INTERESTS IN LIBERIA**

Every day adds to our knowledge of the moral and physical powers, capacities, and productions of the inhabitants and soil of this region, and no doubt is entertained that the returns must soon reach tens of millions of dollars per annum. If we desire to obtain our fair share of its benefits, let our rulers avoid no opportunity to uphold and cherish the trade of this important region.<sup>15</sup>

- *The Philadelphia North American* (1862)

A significant driver in the relationship between the United States and Liberia has been U.S. commercial interests. Commercial relations between the United States and Liberia often benefited U.S. interests at the expense of the majority of Liberians. In the 1920s, U.S. demand for rubber was growing in conjunction with the growth of the U.S. auto industry. To break British dominance in the global rubber market, the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company (“Firestone”) sought, with assistance from the U.S. State Department,<sup>16</sup> a concession from the Liberian government to tap Liberia’s significant rubber resources. In exchange for a five million dollar loan from Firestone (which Liberia subsequently used to settle its foreign debt), Liberia leased one million acres for 99 years at a price of six cents per acre. According to some scholars, Firestone never carried out many of its promises to develop Liberia’s infrastructure, and the loan was designed to keep Liberia permanently indebted.<sup>17</sup> In addition, the Firestone agreement gave the company ownership of any minerals or oil found in the leased area.<sup>18</sup> In the late 1920s and early 1930s, Firestone, along with other international entities, was implicated in a forced labor scandal that led to a League of Nations investigation. The Liberian government was ultimately found to have used slavery-like practices to supply laborers to Spanish controlled plantations as well as to the Firestone rubber plantation.<sup>19</sup> A League of Nations inquiry found, however, that there was “no evidence that Firestone Plantations Company consciously employs any but voluntary labour on its leased rubber plantations.”<sup>20</sup>

Almost a century after the League of Nations inquiry, Firestone remains under scrutiny for unfair labor practices amounting to forced labor and child labor. Firestone is currently the subject of a civil

lawsuit in U.S. federal court related to unfair labor practices.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, the U.S. government has continued its support for Firestone. During the conflict period when most industries in Liberia were sanctioned to prevent use of resources to fuel the conflict, rubber remained in legal production. While the United Nations gave some consideration to imposing sanctions on Liberia's rubber industry in October 2001, U.S. lobbying on behalf of Firestone and its strong condemnation of the potential economic impact prevented the Security Council from taking further action.<sup>22</sup>

In addition to rubber, mining of Liberia's iron ore<sup>23</sup> and diamonds brought a steady influx of U.S. dollars into Liberia and a steady profit to multinational corporations until the late 1970s. A U.S. government memorandum prepared in the late 1970s estimated U.S. economic interests in Liberia to be in excess of \$300 million in assets.<sup>24</sup> One of these significant assets included the Liberian Maritime Registry, which was run by a U.S.-based company that remitted profits to the Government of Liberia.



Liberia's mineral wealth and its maritime registry benefited U.S. corporate interests up through the Taylor regime. For example, the American televangelist Pat Robertson's Freedom Gold Ltd. signed an agreement with Taylor in 1999 to gain development rights to diamonds and gold in Liberia.<sup>25</sup> Despite the Liberian government's refusal to ratify the agreement, Freedom Gold started a diamond-mining venture in southeastern Liberia in 2000. Subsequently, it became known that Taylor had a ten percent ownership interest in Freedom Gold.<sup>26</sup> In 1999, the Taylor government signed an agreement to transfer administration of the maritime registry to the Liberian International Ship and Corporate Registry (LISCR), a U.S. company run by Taylor associates.<sup>27</sup>

This change provided Taylor with the opportunity to divert millions of dollars from the shipping industry. In addition to providing funds to Taylor, LISCR directly or indirectly aided Taylor and the civil war by agreeing to send registry revenue to non-governmental bank accounts.<sup>28</sup> A U.N. Panel of Experts found that this money was used for the delivery of weapons.<sup>29</sup>

### **THE HEIGHT OF U.S. INVOLVEMENT: MILITARY AND FOREIGN POLICY EXPEDIENCY**

Apart from commercial benefits, the United States has played a significant military and policy role in Liberia, gaining important strategic benefits by doing so. In 1910, at the request of the Liberian

government, the U.S. Navy sent two war ships to the Liberian coast.<sup>30</sup> Their presence assisted the Liberian Frontier Force in warding off attacks from indigenous armies.<sup>31</sup> Later, from 1912 until 1922, the Frontier Force, which later became the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), was led by African-American U.S. military personnel.<sup>32</sup>

The two nations maintained a bilateral military relationship, with the United States positioning its strategic interests and assets within Liberia, and Liberia posing a number of requests for military assistance. Such military agreements began early with a 1942 defense pact between Liberia and the United States.<sup>33</sup> In 1959, the United States and Liberia signed another defense pact, which provided Liberians with a sense of security and the belief that the United States would come to its aid in case of attack.<sup>34</sup> The United States gained significant strategic assets based on its interactions with Liberia. These included use of Robertsfield International Airport “without restriction to support [U.S.] policy objectives,” a communications station that provided communications for 34 U.S. Embassies and Consulates in Africa, the OMEGA Navigational Station, the Voice of America transmitter and receiver facilities, and the right to establish military installations in the Monrovia port, according to a U.S. Embassy memorandum, “should they become necessary for the maintenance of international peace and security.”<sup>35</sup>



During the latter part of the 1970s, however, the relationship between Liberia and the United States began to deteriorate as President Tolbert adopted a more conciliatory policy towards non-aligned countries.<sup>36</sup> Immediately after the 1980 coup, the United States sought to protect important U.S. assets in Liberia and prevent the spread of socialism.<sup>37</sup> Accordingly, the United States embraced the Doe administration so as to counteract the influence of the Ethiopians, Libyans, and Russians.<sup>38</sup>

Former Liberian Minister of State for Presidential Affairs Elwood Dunn has characterized the early years of the Doe administration as the height of U.S. involvement in Liberia.<sup>39</sup> Between the 1980 coup and the 1985 elections, the United States contributed some \$402 million in aid to Liberia, accounting for more than one-third of the country’s operating budget.<sup>40</sup> Doe made abundant requests for military assistance, leading one State Department official to refer to them as “stock” (i.e., standard) requests.<sup>41</sup> Doe also ensured that Liberia supported U.S. policy objectives by closing the Libyan diplomatic mission in Liberia, ordering reductions in the size of the Soviet mission, and establishing diplomatic relations with Israel.<sup>42</sup>

Generally speaking, during the early Doe years the United States was relatively successful in extracting gains for human rights and democratic reforms in exchange for aid. Early efforts to encourage Doe to respect human rights included the condemnation by State Department officials of the 1980 executions<sup>43</sup> and continuous urging of respect for due process rights of political prisoners.<sup>44</sup> State Department officials often attempted to leverage Liberia's dependence on international creditors, stressing the relation between political legitimacy and private investment.<sup>45</sup> The Reagan administration played an important role in pushing for the 1985 elections, assisting with constitutional reform, getting the ban on political activity lifted, and securing the release of political prisoners.<sup>46</sup>

After the contentious 1985 elections in which Doe declared himself the winner, however, the U.S.' failure to withdraw support for Doe "shocked" many Liberians.<sup>47</sup> According to some reports, Doe had been selected by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency as one of a select group of foreign heads of state to benefit from a special security and intelligence assistance program that provided him with "head-of-state" protection.<sup>48</sup> These operations gave the U.S. government access to important intelligence and thus a vested interest in keeping its friends in power.<sup>49</sup>

It has also been reported that shortly after the 1985 elections, the United States provided intelligence to Doe warning him of a coup attempt that was being planned by Doe's PRC co-founder, Thomas Quiwonkpa.<sup>50</sup> Quiwonkpa's coup attempt failed, Quiwonkpa was brutally murdered, and Doe unleashed a campaign of revenge attacks across the country. Although the United States decreased aid levels during the second half of the 1980s,<sup>51</sup> the United States was still providing more aid per capita to Liberia than to any other West African nation.<sup>52</sup> Despite condemnations from Congress regarding the conduct of the 1985 elections, the Reagan administration continued to recognize Doe as the legitimate leader of Liberia and continued to provide him with support.<sup>53</sup> In the latter half of the 1980s, however, Congress also lost focus on human rights violations in Liberia in part because "Liberia [had] been eclipsed...by the question of sanctions against South Africa."<sup>54</sup>

### **BETRAYED TWICE: U.S. OMISSIONS DURING THE CIVIL WAR**

Statement givers frequently referred to the United States as Liberia's "motherland"<sup>55</sup> or its "big brother,"<sup>56</sup> and spoke about the "special place United States holds in hearts of Liberians."<sup>57</sup> Others described how they see Liberia as the United States' "child"<sup>58</sup> or as a 51st state.<sup>59</sup> Throughout the West African sub-region, Liberia was seen as the "Little U.S."<sup>60</sup>

During the conflict from 1989-1997, however, White House officials dismissed the notion that the United States had a special relationship with Liberia. National Security Advisor Robert Gates described the historical relationship as "meaningless; it doesn't govern us anymore; we treat Liberia just like any other country, and we have no real interest there."<sup>61</sup> Moreover, in the early 1990s, the U.S. public's attention was focused elsewhere: on a war in the Persian Gulf.

Nevertheless, diplomatic officials on the ground made efforts to secure an end to the fighting. Immediately after the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) invasion and later during the civil war, State Department officials were in communication with faction leaders and attempted to mediate.<sup>62</sup> The United States made an effort to persuade Doe to hold early elections,<sup>63</sup> as well as a negotiated ceasefire based on an agreement for President Doe's departure and exile into Togo.<sup>64</sup> The White House, however, decided not to intervene, refusing to back the plan for Doe's departure.<sup>65</sup> National Security Advisor General Brent Scowcroft was quoted as saying "It was difficult to see how we could intervene without taking over and pacifying the country with a more-or-less permanent involvement of U.S. forces."<sup>66</sup>

The support for Taylor's initial invasion, coming from the diaspora and other quarters, also created complexities in U.S. attempts to intervene. Following the NPFL invasion, President Doe asked the United States for military and financial assistance.<sup>67</sup> Herman J. Cohen, former Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, explained:

Our first reports were that the Liberian army was trying to counter these guerrillas and that...wherever guerillas were spotted, they would – in a village, they would go in and burn down the whole village and kill all the people there, fellow Liberians. And this got us very upset.<sup>68</sup>

Upon hearing reports of AFL human rights violations in Nimba County, the U.S. government sent two U.S. Army officers to work with AFL forces and to advise them against further human rights abuses.<sup>69</sup> The Liberian community in the United States contended, however, that sending these officers would signal support for President Doe, and the two Army officers were removed.<sup>70</sup> This withdrawal effectively allowed the atrocities to continue, in the opinion of Assistant Secretary Cohen.<sup>71</sup>

As the situation on the ground continued to worsen, the U.S. military role was limited to evacuating U.S. citizens and protecting the U.S. embassy. The United States sent troops to evacuate U.S. and third country nationals between August and December 1990, in October 1992, and between April and August 1996. The 1990 evacuations followed a threat by Prince Johnson to arrest and to detain any U.S. personnel. United States troops entered Monrovia to evacuate U.S. citizens, "but the Liberians were left behind."<sup>72</sup> In April 1996, due to the "deterioration of the security situation and the resulting threat to American citizens," President Clinton ordered the U.S. military to evacuate "private U.S. citizens and third-country nationals who had taken refuge in the U.S. Embassy compound."<sup>73</sup> As one statement giver remarked (rhetorically), "How many American soldiers went to Liberia? Five – and they went to protect the Embassy."<sup>74</sup> In 1990, during some of the worst of the NPFL attacks on Monrovia, the White House spokesman made clear that the "United States had no intention of intervening militarily in the conflict,"<sup>75</sup> a position that the United States maintained for the duration of the Liberian Civil War.





To many statement givers, however, it seemed clear that U.S. intervention could have swiftly brought an end to the carnage. One noted that the civil war could have been stopped if the United States, so highly regarded by Liberians, had simply demanded that the fighting factions set down their arms.<sup>76</sup> This suggestion may indeed have been correct, given that, when the U.S. government contacted the AFL, NPFL and Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL) to request a ceasefire in preparation for an evacuation in

1990, all parties laid down their guns during the Marine helicopter flights.<sup>77</sup> Another statement giver commented how the United States could have stopped the war because Taylor so feared the United States.<sup>78</sup> Indeed, Taylor made overtures to the United States and would have accepted a U.S. brokered peace deal.<sup>79</sup> The Catholic Archbishop of Monrovia, Michael Francis, was quoted as saying that a few well trained U.S. soldiers would have made the rebel soldiers terrorizing the capital “just throw away their guns and run away.”<sup>80</sup>

Liberians resorted to desperate measures to plead for U.S. intervention. One statement giver told the TRC that:

Liberians were throwing dead bodies over the embassy wall to appeal to the sympathy of [the] United States government and to make sure that they couldn't ignore the Liberians who were dying on the other side of their wall.<sup>81</sup>

Although the United States refused to intervene, it did attempt to provide humanitarian assistance. In 1996, the United States opened its Greystone Compound, across the street from the U.S. Embassy in Monrovia, to Liberians seeking safety.<sup>82</sup> More than 20,000 sought shelter there.<sup>83</sup> By June 1996, many whose homes were destroyed remained in displaced persons centers, including in the Greystone Compound.<sup>84</sup> The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), in coordination with multi-lateral government agencies and non-governmental organizations, delivered food and water to the refugees staying in the Greystone Compound.<sup>85</sup> Many statement givers described seeking refuge in the Greystone Compound,<sup>86</sup> which they perceived to be safe from the war.<sup>87</sup> Statement givers reported stays at the compound ranging from a few days<sup>88</sup> to a month-and-a-half.<sup>89</sup> Still, the compound was not completely safe, and at least two statement givers reported rebel attacks by rockets

and shootings that resulted in deaths.<sup>90</sup>

Others sought safety at the Voice of America compound,<sup>91</sup> which was occupied by U.S. Marines.<sup>92</sup> One statement giver estimated that nearly 30,000 Liberians sought protection there.<sup>93</sup> Another reported that Americans at the Voice of America took in Liberians and provided them with food and shelter.<sup>94</sup> Statement givers reported staying at the compound from four to five days<sup>95</sup> to up to two weeks.<sup>96</sup> Stays at the Voice of America were cut short once the U.S. personnel evacuated in 1990 and the rebels moved in.<sup>97</sup>

While U.S. personnel provided some assistance, Liberians also describe instances where U.S. actors denied them help. At least one statement giver stated he was denied entry into the Greystone Compound.<sup>98</sup> Another statement giver described the U.S. response to Liberians seeking safe refuge at the embassy:

[W]hen Monrovia was under siege, and many Liberians were helpless, they were shot at by U.S. Marines who wanted to prevent crowds from getting near the embassy.<sup>99</sup>

Another statement giver described how, during his stay at the U.S. Embassy, he discovered that the embassy staff destroyed a reserve of canned food, claiming it had expired.<sup>100</sup> Given the starvation in Monrovia, this destruction greatly upset the statement giver, who chose to leave the embassy's safe haven.<sup>101</sup> In another case, a woman called the U.S. Department of State out of concern for her brother, who was being targeted. "My concerns fell on deaf ears. No one called me back. They probably just thought I was this crazy woman."<sup>102</sup>

The U.S. policy decision not to intervene in the conflict left many Liberians feeling betrayed.<sup>103</sup> As one statement giver pointed out, the Americans had a role to play in Liberia. "[T]hey should have helped."<sup>104</sup> Statement givers often voiced their distress over the non-reciprocal view of the relationship between the U.S. and Liberia. As one statement giver asked, "Why can't the United States love Liberia like Liberia loves them?"<sup>105</sup> Another explained that he did not blame the United States for Liberians killing each other, but did fault the United States for failing to help.<sup>106</sup> Instead of stepping in, the "American warships sat in the water and watched Liberians slaughter each other." What help the United States did provide was "too little too late."<sup>107</sup>

As one statement giver noted, people felt betrayed twice: first when the United States failed to intervene in the conflict, and again when it sent ships in to save Americans but not Liberians.<sup>108</sup>

Liberians looked up to the United States as a savior. And I can assure you that if you talk to many Liberians, that they were very much disappointed

with the way the United States dealt with the issue of war that was going on at this time. For example, while Liberians were being killed, what the United States did was to send planes and get their own citizens out of the country and left Liberians to die...George Bush sen[t] the Coast Guard, the – the Coast Guard right there by the seashores of – of Monrovia, and they did not come out to save Liberian life. So as a result, many Liberians do have a really distaste[ful] feeling about the United States.<sup>109</sup>

Because of the long history of Liberia's connection with the United States, there were many Liberian families in which some members had been born in the United States and were U.S. citizens. The evacuations had the additional impact of splitting up these families:

[T]hey were pulling out only American citizens out of the country, dividing mothers and children. If you had three kids and one was born in the United States, that child was airlifted and the others were left to fend for themselves.<sup>110</sup>

As the conflict was nearing its close, in June 2003, West African leaders and the United Nations asked the United States to lead a peacekeeping force to Liberia.<sup>111</sup> State Department representatives promised that the United States would “help the people of Liberia find the path to peace,”<sup>112</sup> but conditioned the engagement of U.S. troops on several requirements.<sup>113</sup> On June 30, 2003, during a closed door meeting, the U.S. government told the United Nations that there were three requirements for a U.S. engagement in Liberia: Taylor's departure, a political agreement, and international support.<sup>114</sup> President Bush reiterated his call for Taylor to step down several times.<sup>115</sup> On July 14, 2003, President Bush stated that the United States was committed to help bring peace to Liberia and, provided that Charles Taylor left Liberia, this support could include U.S. troops.<sup>116</sup>

Despite the behind the scenes support, negotiations, and humanitarian assistance, the United States never sent a sustained peacekeeping mission to Liberia.

[M]y own personal feelings were that the United States had a very special capability there to really come in and do it fast. I was very impressed when Charles Taylor said to me, “If you send in a company of Marines, we'll all surrender.” I know that Charles Taylor often didn't tell the truth, but I think there he was telling the truth. And when the U.S. offshore forces sent the message that they were sending Marines to the center of Monrovia to bring in citizens, everybody stopped fighting immediately. So I knew in my own heart that the United States had the special capability because of the historical relationship. So I personally am very sorry that we did not

intervene and that we didn't do it, because we could have.<sup>117</sup>

Even in August 2003, after the departure of Charles Taylor, hopes were raised that thousands of U.S. Marines waiting in ships off the coast of Liberia would be deployed. Two hundred did eventually land, but a few weeks later, the three warships off the coast sailed home, leaving a contingent of only 100 Marines on the ground to protect the embassy and to work with West African peacekeepers.<sup>118</sup>

In October 2003, Congress held a hearing on the future of U.S. foreign policy towards Liberia. Rep. Gregory W. Meeks, from New York, asked:

[A]re the people of Liberia suffering any less than those of Iraq? . . . We can find \$87 billion to rebuild a nation that actually throughout history has not even made a fraction of the same contribution to America as those individuals from Liberia. The question is especially relevant when the estimated price tag for intervention in Liberia is only \$275 million. . . [I]t becomes a question of value of lives on the African continent. . . particularly when you look at Liberia and the closeness that it has had with the United States of America.<sup>119</sup>

## Notes

- 1 Henry Noble Sherwood, *The Formation of the American Colonization Society*, 2 J. NEGRO HIST. 209, 214 (1917).
- 2 *Id.* at 212.
- 3 *Id.* at 210.
- 4 D. ELWOOD DUNN, AMOS J. BEYAN & CARL PATRICK BURROWES, HISTORICAL DICTIONARY OF LIBERIA 60 (2d ed. 2001).
- 5 JEREMY I. LEVITT, THE EVOLUTION OF DEADLY CONFLICT IN LIBERIA: FROM ‘PATERNALTARIANISM’ TO STATE COLLAPSE 40-41 (2005).
- 6 See DUNN ET AL., *supra* note 4, Map 1, Map 3.
- 7 See LEVITT, *supra* note 5, at 32-33, 38-39.
- 8 Monrovia is the most obvious example, named after ACS founder and U.S. President James Monroe. Other examples include, Mechlin Street which bears the name of Dr. Joseph Mechlin Jr., a reportedly unpopular ACS governing agent in the 1830s. See *id.* at 56. Bushrod Island bears the name of the first ACS president, Judge Bushrod Washington. See Sherwood, *supra* note 1, at 227. Caldwell and Mercer are also names of prominent landmarks in Monrovia which correspond with Elias B. Caldwell, first secretary of the ACS, and Charles Fenton Mercer, a member of the Virginia legislature, a slaveholder, and an ACS founder.
- 9 STEPHEN ELLIS, THE MASK OF ANARCHY: THE DESTRUCTION OF LIBERIA AND THE RELIGIOUS DIMENSION OF AN AFRICAN CIVIL WAR 43 (1999); Dwight N. Syfert, *The Liberian Coasting Trade, 1822-1900*, 18 J. AFR. HIST. 217, 227-28 (1977).
- 10 J. GUS LIEBENOW, LIBERIA: THE EVOLUTION OF PRIVILEGE 82 n.6 (1969).
- 11 DUNN ET AL., *supra* note 4, at 295.
- 12 LIEBENOW, *supra* note 10, at 5.
- 13 *Independence of Liberia*, THE AFR. REPOSITORY (1850-1892), 111 (1862) (on file with author).
- 14 *Recognized Independence of Hayti and Liberia*, THE AFR. REPOSITORY (1850-1892); 38; 7 (1862) (on file with author).
- 15 *Independence of Liberia*, *supra* note 13.
- 16 Nicolas Cook, Cong. Research Service, *Liberia: 1989-1997 Civil War, Post-War Developments, and U.S. Relations* 18 (Dec. 31, 2003), <http://digital.library.unt.edu/govdocs/crs/permalink/meta-crs-8431:1>.
- 17 *Liberia: America’s Stepchild* (PBS television broadcast October 10, 2002).
- 18 *Id.*
- 19 *The 1930 Enquiry Commission to Liberia*, 30 J. ROYAL AFR. SOC’Y 277-290 (1931).
- 20 *Id.* at 280.
- 21 See William Baue, *Alien Tort Claims Act Lawsuit Alleges Slavery and Child Labor on Liberian Firestone Plantation*, Dec. 30, 2005, <http://www.stopfirestone.org/2005/12/alien-tort-claims-act-socialfunds/>.
- 22 Christine Cheng, *The Rise of Extralegal Groups during Post-Conflict Transitions: Illegal Rubber Tapping in Liberia* 9 (Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Philadelphia, PA, Aug 31, 2006), [http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p151191\\_index.html](http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p151191_index.html).
- 23 LAMCO (The Liberia American Mining Company) was among a consortium which mined iron ore until the end of the 1970s.
- 24 Memorandum from U.S. Embassy in Monrovia to Secretary of State, dated May 1979, 302045Z May 79, at 2 (on file with author, FOIA).
- 25 See Lansana Gberie, *Diamonds Without Maps: Liberia, The UN, Sanctions, and the Kimberley Process* 7 (2004), <http://www.pacweb.org/e/pdf/LiberiaReport.pdf>.
- 26 *Id.* at 8. Robertson was furious with Bush for calling on Taylor to step down as President of Liberia. Robertson was quoted as saying “[s]o we’re undermining a Christian, Baptist president to bring in Muslim rebels to take over the country.” See *Pat Robertson Slams Bush on Liberia*, CBS NEWS, July 11, 2003, [http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/07/11/national/printable\\_562915.shtml](http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/07/11/national/printable_562915.shtml).
- 27 Lester Hyman, the founder of LISCR, was a close friend of Taylor who helped him get his criminal record related to his Massachusetts jailbreak expunged. U.N. Sec. Council, *Report of the Panel of Experts pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1343 (2001), paragraph 19, concerning Liberia*, ¶ 399, U.N. Doc. S/2001/1015 (Oct. 26, 2001).
- 28 The U.N. report details transfers from LISCR’s bank account in New York to an account in the United Arab Emirates. *Id.* at 88. The first transfer was for

- \$525,000 on June 21, 2000 and the second was for \$400,000 on July 7, 2000. *Id.*
- 29 *Id.* at 93.
- 30 LEVITT, *supra* note 5, at 155.
- 31 *Liberia: America's Stepchild*, *supra* note 17.
- 32 LEVITT, *supra* note 5, at 162.
- 33 DUNN ET AL., *supra* note 4, at xxvii.
- 34 *Id.* at xxviii; Memorandum from U.S. Embassy in Monrovia to Secretary of State, dated May 1979, *supra* note 24.
- 35 Memorandum from U.S. Embassy in Monrovia to Secretary of State, dated May 1979, *supra* note 24, at 2-3. *See also* Telephone Interview with Edward Perkins, Former Ambassador to Liberia (April 10, 2008).
- 36 Telephone Interview with James Bishop, Former Ambassador to Liberia (Nov. 10, 2008); DUNN ET AL., *supra* note 4, at 324.
- 37 Telephone Interview with Herman J. Cohen, Former Asst. Sec'y of State for African Affairs (March 21, 2008); Telephone Interview with Edward Perkins, *supra* note 35.
- 38 Telephone Interview with James Bishop, *supra* note 36; Memorandum from Secretary of State to U.S. Embassy in Monrovia, dated May 1980, 0312038Z May 80, at 1, 5 (on file with author, FOIA).
- 39 Telephone Interview with Elwood Dunn, Former Liberian Minister of State for Presidential Affairs (April 8, 2008).
- 40 Reed Kramer, *Liberia: A Casualty of the Cold War's End*, CSIS AFRICA NOTES (July 1995); LAWYERS COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, LIBERIA: A PROMISE BETRAYED 165 (1986).
- 41 Memorandum from the U.S. Embassy in Monrovia to Secretary of State, dated September 1984, 011336Z Sep 84, at 3 (on file with author, FOIA).
- 42 Kramer, *supra* note 40.
- 43 Memorandum from Warren Christopher to President Carter, dated April 23, 1980, at 1 (on file with author, FOIA).
- 44 Memorandum from the U.S. Embassy in Monrovia to Secretary of State, dated June 1980, 181854Z Jun 80, at 1(on file with author, FOIA); Memorandum from Secretary of State to U.S. Embassy in Monrovia, dated June 1980, 170145Z Jun 80, at 1 (on file with author, FOIA).
- 45 Memorandum from the Secretary of State to American Embassies in: Monrovia, Dakar, Bangui, Conakry, Freetown, Abidjan, Lome, Accra, Lagos, Ouagadougou, Yaounde, Liberville, dated May 1980, 231950Z May 80, at 2 (on file with author, FOIA); Memorandum from the Secretary of State to U.S. Embassy in Monrovia, dated May 1980, 161739Z May 80, at 1(on file with author, FOIA); Memorandum from the U.S. Embassy in Monrovia to Secretary of State, dated June 1980, *supra* note 44.
- 46 LAWYERS COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, *supra* note 40, at 167.
- 47 *Id.* at 167-68; Kramer, *supra* note 40. *See also* Telephone Interview with Edward Perkins, *supra* note 35 (noting that U.S. observer teams in Liberia during the elections saw some irregularities, but that the U.S. government would not characterize the elections as fraudulent).
- 48 BOB WOODWARD, VEIL: THE SECRET WARS OF THE CIA 1981-1987, 307-311 (1987).
- 49 *Id.*
- 50 *Liberia: America's Stepchild*, *supra* note 17.
- 51 *See House Urges Reagan to Drop Liberian Aid*, N.Y. TIMES, Feb. 19, 1986, at A6. Human Rights Watch, *World Report 1989: Liberia*, <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1989/WR89/Liberia.htm>. In particular, during a 1989 fact-finding mission to Liberia, U.S. Representative Mervyn Dymally expressed his discontent with the Doe regime's unfulfilled commitment to humanitarian issues and noted that U.S. aid should be tied to improvements in human rights. *Id.*
- 52 USAID Economic Analysis and Data Services, *U.S. Assistance per Capita by Year*, [http://quesdb.usaid.gov/gbk/us\\_assistance\\_per\\_capita\\_07.xls](http://quesdb.usaid.gov/gbk/us_assistance_per_capita_07.xls) (last visited Nov. 13, 2008); *see also* Telephone Interview with Edward Perkins, *supra* note 35 (describing that the U.S. had a different relationship with Liberia than any other country and was trying to improve the situation on the ground).
- 53 LAWYERS COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, *supra* note 40, at 173.
- 54 *Id.* at 174.
- 55 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 123.
- 56 TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 113 and 40.

- 57 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1116.
- 58 TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 188 and 1551.
- 59 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 110.
- 60 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 40; *see also Liberia: America's Stepchild*, *supra* note 17.
- 61 Interview by Nancee Oku Bright with Herman J. Cohen, Former Asst. Sec'y of State for African Affairs (Feb. 2000), (Transcript at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/globalconnections/liberia/film/hermancohen.html>). Cohen also reported that the three U.S. agencies that had facilities in Liberia, the Department of Defense, the CIA, and the USIA, never protested the Administration's position and that this undermined Cohen's efforts to convince the Administration to change its position. *Id.*
- 62 Telephone Interview with James Bishop, *supra* note 36 (describing a desire to reconcile the NPFL and the Liberian government); *see, e.g.*, State Department Cable 141702Z Jun 94 (describing Deputy Asst. Sec'y of State Bushnell's meetings with leaders of fighting factions) (on file with author, FOIA).
- 63 Herman J. Cohen, Former Asst. Sec'y of State for African Affairs, Testimony at the Diaspora Public Hearings of the Truth & Reconciliation Comm'n of Liberia 8 (June 12, 2008, St. Paul, Minn., U.S.A.) (transcript on file with the author).
- 64 On April 28, 1990, Assistant Secretary Cohen called Togolese President Gnassingbe Eyadema to request that Togo provide political asylum for President Doe, a request he granted. HERMAN J. COHEN, INTERVENING IN AFRICA: SUPERPOWER PEACEMAKING IN A TROUBLED CONTINENT 138 (2000) (citing Department of State telegram 137386 to Lome, dated April 28, 1990). Herman J. Cohen, Former Asst. Sec'y of State for African Affairs, Testimony at the Diaspora Public Hearings of the Truth & Reconciliation Comm'n of Liberia 10-11 (June 12, 2008, St. Paul, Minn., U.S.A.) (transcript on file with the author). U.S. diplomats persuaded Doe to accept the idea of leaving and were prepared to assist him in his departure, but they received a message from the White House ordering them to cease all activities dealing with the Liberian conflict with no further explanation. *Id.*
- 65 Kramer, *supra* note 40.
- 66 *Id.*
- 67 Telephone Interview with James Bishop, *supra* note 36; *see also Liberia: America's Stepchild*, *supra* note 17.
- 68 Herman J. Cohen, Former Asst. Sec'y of State for African Affairs, Testimony at the Diaspora Public Hearings of the Truth & Reconciliation Comm'n of Liberia 7 (June 12, 2008, St. Paul, Minn., U.S.A.) (transcript on file with the author).
- 69 COHEN, *supra* note 64, at 131; Herman J. Cohen, Former Asst. Sec'y of State for African Affairs, Testimony at the Diaspora Public Hearings of the Truth & Reconciliation Comm'n of Liberia 7 (June 12, 2008, St. Paul, Minn., U.S.A.) (transcript on file with the author).
- 70 Interview by Nancee Oku Bright with Herman J. Cohen, *supra* note 61 (explaining that the Liberian community in the United States "vetoed" what they saw as the United States providing military support to an unpopular leader).
- 71 Herman J. Cohen, Former Asst. Sec'y of State for African Affairs, Testimony at the Diaspora Public Hearings of the Truth & Reconciliation Comm'n of Liberia 8 (June 12, 2008, St. Paul, Minn., U.S.A.) (transcript on file with the author).
- 72 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1502.
- 73 Lauren Ploch, Cong. Research Service, Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests & the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa 36 (JULY 6, 2007), <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RL34003.pdf>.
- 74 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 123.
- 75 Michael R. Gordon, *U.S. Forces Evacuate 74 After Threats in Liberia*, N.Y. TIMES, Aug. 6, 1990.
- 76 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1351.
- 77 Gordon, *supra* note 75.
- 78 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 15.
- 79 Kramer, *supra* note 40; Telephone Interview with Herman J. Cohen, *supra* note 37.
- 80 Declan Walsh, *Desperate, Dying: Liberia's War Victims Wait for George Bush to Make up His Mind*, THE INDEPENDENT, July 12, 2003.
- 81 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1440.
- 82 Cook, *supra* note 16, at 5.
- 83 *Id.*
- 84 *Id.* at 23.
- 85 *Id.*
- 86 TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 24, 26, 103, 114, 267, 284, 367, 544, 556, 548, 819, 909.

- 87 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 707.
- 88 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 819.
- 89 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 909.
- 90 TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 544 and 909.
- 91 TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 1004, 1502, 1475, 1324.
- 92 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1324.
- 93 *Id.*
- 94 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1502.
- 95 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1475.
- 96 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1324.
- 97 TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 1502 and 1324.
- 98 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1440. Another statement giver stated that civilians always fled to the embassy during the war for rescue and help, but the embassy never provided Liberian civilians with any aid. TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1559.
- 99 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1440.
- 100 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1352.
- 101 *Id.*
- 102 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1551.
- 103 *See, e.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 188.
- 104 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 105.
- 105 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 113.
- 106 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 15; *see also* TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1351 (faulting the U.S. for failing to intervene and withdrawing aid).
- 107 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1551.
- 108 TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 15 and 648.
- 109 Dr. Augustine Konneh, Testimony at the Diaspora Public Hearings of the Truth & Reconciliation Comm'n of Liberia 24 (June 10, 2008, St. Paul, Minn., U.S.A.) (transcript on file with the author).
- 110 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1551.
- 111 *UN Stalls Decision on Liberia Troops*, BBC NEWS, June 30, 2003, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3033934.stm>.
- 112 *Id.*
- 113 U.S. Dept. of State, Liberia Chronology June 12, 2003 to August 18, 2003, at 4 (on file with author, FOIA); White House, *President Reaffirms Strong Position on Liberia*, Remarks by the President and United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan in Photo Opportunity, The Oval Office, July 14, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/07/20030714-3.html>.
- 114 Liberia Chronology, *supra* note 113, at 5.
- 115 In early July 2003, President Bush explained that “[i]n order for there to be peace and stability in Liberia, Charles Taylor needs to leave now.” Scott Stearns, *Liberia’s Charles Taylor Needs to Leave Now*, says *Bush*, VOICE OF AMERICA, July 2, 2003, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2003/07/mil-030702-voa09.htm>. State Department documents suggest that President Bush began demanding that President Taylor step down as early as June 26, 2003, with another demand on July 3, 2003. Liberia Chronology, *supra* note 113, at 4-5.
- 116 Office of the Press Secretary, *supra* note 113.
- 117 Herman J. Cohen, Former Asst. Sec’y of State for African Affairs, Testimony at the Diaspora Public Hearings of the Truth & Reconciliation Comm’n of Liberia 74 (June 12, 2008, St. Paul, Minn., U.S.A.) (transcript on file with the author).
- 118 *U.S. Policy Toward Liberia: Hearing Before the Subcomm. on Africa of the Committee on International Relations House of Representatives*, 108<sup>th</sup> Cong. 28 (2003) (statement of Alex Vines, Senior Researcher, Business and Human Rights Division, Human Rights Watch).
- 119 *Id.* (statement of Rep. Meeks, Member, Subcommittee on Africa).





