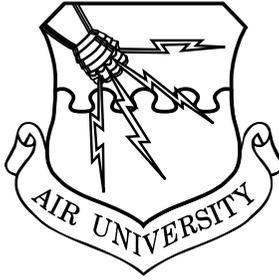


# TWO CENTURIES OF US MILITARY OPERATIONS IN LIBERIA

Challenges of Resistance and Compliance



Niels Hahn



# **Two Centuries of US Military Operations in Liberia**

## **Challenges of Resistance and Compliance**

By  
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Air University Press  
Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama

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## Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Hahn, Niels, 1973– author. | Curtis E. LeMay Center for Doctrine Development and Education, issuing body.  
Title: Two centuries of US military operations in Liberia: challenges of resistance and compliance / Niels Stephan Cato Hahn. Other titles: Two centuries of U.S. military operations in Liberia

Description: Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama: Air University Press; Curtis E. LeMay Center for Doctrine Development and Education, [2020] | “Published by Air University Press in July 2019”—CIP galley, title page verso. | Includes bibliographical references and index. | Summary: This book reviews the history of the United States-Liberia relations from the early 1820s to 2015, with particular attention paid to the role of the US armed forces. Contrary to most literature on the genesis and development of Liberia, this book demonstrates how US military power has been the primary influence shaping Liberia’s history. This includes the role played by the US military in the founding of Liberia, the protection of the country during the European formal colonial era, multiple covert operations in securing US-friendly administrations in Liberia, and direct military interventions when necessary to secure American interests in the region”—Provided by publisher.

Identifiers: LCCN 2019051142 (print) | ISBN 9781585663040 (paperback) | ISBN 9781585663040 (Adobe PDF)

Subjects: LCSH: Liberia—Politics and government. | Liberia—History. | Liberia—Foreign relations—United States. | United States—Foreign relations—Liberia. | Liberia—Military relations—United States. | United States—Military relations—Liberia. | Liberia—Foreign relations—China. | China—Foreign relations—Liberia.

Classification: LCC DT631.5 .H36 2020 (print) | LCC DT631.5 (ebook) | DDC

Published by Air University Press in March 2020

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## Foreword

When I first arrived in Liberia during the war in 2002 to work for the humanitarian organization Médecins Sans Frontières as a non-medical coordinator, my prior knowledge of the country and the conflict in Liberia had been gained from reports published by established institutions and media outlets. From these sources, I gained the impression that this was a civil war that started around 1990. The general picture was clear. The people in the Liberian government headed by Charles Taylor were the “bad guys.” The international community was the “good guys,” seeking to help and protect the civilian population. The rebels, Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), fell somewhere in between.

While living and working in Monrovia, I soon came to realize that the conflict was primarily between the Liberian government and the United States government. France was also involved, seeking to expand its sphere of influence from the neighboring Ivory Coast into Liberia. To the west, in Sierra Leone, the Revolutionary United Front had challenged the balance of power, with external covert support. Several military interventions had taken place, including the deployment of a large UN peacekeeping force. In addition to this, Britain had also deployed its soldiers to secure British interests. To the north, Guinea was hosting and training the LURD rebels near the border to Liberia. Most other countries in the region, such as Burkina Faso, Ghana, Libya, and Nigeria, were also involved in the war in Liberia, along with several other European and Asian countries.

It was often difficult to know who supported whom, and alliances shifted over time. It was clear, however, that the war in Liberia was not a “civil war,” as most commonly described. It was an *international* war fought primarily on Liberian soil. Severe inequalities within Liberian society, combined with poverty, class divisions, and religious and ethnic groupings, made the country vulnerable to destabilization—which provided an opportunity for local actors to work in close collaboration with foreign powers—and challenged US influence in Liberia.

The struggle for power among foreign nations in the West African region is not new, and over the past two centuries, the United States has frequently sent its troops to Liberia to regain control of the country. Through diplomatic, economic, cultural, and military means, the United States has set limits up on foreign powers in Liberia,

## FOREWORD

disciplined or removed Liberian governments, and enforced relative peace in the country.

Liberia is the country in Africa where the United States has the most extended history of military engagement, and each intervention is layered on the experience of previous interventions. Over the years, the interventions have become more comprehensive and sophisticated, and Liberia can be considered an essential case for the general study of US military interventions in Africa.

NIELS HAHN

## **About the Author**

Niels Hahn holds a PhD in Development Studies. Since 1995, he has worked in the fields of development aid and humanitarian assistance and researched the root causes of poverty, neoliberalism, armed conflicts, and underdevelopment. Working in numerous countries including Afghanistan, Britain, Ethiopia, Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, and Tanzania, he has primarily focused his research on US military intervention strategies concerning broader aspects of international politics and economics. Because of the long history of US military, economic, and cultural interventions in Liberia, this country became Hahn's primary case study for analyzing the modalities of US interventions in general.



## Acknowledgment

This book would not have materialized without the contributions, support, and local knowledge of hundreds of Liberians. Some of the contributions are from 167 formal interviews, including former presidents, heads of transitional governments, ministers, military officers, politicians, ex-combatants, academics, civil servants, leaders of rebel groups, child soldiers, leaders of religious and ethnic groups, civil society leaders, and family members of government officials killed in the war.

Informal discussions with Liberians at small coffee shops and with journalists, students, vendors, business owners, members of political parties, ordinary professionals, unemployed people, mercenaries—and many more—have also contributed significantly to this book. These people have shared their life experiences and knowledge. The hardship and suffering experienced by most people in Liberia are almost unimaginable; their stories remind us that each must do what is possible according to ability, to ensure that everyone can live in peace and security. Special thanks to Professor Alfredo Saad-Filho for his consistent support for this research. Without his help, this study would not have taken place. Professor Gilbert Achcar's encouragement and intellectual assistance have also been invaluable. Also, colleagues, friends, family, and especially my wife have provided essential support at all levels.

The publication of my book is possible thanks to Rémy Mauduit, who contacted me after I had presented the key findings in 2013, at the International Study Association conference in San Francisco. He ensured that my research results were published in 2014, under the title "US Covert and Overt Operations in Liberia, 1970s to 2003."<sup>1</sup> Dr. Ernest Rockwell, former managing editor of the Air University Press, ensured publication of the extended research in this current book format.

I am grateful for the financial support provided by Danish taxpayers who, through the Danish Ministry of Education, ensures that all Danish citizens have free access to higher education—including monthly, non-refundable financial support—which increases the level of independent research. I would also like to thank the following Danish independent funds for supporting my research financially: Knud Højgaards Fond; Reinholdt W. Jorck og Hustrus Fond; Fabrikant

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Vilhelm Pedersen og Hustrus Legat; Christian og Ottilia Brorsons Rejselegat; Anglo-Danish Society; Oticon Fonden/William Demant Foundation; William & Hugo Evers Fond; Scherffenberg Møllers Fond; Jørgen Esmers Mindelegat, Understøttelsesforeningen for Næstved Præstø Møn; and Fabriksejer, Ingeniør Valdemar Selmer Trane og Hustru, Elisa Tranes Fond.

## Notes

1. Niels Hahn. "US Covert and Overt Operations in Liberia, 1970s to 2003," *Air & Space Power Journal–Africa and Francophonie* 5, no. 3 (Fall 2014):19–47, <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/>.

## Introduction

This book reviews the history of United States–Liberia relations from around the 1820s to 2015, with particular attention paid to the role of the US armed forces. Contrary to most literature on the genesis and development of Liberia, this book demonstrates how US military power has been the primary influence shaping the Liberian state.

This includes the role played by the US military in the founding of Liberia, the protection of the country during the European formal colonial era, multiple covert operations in securing US-friendly administrations in Liberia, and direct military interventions when necessary to secure American interests in the region.

The book is predominantly based on primary sources, or documents and interviews that are as close to the primary source as possible. Based on these sources, it is shown that Liberia was the most crucial American foothold in Africa for more than a century. The frequent visits by the US Navy in combination with a comprehensive military strategy for the country provided the fundamental security structure necessary for the development of important economic activities. For example, in 1926, Firestone Rubber Company established one of the world's most extensive rubber plantations in Liberia in order to break the British rubber monopoly, thus securing reliable supplies of rubber to the US armed forces and industries. Equally important, in 1948, former US Secretary of State Edward Stettinius Jr. established the Liberian Registry, which became one of the largest off-shore ship registries in the world, allowing sensitive goods to be shipped discreetly across the world while providing economic advantages to shipping companies.

During World War II and the Cold War, the US government (USG) established many critical military facilities in Liberia. This included a significant air base, Robertsfield; a deep seaport; several training camps and centers for military and intelligence personnel; the US diplomatic and intelligence communications relay station for US embassies in Africa and West Asia; two powerful Voice of America radio transmitters to cover the African continent; and one of the six antennas for the OMEGA global navigation system (later made redundant by and replaced by the Global Positioning System).

The USG gradually lost access to these strategic facilities as notions of socialist-oriented Pan-Africanism influenced Liberian intellectuals and politicians in the 1960s. These early notions of Pan-Africanism

## INTRODUCTION

originated in the United States around the mid-eighteenth century and developed in Liberia and Sierra Leone throughout the nineteenth century. In the latter half of the twentieth century, Pan-Africanism developed into a significant social force that was an essential component of the African independence movements. The interests of the independence and Pan-African movements converged with the interests of the USG regarding breaking up the formal European colonial structures in Africa. However, Pan-Africanism turned against US interests in Liberia in the 1970s when the Liberian government imposed restrictions on US business activities and access to military facilities while also establishing relations with the USSR and the People's Republic of China.

These restrictions on US businesses and military bases and closer relations with the USSR and China resulted in several US covert and overt military operations in Liberia that removed three governments from power between 1980 and 2003. During this period, the USG did not succeed in securing a long-term, stable, US-friendly government in Liberia. From 1990 to 2003, the country experienced full-scale war involving more than 15 nation states, most significantly Britain, Burkina Faso, France, Guinea, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Libya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and the United States.

The war in Liberia created opportunities for other states, particularly France, to challenge US interests in Liberia, and the United States in return challenged French interests in the Ivory Coast. During the 1990s, numerous civil society groups were organized, armed, and trained for unconventional warfare, and national armies from neighboring countries were sent to Liberia directly or indirectly under US command. As wars erupted in Sierra Leone and the Ivory Coast, the conflict environment became increasingly complicated. Around the end of the 1990s, UN military forces were gradually increased in the regions (UN Charter, chapt VII).

In the latter half of 2003, UN military intervention took place in Liberia under US military command followed by a comprehensive reconstruction program. By mid-2004, Liberia was under *de facto* US administration. The armed forces of Liberia were dismantled and rebuilt under the supervision of the US Department of Defense (DOD). Foreign experts indirectly approved by the USG were deployed in key control points of Liberian government administration with the power to sign off on important decisions.

This form of intervention has in the short term been effective, but in the long term, it may result in new armed conflicts and regional terrorism. The intervention stopped the war, disarmed the belligerent forces, and restored the infrastructure for economic development. However, the recent US control of the Liberian military and economic structures is just the latest in a series of similar US interventions throughout the history of Liberia—which were fiercely resisted by local and regional actors for various reasons—as is examined in this book.

From a historical and realist theoretical perspective, it is not likely that the US intervention that started in 2003 will lead to a long-lasting peace in Liberia that will secure US interests. It is more likely that Liberian intellectuals and politicians will establish stronger bilateral relations with China that will conflict with US interests. Such conflicts of interests are not limited to Liberia but reflects a general tendency across the African continent. The deepening of China-Africa relations is gradually changing the balance of power on the African continent, and this will contribute to changes in the global balance of power. As the last part of this book demonstrates, China-Liberia relations have grown stronger since 2003, and Liberia is particularly vital to the Chinese government due to the complicated history of China--Liberia relations.

The history of Liberia is perhaps the best case study of United States–Africa relations as an example that can be applied to other African countries and cases outside of Africa, because of the long and complicated experience. The past 40 years of experience is, in particular, useful for contemporary analyses of US-Africa-China relations, which is likely to develop into a new form of a cold war in Africa, where renewed forms of Pan-Africanism are aligning with China.

Chapter one shows, in contrast to the mainstream literature, that Liberia was not established by slaves freed by slave holders in the United States with support from the philanthropic American Colonization Society (ACS), but instead by white American slave owners in close collaboration with the USG. They feared the increasing number of slave rebellions in the Americas and the growing black population within the United States, which was seen as a threat to US national security. This concern was interconnected to the risk that external powers could instigate slave rebellions inside the United States by promising freedom to the slaves after their military victory. As the use of slave labor had become increasingly dangerous, Liberia was

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founded as a place where “problematic” black people could be sent “back to Africa.” The racial struggle continued in the Liberian colony between the white colonial administrators of the ACS, the black settlers, and the indigenous population, which was intertwined with inter-imperial rivalries between Britain, France, and the United States. Because of the internal struggles and external pressure from Britain, which wished to turn Liberia into a British protectorate, the USG and the ACS had the Liberian constitution written at Howard University, and a flag inspired by the US flag became the national symbol. The most trusted black settlers became the official representatives of the Republic of Liberia, which declared independence in 1847 and was recognized by Britain and France in 1848. From that point and until the USG recognized the Liberian Republic in 1862, the Liberian governance system transmuted from direct colonial administration to indirect administration, later considered as a neocolonial system by the leftist Pan-African movement since the 1960s.<sup>1</sup>

The continuation of internal struggles (in combination with resistance against US dominance based on Black Nationalism) and inter-imperial rivalries between Britain, France, Germany, and the United States resulted in many armed conflicts in Liberia, and the USG frequently sent warships to Liberia to protect its interests.

Chapter two examines how Liberia as an “icon” of black self-governance inspired the Pan-African movement and how the Pan-African movement influenced the political and economic environment in Liberia. This issue is marginalized or ignored in most of the literature on Liberia in particular and Pan-Africanism in general. This chapter shows how liberal capitalism in Liberia challenged the conventional notions of race, color, and class, which shaped the political ideology of the Pan-African movement. It was partly the encounter with the Liberian state and the colonial powers in the West African region that shattered Marcus Garvey’s Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). Garvey’s notion on race and color clashed with the reality of class and liberal capitalism in Liberia during his attempt to establish UNIA’s headquarters in Liberia in the 1920s. It was also in Liberia that W.E.B. Du Bois started to analyze race and color as subordinated to class, concerning the establishment of Firestone rubber plantation in the 1920s and the subsequent labor crisis around 1930, where the USG accused the government of Liberia (GoL) of engaging in slavery and slave trade. These observations made Du Bois move from the liberal right to the socialist left, and in

the 1960s, the Pan-African movement was dominated by a socialist orientation. During the rule of William V. S. Tubman, from 1944 to 1971, Liberia was one of the main bastions against the radical Pan-African liberation movement. It was through the Liberian state apparatus that a coalition of Western powers encouraged and supported the formation of the Monrovia Group that aimed at countering the attempt to establish an African Union, as promoted by the socialist oriented Pan-African Casablanca Group led by Kwame Nkrumah, Gamal Abdul Nasser, and Ahmed Sékou Touré.

Chapter three stands in sharp contrast to most of the literature that refers to the William R. Tolbert administration from 1971 to 1980 and describes his administration as a continuation of a suppressive rule by the Americo-Liberian elite, which ultimately led to the military coup in 1980.<sup>2</sup> This chapter shows that Tolbert's administration marks a significant shift from the Tubman administration and was inspired by Kwame Nkrumah's and Sékou Touré's notion of socialist Pan-Africanism. During Tolbert's administration, social reforms were implemented, which gradually introduced free education and health care, pensions schemes, low-cost social housing, and food security. The GoL broke the strong alliance with the USG and established close relations with socialist-oriented countries, such as East Germany, Guinea, Libya, the People's Republic of China, Romania, and the USSR, from which Liberia received financial and technical support for comprehensive agricultural programs and the establishment of more than 30 state-owned enterprises. The Open Door Policy that expanded under Tubman's administration was gradually reversed. Concession agreements with foreign corporations were reviewed, and local infant industries were protected by import tariffs. The GoL further restricted the USG from using its military bases in Liberia. The last part of this chapter provides a detailed analysis of how the USG responded to the policies of the GoL through the establishment of opposition groups that delegitimized the GoL and prepared the ground for the military coup in 1980 when Tolbert was murdered and 13 key government officials publicly executed.

Chapter four examines how the USG supported the military junta under the leadership of Samuel K. Doe in the first half of the 1980s and how the policies of the Tolbert administration were reversed. It further outlines why Doe fell out with the USG in the latter half of the 1980s and how the US Department of State responded to Doe's increasingly anti-American position, which initially made the USG

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support Charles Taylor and the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) with the aim of removing Doe from power and making Charles Taylor president of Liberia. However, since the USG could not rely on the NPFL as a credible ally, primarily because of the links to Muammar Gaddafi's government in Libya, it encouraged and supported the formation of the Independent NPFL (INPFL) as a break-away group from the NPFL under the leadership of Prince Johnson. As the INPFL was not strong enough to remove Doe and keep the NPFL from power, the USG facilitated the formation and intervention of the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), which functioned as a *de facto* African multinational proxy army of the USG. Besides direct financial contributions through pooled funding, the USG channeled resources to ECOMOG through increased aid to contributing African nations. Rhetorically, ECOMOG was presented as an African solution to an African problem. With the assistance of ECOMOG and the USG, President Doe was captured by the INPFL and died from torture.

Chapter five provides a historical analysis of the war from 1990 to the removal of Charles Taylor in 2003, which shows how the historical struggles resumed with an unprecedented magnitude. These conflicts destroyed the material infrastructure of Liberia and caused the death of more than 100,000 people and the displacement of millions. The analysis primarily focuses on the role of the external powers, especially the USG. It outlines how the USG has intervened covertly and overtly in Liberia, which can be useful for the study of other conflicts in Africa. The chapter also shows how the wars in Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast are interconnected with the war in Liberia, where Britain and France play a similar role to the United States in Liberia, although at a less sophisticated level. The chapter thereby contests "new wars theories," new interventions theories," the "new barbarism thesis," and the "greed and grievance" debate, where scholars use the West African conflicts as case studies to underpin any of these theories, because they marginalize or ignore the central role played by external powers—in particular, Britain, France, and the United States.

The last chapter focuses on the USG-led UN military interventions since 2003 and the transitional frameworks that aim at transforming and reshaping the Liberian political and economic system according to neoliberal ideology. The new features of foreign intervention strategies are examined in reference to historical strategies. It further includes an analysis of how the GoL tries to reduce US domi-

nance by welcoming Chinese military, technical, and financial assistance and investment. The Liberian government has opened up for Chinese investment, including several industrialization projects, which in many ways marks a return to the Tolbert policies of the 1970s. As a response, the USG has resumed its intervention into Liberian civil society organizations as in the 1970s—but this time through a more comprehensive and sophisticated approach promoted by notions of democracy, human rights, and international justice backed by an army of Western government-funded NGOs.

The book concludes that the disintegration of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s did not mark the “end of history” or a change of the world system. As the power of the USSR vanished, the rivalry between external powers continued in the 1990s. The recent armed conflict in Liberia was an intensification of tensions between ethnic groups and extreme class divisions, in combination with nationalism, Pan-Africanism, and rivalries between external powers—which has many similarities with other conflicts in Africa, such as in Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone, Somalia, and Sudan. These struggles are still ongoing in Liberia and in the first decade after the war tensions were kept down by the deployment of foreign troops, private security companies, and foreign administrators and advisors in strategic government positions. As Chinese engagement in Africa has increased significantly since the early twenty-first century, Western powers are reestablishing alliances in a renewed struggle for African resources and markets, as reflected in the case of Liberia.

#### Notes

1. See chapter 2 of this book, specifically “Countering Socialism and Pan-Africanism.”
2. See for example Ellis, *Mask of Anarchy*, where Tolbert’s administration is referred to as “an oriental court” with “attendants jestering for positions,” (51). Ellis further notes that Tolbert was “acquainted with international drug traffickers” (2006,155) and “signed death warrants in an attempt . . . to weaken the opposition within his own party” (2006, 255). The work of Ellis is a significant example of how the role of external powers is ignored or marginalized.

## Chapter 1

# **The Early History of Liberia**

## **Expansionism and Slavery in America**

The United States' early quest for territorial expansion is inter-related with the establishment of the Liberian colony in West Africa. Shortly after the US Declaration of Independence, in 1776, the United States government (USG) attempted to annex territories north and east of the Great Lakes (Kiernan 2005, 7; LaFeber 1963, 3; W. Williams 2006, 23). Although the first attempts were unsuccessful, the desire for US expansion remained. Pres. Thomas Jefferson's commitment to liberal expansionism is well captured in his letter to Nathaniel Niles in 1801, in which he states that "Montesquieu's doctrine, that a republic can be preserved only in a small territory" is false. According to Jefferson, "the reverse is the truth" (Jefferson 1801; Paterson et al. 2010, 31). Jefferson further expressed the goal of the expansion in 1809 to incoming Pres. James Madison, when he states that "we should have such an empire for liberty as she has never surveyed since the creation" (Jefferson 1809). President Madison then reattempted to annex the territories north and east of the Great Lakes, also known as the War of 1812 against Britain. This war was further interconnected with the United States trading with France during the Napoleonic wars, and like the first attempt of expansion into these territories, the United States was defeated by the British Empire. After these unsuccessful attempts at expansion in the northern direction, the United States started to expand in southern and western directions (LaFeber 1963, 4).

Early US expansion clashed with many foreign powers, and, in addition to officially declared wars, the United States was engaged in 23 undeclared external wars from 1787 to 1829 (W. Williams 2007, 71). This created many foreign enemies. (Kagan 2006, 185), notes that the high number of slaves within the United States created "an acute national vulnerability that was recognized in both North and the South" because "any foreign power at war with the United States could see the advantage of sparking a slave insurrection" (Kagan 2006, 185). During the American Revolution, Britain used that strategy, and in the War of 1812, Britain again considered a strategy of "landing on the Gulf Coast to encourage armed uprisings by both Indians and

slaves” (Kagan 2006, 185). According to Kagan, the economic system of slavery was such a big threat to the United States that “slavery shaped American foreign policy, above all” (Kagan 2006, 185).

Many black slaves in the Americas had been captured and shipped from West Africa over generations, and US imperial expansion took place simultaneously with many slave rebellions in the region. There is not a reliable accounting of the number of slaves who were shipped from West Africa to the Americas, but the generally accepted figure is somewhere between 10 and 15 million slaves over 400 hundred years, which Perbi considers as a low estimate for political reasons.<sup>1</sup> The data on the slave trade is scarce because Britain, as a major slave trader, had suppressed research into this area for more than a century (Anquandah 2007, 23). Significant data, however, can be retrieved from the Danish National Archives, which contains diaries, maps, and shipping lists from the Danish West Indies. Around 1800, many slave rebellions were motivated by the new winds that came from the French Revolution of 1789. At that time, French San Domingo had already experienced severe tensions between slaves and slave owners. San Domingo was one of the most profitable colonies in the world (James 2001, 46), with a white minority numbering around 30,000—around the same number of mulattos and free blacks—while the black slaves numbered around a half million in 1789 (James 2001, 51). The notion of “Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity” fueled not only splits along the color line but also in class divisions.<sup>2</sup> Within two years of the beginning of the French Revolution, San Domingo experienced the most massive slave rebellion in history under the leadership of Toussaint L’Ouverture. C. L. R. James’s *Black Jacobins* (2001) provides a detailed class analysis of the slave system and this rebellion.

Slave rebellions, protests, and riots were already prevalent in the eighteenth-century in places such as Jamaica, which was a leading British sugar-producing colony. However, these slave rebellions were subdued by force and provision of minor concessions to the slaves (Reckord 1968). What was significant with the rebellion at San Domingo was that many of the white wage laborers, also referred to as “small whites,” joined the slaves who welcomed them in the struggle for freedom. James (2001) notes that this marks a “retreat of race prejudice” (51) and provides an example of a class struggle where the oppressed whites and blacks united against their dominators. The slave rebellion developed into the Haitian revolution, 1791 to 1804, and in 1793, slavery was abolished (James 2001, 51). San Domingo

was renamed Haiti and declared independent in 1804 (James 2001, 51). This revolution became a landmark case in the history of slavery and Pan-Africanism, and as Dr. Eric Eustace Williams (1994) noted, after the establishment of Haiti “every white slave-owner, in Jamaica, Cuba, or Texas, lived in dread of another Toussaint L’Ouverture” (E. Williams 1994, 202).

The ideas of the Haitian revolution spread throughout the Atlantic world, leading the poet William Wordsworth to refer to these ideas as “the common wind” (Rothman 2007, 22). The number and intensity of rebellions increased across the slave-holding Atlantic world, and slave owners experienced serious tensions and rebellions in Barbados, Jamaica, and British Guiana (E. Williams 1994). In 1800, Virginia experienced the “Gabriel Conspiracy,” which was the largest attempted rebellion at the time. Under the leadership of the blacksmith Gabriel, a large number of suppressed people, including slaves, mulattos, and lower-class whites, united with the aim of overthrowing the white property-owning class, who enriched themselves through the joint exploitation of slave labor and low paid wages for work (Egerton 1990, 207). The Gabriel Conspiracy sought to end slavery, under the slogan “Death or Liberty” (Rothman 2007, 22), and the means of pressure would be the seizure of the city of Richmond, Virginia, where Gov. James Monroe would be taken hostage. The revolt failed, and the slaves who were considered its leaders were executed (Sidbury 2004, 15–20).

Governor Monroe defined the rebellion as “unquestionably the most serious and formidable conspiracy we have ever known of the kind” (Cunningham 2003, 32). In response to a letter from Monroe, Pres. Thomas Jefferson acknowledged the seriousness of this rebellion but noted that the government would not be able to execute them all, because “the other states and the world at large will forever condemn us if we indulge in a principle of revenge” (Jefferson 1800). Acknowledging the importance of public opinion, Jefferson further noted in the letter that long-term imprisoning within US borders could create long-term problems if public opinion demanded the release of the accused. Displacing the rebellious slaves outside the United States was seen as a possible solution and, as Jefferson (1800) notes, “surely the legislature would pass a law for their exportation, the proper measure on this & all similar occasions.” However, the question was: To where should these black people, and other black people with similar rebellious tendencies, be exported?

The next year Jefferson suggested in a letter to Monroe the possibility of procuring “lands beyond the limits of the U.S. to form a receptacle for these people,” because it was not desirable to have these people too close to the United States. Jefferson refers to Southern America and Santo Domingo as possible solutions and notes that Africa “would offer a last & undoubted resort, if all other more desirable should fail us” (Jefferson 1801, 487–89).

While considering how to “get rid of” some of the slaves, the debate at that time also focused on how to stop the supply of new slaves. The transatlantic slave trade had been central for early industrialization where the textile industry was the main driving force of industrialization in the latter part of the eighteenth century. As Braudel (1994, 378) notes, it was for “cotton that the first real factories came into being,” which were bound up with “the Indian, African and American trade, and with the traffic in black slaves.” Factories were established around the colonial ports, such as Liverpool and Glasgow where capital was accumulated and “initiated technological improvements” (Braudel 1983, 378).

In the United States, the number of slaves had gradually increased over the centuries, but their growth accelerated even faster around 1800.<sup>3</sup> US census reports show that in 1790 the number of slaves in the United States was 694,207. This number increased to 887,612 in 1800; and to 1,130,781 by 1810. By 1860, almost four million people were living in slavery in the United States, out of a total population of around 31 million (US Census Report 1860, vvvi). The highest concentrations of slaves were in Virginia (548,907), Alabama (437,770), Mississippi (437,404), South Carolina (412,320), and Georgia (405,698) (US Census Report 1860, xiii). This prompted concerns about US national security because, as Beckles (2007, 81) notes, the transatlantic slave trade was based on military terror and subtle economic manipulation. Since the early days of the transatlantic slave trade, slavery was fiercely resisted from the point of enslavement and continued into the Americas, where “anti-slavery conflict was the order of the day” (Beckles 2007, 88).

As the ruling elite in the United States increasingly became aware of the limits to slave labor, Adam Smith provided many arguments in favor of a safer economic system built on free wage workers which would also be more efficient. Adam Smith (1775) argued that “gentle usage renders the slave not only more faithful, but more intelligent, and therefore, upon a double account, more useful” (389). The more

the slave approaches the “condition of a free servant” the more the slave will “possess some degree of integrity and attachment to his master’s interest,” which are virtues frequently belonging to “free servants” (Smith 1775, 389). According to Smith, slavery is also an inefficient mode of production because more slaves must be employed to “execute the same quantity of work than in those carried out by freemen” (1775, 454). Slaves are not “free” labor and there are a number of costs attached to each slave because “in order that they may work well, it is in the interest of their master that they should be fed well and kept in good heart in the same manner as it is his interests that his working cattle should be so” (Smith 1775, 626).

Smith does not provide a measurement of the cost for slave labor compared to wage labor, but his arguments on productivity relate well to Abraham Maslow’s (1943, 370) theory of human motivation where motivation “should be human centered rather than animal-centered” and where “every drive is related to the state of satisfaction or dissatisfaction of other drives.” By addressing the basic human needs such as the opportunity for social mobility, safety, love and belonging, esteem and self-actualization, and feeling of autonomy, the workers can be motivated to work by consent, which will increase productivity (Maslow 1943, 370). The mode of production will thereby be safer because the form of power applied by the employer to make the workers work shifted from coercive power to consent power or what Bertrand Russell (2007, 79) called “naked power” to “traditional power.” Russell (2007) describes naked power as the application of direct violence, such as slavery or “the booty extracted by the highwayman from his victim, or by a conqueror from a vanquished nation” (79). The “definition of naked power is psychological” (Russell 2007, 64), and for the person, it is a matter of consciousness. A worker who is conscious of how exploitation takes place is likely to revolt because the “increase of socialistic opinion makes the power of the capitalist more naked” (Russell 2007, 80). From this perspective, slave labor is a dangerous mode of production because the use of naked power is undeniable.

As slavery increasingly became more dangerous, slave owners began to talk about the moral wrongs of the slave trade. A significant example is the Quakers. Although they trace their opposition to slavery back to the 1600s, Ryan Jordan (2007, 4) and Eric Williams (1994) note that in the mid-1750s, “slave dealing was one of the most lucrative investments of English as of American Quakers” (Williams 1994, 43).

The Quakers' opposition was an evolutionary process in the latter half of the 1700s, where they gradually reduced their engagement in the slave trade, to then be at the forefront of the abolition movement around 1800 (Clegg 2004, 12–14). The Quakers focused on the inhumane transportation of the slaves to create public opinion for a legislative ban on the slave trade. They used propaganda by disseminating posters of the slave ship, *Brookes*, which showed the conditions under which slaves were transported (Quakers 2011; Tomkins 2007).

In 1792, the slave trade was first banned by the Danish legislature based on recommendations from a commission established by the Danish finance and trade minister, Ernst Heinrich von Schimmelmann (Eilstrup and Boesgaard, 1974). It should be noted that the Danish slaveholders had experienced social unrest in the Danish West Indies islands, and the commission was not established by a philanthropist but by a slave owner: Schimmelmann. He owned more than 1,000 slaves who worked on his plantations in the Danish West Indies, but he had been influenced by the liberal thoughts and profitability of the colonies that could increase if the slaves were treated better (Peters et al. 2017, 38). In the same year the British Sierra Leone Company had been established as a successor of the St. George's Bay Company, which half a decade earlier had been unsuccessful in establishing a free settlement for the destitute black people in London. The Sierra Leone Company succeeded in establishing the colony of Sierra Leone in West Africa (Kup 1972), and by 1800 transferred more than 1,700 black people from the British territories in North America to Sierra Leone (Abasiattai 1992, 107).

The British Empire banned the slave trade in 1807 (Morgan 2010, 103), which was followed by a similar ban by the United States in 1808 (J. Taylor 1960, 37). The abolition campaign that destroyed the slave trade was guided by humanitarian, philanthropic rhetoric, which Eric Williams (1994, 178) notes, was “one of the greatest propaganda movements of all time.” It was often represented as the work of God rather than driven by selfish interests. Williams further notes that France suspected Britain of abolishing the slave trade based on selfish motives, because “her colonies were well-stocked with Negroes.” After 1808, slaves were illegally imported into the United States (J. Taylor 1960, 36), and the ban on the slave trade was only the beginning of a long transition that led to the ban on direct slavery in the United States after the American Civil War from 1861 until 1865 (Brauer 1977).

In 1816 the Society for the Colonization of Free People of Color of America, commonly known as the American Colonization Society (ACS), was established to deal with some of the problems of slavery. According to its constitution, the main objective of the ACS was:

to promote and execute a plan for colonizing (with their consent) the free people of color, residing in our country, in Africa, or such other place as Congress shall deem most expedient. And the Society shall act, to effect this object in cooperation with the general government, and much of the states as may adopt regulations upon the subject (ACS 1818, 3, Article II).

The dominant presentation of the ACS is influenced by liberal idealism and notions of philanthropy, humanitarianism, and freedom, which has roots in the literature published in the 1800s, such as Blyden (1883, 22), McPherson (1891), Sherwood (1917), and Wilkeson (1839). However, the philanthropic presentation of the ACS is contradicted by statements and reports from leading members of the ACS that point to racist motivations. Dr. J. H. T. McPherson of Johns Hopkins University acknowledged in 1891 that some of the leading members of the ACS spoke directly about the “desirability of removing the turbulent free-negro element” (8). He notes that such remarks “of these gentlemen and others of similar views have subjected the Society to many unjust attacks . . . but the guiding principles of the Society itself have always been distinctly philanthropic” (McPherson 1891, 34). In a similar defense of the philanthropic notion, Henry Noble Sherwood (1917) noted in *The Journal of Negro History* that “one finds it difficult to explain how the colonizationists could argue that one of their objects was to remove a dangerous element from our population” (224).

The philanthropic notion of the ACS has survived the contradicting statements from some of the leading members of the ACS and been reproduced in various ways in most of the literature published on Liberia. From the beginning of the twentieth century, it has gradually become the dominant notion that Liberia was founded in 1822 by freed slaves from the United States with the support of the ACS, as reflected in Akingbade (1976, 6), Angstrom and Duyvesteyn (2001, 202), Bøås (2005, 75), British Foreign Office (1919, 11), Goodhand and Atkinson (2001, 19), Cook (2003, 2), Outram (1999, 163), Rowlands (2008, 13), Shick (1980, 3–4), Sibley and Westermann (1928), J. Smith (1987, xi), Tyler-McGraw (2007), US Department of State (USDOS) (2011), Webster and Boahen (1980, 123), and West (1933, 5–10).

This view appears as an axiom, sometimes without any references. Because this view indicates a harmonious and cooperative relationship between the ACS and the freed black slaves, it does not capture the history of the fierce struggle against slavery in the Americas before the founding of Liberia. Some authors have even romanticized the ACS and the founding of Liberia, such as Tom W. Shick, in his *Behold the Promised Land*, who stated that the immigration to Liberia “might well be viewed romantically as a kind of homecoming” which has a “certain Biblical quality about it” (Shick 1980, 17).

Beyan (1991), Boley (1983), Clegg (2004), Egerton (1985), Frothingham (1855), Guannu (2009), and Kieh (1992) argue that Liberia was not founded by freed slaves from the United States or by a philanthropic society, but by white slave owners in the United States.<sup>4</sup> Liberia was founded in close cooperation with the USG, which was concerned about the increasing number of slave revolts and growing black population in the United States. Amos J. Beyan in *The American Colonization Society and the Creation of the Liberian State* (1991) noted that the board of the ACS was composed of southern slaveholders who had a strong desire to protect the institution of slavery. He argues that the main reasons for that body’s formation were “to mitigate the danger of further slave revolts and secure slavery” (Beyan 1991, 3). The ACS predominantly focused on free blacks because they were the primary source for insurrections (Beyan 1991, 3). From a similar perspective, but in contrast to Beyan, George Klay Kieh (2007) in *The First Liberian Civil War* argues that the ACS’s goal was not to protect slavery but a response to the disintegration of the slave system. The function of the ACS was removing the increasing number of freed slaves, whom the ruling class had decided to eliminate (Kieh 2007, 25). G. E. Saigbe Boley’s *Liberia* (1983, 6) argues that the ACS was the “design of the white man, in attempting to remove totally from the continent of North America all black people” with focus on those blacks who had been emancipated.

J. Gus Liebenow (1969) argues in *Liberia: The Evolution of Privilege* that the white ACS members who founded and managed Liberia were concerned with the issue of slavery and slave trade but notes that their motivations were mixed (1969, 2). He further states that among several considerations, the establishment of Liberia was to play a central role in the implementation of the ban on the slave trade, which came into force in 1808 (Liebenow 1969, 2). With this, Liberia would serve as a harbor for US warships and as a place for disposing

of the “recaptured” Africans taken from the slave ships intercepted by US warships (Liebenow 1969, 2). Other scholars suggest that Liberia is an example of black imperialism in Africa, where the black settlers, who became known as Americo-Liberians, de facto colonized the territory intending to develop Liberia into a great nation. (Akpan 1980, 58). Robert Kappel, (1980, 171) in his article “Resistance of the Liberian People,” argues that the colonization was an American project, where Liberia was to be the starting point for “American penetration of the whole African continent.”

The contrasting perspectives on the reasons why the ACS was established and Liberia founded are significant, and as this book demonstrates, the United States has had multiple interests in Liberia that have changed over time. An issue that becomes clear from the historical documents of the ACS is that the organization was not established as a philanthropic society, but as a society consisting of white slave owners that feared the slave rebellions. Robert Finley, president of the University of Georgia and cofounder of the ACS, writes in a letter from February 1815 that

the longer I live to see the wretchedness of men, the more I admire the virtue of those who desire, and with patience labour, to execute plans for the relief of the wretched. On this subject the state of the free blacks has very much occupied my mind. Their number increases greatly, and their wretchedness, as appears to me. Every thing connected with their condition, including their colour, is against them. Nor is there much prospect that their state can ever be greatly meliorated while they shall continue among us. Could not the rich and benevolent devise means to form a colony on some parts of the coast of Africa, similar to that of Sierra Leone, which might gradually induce many free blacks to go and settle, devising for them the means of getting there, and protection and support until they were established? Could they be sent back to Africa a threefold benefit would arise? We should be clear of them—we should send to Africa a population partly civilized and Christianized, for its benefit—and our blacks themselves would be put in a better situation (Finley 1815).

Their concern about the “black problem” is further captured retrospectively in Carey’s study of the rapid growth of the black population in the United States presented to the ACS in 1832. His figures show that from 1790 to 1830 the white population increased by about 80 percent, while the black population increased by 112 percent. In Virginia, in 1790, the number of free white people was 442,127 while the number of enslaved blacks was 292,627. By 1830 the number of free white people was 694,439; 469,724 for enslaved

blacks. In 1790 the “free coloured population” was 8,042, which by 1830 had increased to 52,942 (Carey 1832, 15). Based on this statistic, Carey notes “it is only necessary to cast a furtive glance at the scenes in St. Domingo . . . [to understand] . . . its great magnitude and importance” (Carey 1832, 14), which is “an admonitory lesson in favour of colonization” (1832, 15).

Shortly after the ban on the slave trade, Sierra Leone was consolidated as a British Crown colony in 1808, and Freetown became the base for the Royal Navy’s West Africa Squadron. Britain had begun to send its freed slaves to Freetown, but the USG and US slaveholders had still not found a place where they could send their black people. After the Gabriel Conspiracy in 1800, the legislature of Virginia had, during a secret session, instructed Governor Monroe to request that President Jefferson negotiate for the United States. He urged the president to collaborate with European powers possessing colonies on the coast of Africa in order to give asylum to the freed slaves from the United States. President Jefferson opened negotiations with the Sierra Leone Company and Portugal; however, he did not succeed (Carey 1832, 13).

In 1816, the legislature of Virginia adopted a resolution for the foundation to establish the ACS. It states that the legislature repeatedly has “sought to obtain an asylum, beyond the limits of the United States, for such persons of colour as had been or might be emancipated under the laws of this Commonwealth, but have hitherto found all their efforts frustrated.” Therefore, the legislature resolved that

the executive be requested to correspond with the President of the United States, for the purpose of obtaining a territory on the coast of Africa, or at some other place, not within any of the states or territorial governments of the United States, to serve as an asylum for such persons of colour as are now free, and may desire the same, and for those who may hereafter be emancipated within this Commonwealth; and that the Senators and Representatives of this state in the Congress of the United States, be requested to exert their best efforts to aid the President of the United States in the attainment of the above objects (Carey 1832, 9).

Consequently, on 21 December 1816, a meeting was held in the US House of Representatives to discuss the future of the freed black people (Clegg 2004, 29). Carey (1832, 9) notes that nearly all the participants were slaveholders, and the meeting was presided over by George Washington’s nephew, Bushrod Washington, who was the associate justice of the US Supreme Court. During the meeting the slaveholder

John Randolph of Roanoke stated on the “black problem” that “if a place could be provided for their reception, and a mode of sending them hence, there were hundreds, nay, thousands, who would, by manumitting their slaves, relieve themselves from the cares attendant on their possession” (Carey 1832, 9).

Afterward, a constitution was formed, and Bushrod Washington was appointed as the president, and Hon. William H. Crawford, of Georgia; Hon. Henry Clay of Kentucky; Hon. William Phillips of Massachusetts; Col Henry Rutgers and Hon. John E. Howard of New York; Hon. Samuel Smith and Hon. John C. Herbert of Maryland; John Taylor of Virginia; Gen Andrew Jackson and Robert Ralston of Tennessee; Richard Rush of Pennsylvania; Gen John Mason of the District of Columbia; and Samuel Bayard of New Jersey were elected as vice presidents (ACS 1818, 19).

The ACS was structured in such a way that the most important positions were held by people who had political influence in the South and by those who had the largest slave number of slaves. The less critical positions were occupied by people with smaller numbers of slaves (Beyan 1991, 13). This, however, did not exclude other members of the society that were among the most influential people in the United States, such as Pres. James Madison (ACS 1816; Membership certificate).

In his work *Democracy in America*, Tocqueville (1835) effectively documents the enormous problems of the slave system and the fear of the white ruling class. He notes that “in the extreme South Blacks are constantly accumulating and growing faster than whites,” which will result in a struggle (Tocqueville 1835, 574). The “whites of the South . . . [have] an immense superiority of enlightenment and means; but the Blacks will have for them numbers and the energy of despair” (Tocqueville 1835, 575). Tocqueville observes that the danger “presents itself constantly as a painful dream to the imagination of the Americans . . . the North talk daily about these dangers . . . [but] in the states of the South the inhabitants are silent . . . they avoid talking about it with friends; each person hides it so to speak from himself. The silence of the South has something more frightening about it than the noisy fears of the North” (Tocqueville 1835, 575).

It is this “preoccupation of the minds” that “has given birth to an almost unknown enterprise that can change the fate of one part of the human race,” which is the formation of the ACS that has “the goal of

exporting at their expense to the coast of Guinea the free Negroes” (Tocqueville 2010, 575-576).

## Establishment of American Colonies in West Africa

The ACS appointed Reverend Samuel J. Mills and Ebenezer Burgess to go to West Africa in 1817, via England. They were tasked with finding an appropriate site for the American colony, with the instruction of focusing on Sherbro Island next to Sierra Leone as a starting point. The two ACS agents were well received in Sierra Leone but realized that the British governor and the local chiefs did not appreciate the idea of an American colony in the region. However, this was not reflected in Mills’s report, which painted a positive picture of the situation. The ACS received this report in the United States after Mills died from malaria in June 1818 (Beyan 1991, 52–59).

The ACS was enthusiastic about the project, and in February 1820, the first ship, *Elizabeth*, left the port of New York with 88 black Americans headed by three white representatives of the ACS, Samuel Bacon, John Bankson, and Samuel Crozer (Beyan 1991, 59–60). The ship was escorted by the US Navy ship *Cyane* (Akingbade 1976, 17) to Freetown, and then to Sherbro Island, which was identified as the starting point for the American colony (Beyan 1991, 60). After arriving at Sherbro Island, the ACS agents realized that the indigenous population did not appreciate their presence, and the natural environment was not healthy for foreigners. By May 1820, the three white ACS agents and 22 black colonists had died from malaria. Reverend Daniel Coker, a black Methodist Episcopalian preacher, had been entrusted with overseeing the black colonists. However, because Coker had been more devoted to the white agents, his authority was opposed by the other freed black slaves. They left Sherbro Island and were given refuge by the British at Fourah Bay, near Freetown (Beyan 1991, 60–62).

The ACS abandoned the idea of colonizing Sherbro Island and sent a new team to contact the chiefs on the mainland. In March 1821, the ship *Nautilus* arrived with a new group of black colonists, headed by Jonathan B. Winn and Ephraim Bacon, representing the USG, and Joseph Andrus and Christian Wiltberger representing the ACS (Beyan 1991, 62). However, the local chiefs were reluctant to sell their land to the Americans, and the ACS realized that “from some unexpected disappointments” there are reasons to consider that the

land purchase “will not be attained until the arrival of another agent, and additional means” (ACS 1821, 12).

As diplomatic means had failed, the USG assisted the ACS with military power. In late 1821, the ACS agent Dr. Ayres, in the company of Capt Stockton of the *USS Alligator* arrived in Sierra Leone. From there, they purchased Cape Mesurado, which they considered as the best spot for the American colony (Brown 1941, 18). The *USS Alligator* was built in 1820 as one of five schooners for the primary use of suppressing the slave trade and protecting merchant ships. On 12 December, Ayres and Stockton sailed to Cape Mesurado to negotiate the land purchase with the local chief Zolu Duma also known as King Peter. After the King had refused to sell the land or meet for further negotiations, Ayres and Stockton returned a few days later to King Peter’s village. Stockton put a pistol to the head of the King and forced him to sell the land to the Americans (Akingbade 1976, 19; Kieh 1992, 26; Beyan 1991, 66; Boone 1970, 17; Harris 1985, 14; Van Sickle 2011, 110).

A document prepared by the Americans was signed by King Peter, King George, King Zoda, King Long Peter, King Governor, and King Jimmy, on the African side, and Capt Robert F. Stockton and Eli Ayres on the American side. John S. Mill and John Graig witnessed it. According to the document, the Kings sold the ACS, “certain Lands, viz: Dozoa Island, and also all that portion of Land bounded north and west by the Atlantic Ocean, and on the south and east by a line drawn in a south-east direction from the north of Mesurado river” (Huberich 1947, 195). For this land the kings were paid: “six muskets, one box Beads, two hogsheads Tobacco, one cask Gunpowder, six bars Iron, ten iron Pots, one dozen Knives and Forks, one dozen Spoons, six pieces blue Baft, four Hats, three Coats, three pair Shoes, one box Pipes, one keg Nails, twenty Looking-glasses, three pieces Handkerchiefs, three pieces Calico, three Canes, four Umbrellas, one box Soap, one barrel Rum” (Huberich 1947, 196). The agreement further states several similar items were submitted for payment, which includes some food stocks, but Liberian historian Joseph Saye Guannu (2009) states that these items were never given to the kings.

ACS colonial agent Dr. Eli Ayres reported to the ACS in 1821 that the value did “not amount to more than three hundred dollars” (Huberich 1947, 191), for which they had “purchased a tract of country containing one million of dollars’ worth of land, with the best harbour between Gibraltar and the Cape of Good Hope . . . [with] an excellent place for watering ships” (Huberich 1947, 191). Ayres further notes

that “Stockton’s dexterity at mixing flattery with a little well-timed threat” (Huberich 1947, 190) had helped the Americans acquire the land (Huberich 1947, 91).

The formal possession of Cape Mesurado took place on 25 April 1822, when Ayres hoisted the American flag in the presence of the local kings and the indigenous people. Then, Ayres was appointed as the first USG agent on 12 May 1822. He employed the black settlers as laborers and began constructing the infrastructure of the American colony (Huberich 1947, 213). Because the relationship between the ACS and the indigenous people was incredibly hostile, the black settlers were also used as soldiers to protect the colony. Britain offered to protect the colonists in exchange for a portion of the land, but the ACS rejected this (Akingbade 1976, 22–24). When the ACS representative Jehudi Ashmun arrived in August 1822, most of the black colonists were organized into a structured militia force (Akingbade 1976, 22–24). Shortly after forming the militia, the first attack on the colony hit, on 11 November 1822, when the combined forces of several ethnic groups attempted to expel the colonists (Akingbade 1976, 27). This attempt was followed by a second attack on 2 December when an estimated 1,500 indigenous people made another unsuccessful attempt to remove the Americans (Akingbade 1976, 29). There were fewer colonists, but they had a technological advantage in terms of arms. At a crucial moment in the battle, Matilda Newport fired a cannon and killed a large number of indigenous people, which made the other indigenous people retreat (Brown, 1941, 19; Shick 1980, 91). For some historians, this marks the triumph of civilization over barbarism (Brown, 1941, 19; Shick 1980, 91); on 1 December 1916, an annual, national celebration day was established to remember this event, and a street was named after Matilda Newport. The celebration of this event has become a controversial symbol of the hostile division between the black settlers and the indigenous people, which still influences the political environment in Liberia almost 200 years later, although the national celebration day was officially abolished in 1980 (Guannu 2009).

The wars against the American colonists marked the beginning of a series of armed conflicts with the indigenous people (Guannu 2009). The colony was placed under martial law and became dependent on the protection of the US Navy, which patrolled the West Coast, reminding the indigenous people and European powers that the settlement was backed by US military power (Akingbade 1976, 35–39).

Whenever the colony was threatened by hostile indigenous people, who continued their attempt to remove the American colonists, the United States sent military support to quell the rebellions (Buell 1947, 1). Beginning with Liberia's establishment as a colony, "through visits of United States warships to Liberian ports and through more urbane gestures, the United States has posted a keep-off-the-grass sign on Liberian soil" (Buell 1947, 1). In addition to the threat of indigenous people, the struggle for control of the colony between the black settlers and the ACS agents continued, and the ACS had to grant the black settlers some political influence gradually.

At the seventh annual meeting of the ACS, held 20 February 1824, it was decided to name the colony on Cape Mesurado "Liberia," based on the notion of "liberty" and the capital "Monrovia" in honor of US Pres. James Monroe (Akingbade 1976, 34; Innes 1971, 81). With this change, the *Plan of Civil Government of 1824* determined that the power of the colony should rest with the Board of Agents. The black settlers were granted the right to assembly and petition and the ability to elect a vice-agent and two councilors who could advise the ACS administration on the colony (Liebenow 1969, 60).

By the end of 1824, the number of black people transferred to Liberia numbered 324; however, 72 blacks died, so the total number of black settlers remaining was 252 (*Tables Showing the Number of Emigrants and Recaptured Africans* 1845, 301–3).<sup>5</sup> Monrovia had been fortified, and most of the men had been trained as soldiers (Akingbade 1976, 24). The colony began to expand under the guise of suppressing the slave trade, with the backing of the US Navy (Akingbade 1976, 38).

The US Navy had become more active in West Africa since the Congress on 3 March 1819 had adopted an "Act Relative to the Slave Trade," which authorized the US president to deploy any of the US armed vessels to intercept slave ships anywhere in the world and

make such regulations and arrangements as he may deem expedient for the safe-keeping, support, and removal beyond the limits of the United States, of all such Negroes, mulattoes, or persons of colour, as may be so delivered and brought within their jurisdiction; and to appoint a proper person or persons, residing upon the coast of Africa, as agent or agents for receiving the Negroes, mulattoes, or persons of colour, delivered from on board vessels seized, in the prosecution of the slave trade, by the commanders of the United States armed vessels ("Documents Relating to the United States and Liberia," 1910, sec. 1).

The act further allocated \$100,000 to cover the cost attached to the implementation of the bill (“Documents Relating to the United States and Liberia,” 1910, sec. 7). Liberia became the place for the disposal of the slaves that were “recaptured” by US anti-slave-trade warships (Younger 2008, 428). The recaptured Africans were classified as “Congos” (Younger 2008, 437), and the first recaptured Africans arrived in Liberia in 1827, when the ship *Norfolk* delivered 141 recaptured blacks to the port of Monrovia. By 1843 the total number of recaptured slaves was around 300 (*Tables Showing the Number of Emigrants and Recaptured Africans...1845*, 300–306).

Suppressing the slave trade became a way in which to justify US military advancement and expansion on the West African Coast. In the name of suppressing the slave trade, Gen William Johnson of the ACS, with support from Capt Barbour of the US Navy, attacked the Spanish and French forts at Trade Town in April 1826 (N. Azikiwe 1934, 100). Trade Town was situated 100 miles east of Monrovia and was under the rule of King West (N. Azikiwe 1934, 100). On 16 January 1827, the territory acquiesced to the authority of the ACS upon signing a treaty (Akingbade 1976, 43). The ACS used “the charge of slave trade against all Africans who opposed them” as a way of forcing the indigenous chiefs and kings to sign treaties that would “cede their lands” to the Americans, with the support from the US Navy and the Black Settler Militia (Akingbade 1976, 53).

As the ACS in cooperation with the US Navy advanced on the West African coast, more American colonization societies were established in the United States. Liberia was managed from Washington by the ACS Board of Managers in cooperation with the federal government. However, in 1827 the ACS Auxiliary Society began to object to the centralization of power in Washington. Under the leadership of Charles Harper, Virgil Macey, and John H. B. Latrobe the Maryland society appealed to the Methodist clerics and members of the Mason Lodge for their direct support in removing the free black people from Maryland (Harris 1985, 37). After the Nat Turner slave rebellion in Virginia in early 1831, the Maryland legislators passed laws to assist the colonialists. They were granted \$20,000 per year for the next 10 years and appointed a special Board of Managers of the State Fund for the Removal of Colored People in Maryland (Harris 1985, 39).

The state of Maryland did not have the constitutional right to establish colonies overseas, but the lawmakers were “more concerned with the most expedient way to remove free blacks than such inconvenient

questions,” so the Maryland State Colonization Society was established as a “semi-public” corporation (Hall 2003, 25). In January 1834, James Hall from the Maryland Society arrived in Monrovia, and on 14 February 1834, Hall had purchased Cape Palmas, around 400 square miles of land, for goods valued at \$1,200 (Hall 2003, 46). Cape Palmas today is near the border between Liberia and Ivory Coast. The architecture of the main city, Harper, includes a Masonic temple and churches reflecting the city’s founders (Caesar 2002).

The deed names the colony “Maryland in Liberia,” and in addition to giving the colonization society full authority over the land, it states that Maryland in Liberia is united with Liberia “in common defense in case of war or foreign aggression” (Eastman 1956, 83). As in the case of the first settlement, Maryland in Liberia needed protection by the US Navy because according to the local Grebo ethnic group, their land had never been sold to the Americans. Petty wars broke out between the indigenous ethnic groups and between indigenous ethnic groups and settlers, and as the crisis over land, trade, borders, and authority escalated in 1843, *USS Cyan* was deployed in order to settle the dispute. Cdr Matthew C. Perry threatened the indigenous people with bombardments if they did not comply with his orders (Akingbade 1976, 90).

In the same year Maryland in Liberia was founded, the Young Men’s Colonization Society of Pennsylvania and the Colonization Society of the City of New York unified and established the colony of Bassa Cove, east of Monrovia (Huberich 1947, 568). The next year, the Mississippi State Colonization Society arrived with 71 people. With the support from the ACS, a colony with the name Mississippi in Africa was established between Bassa Cove and Cape Palmas of about 3,000 square miles (Huberich 1947, 600). Another small settlement with the name Edina was established close to Monrovia on the opposite side of St. Paul’s River, but this colony was under the jurisdiction of Liberia (Huberich 1947, 590). Bassa Cove was integrated into the Commonwealth of Liberia in 1839, and Mississippi in Africa joined the Commonwealth in 1842. In 1856 Maryland became a county in the Republic of Liberia, nine years after Liberia had declared independence (Huberich 1947, 569).

## Liberian Independence

By 1829, the USG had paid \$264,710 under the Act of 1819 to support Liberia in terms of construction, agriculture, logistics, and defense (Harris 1985, 34). According to Lawrence H. Officer and Samuel H. Williamson, in their *Purchasing Power of Money in the United States from 1774 to Present*, \$264,710 would be equal to \$6.4 million in 2010. President Jackson's auditor Amos Kendall recommended withdrawing USG aid to Liberia, but Jackson rejected this and further appropriated \$62,000 (Harris 1985, 34). The president of the ACS and former speaker of the House of Representatives, Sen. Henry Clay, proposed a bill to use public funds raised from a land sale to support the colonization in Liberia. But Sen. Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri objected strongly to this and referred to the example of Sierra Leone, which cost the British Crown around \$35 million (\$846 million according to the 2010 Consumer Price Index)—which he considered as a waste of resources—and urged that United States avoid similar mistakes in Liberia (Harris 1985, 35). The House and the Senate passed the bill, but President Jackson vetoed it. Consequently, Jackson's administration began to re-evaluate the Liberian colonization project and reduced public funding for Liberia. Some congressmen argued that the ACS was out of favor with Jackson, while others argued that Jackson personally disliked Clay's presidential ambitions; however, Jackson continued to support the colonization project (Harris 1985, 36).

In comparison with Sierra Leone, the Liberian colony was inexpensive to maintain, and from 1816 to 1843 the ACS spent \$589,000 (\$17.9 million according to the 2010 Consumer Price Index). Besides USG support, most of the money was raised from private fundraising in the United States and economic activities in West Africa, which had grown with the expansion of the colonies (ACS, 1867, 65). A census report published by the ACS states that the total number of emigrants to Liberia in 1843 was 4,454. Of these 1,687 were freeborn, 97 had purchased their freedom, 2,290 had been emancipated by emigrating to Liberia, and 286 were "recaptured slaves" delivered by the US Navy (*Tables showing the Number of Emigrants and Recaptured Africans* 1845, 306). Out of the total number of black settlers, 2,198 died and 520 had left the colony or been removed. It further states that the total "number in the colony . . . sent out by the American

Colonization Society and its auxiliaries” in 1843 was 1,736 (*Tables showing the Number of Emigrants and Recaptured Africans* 1845, 306).

The Liberian colony enhanced US trade with West Africa, and it increased significantly (Harris 1985, 66). However, as commercial interests increased so did the conflicts with other powers in the region, in particular, Britain. The ACS demanded taxes and tariffs from British traders within the territories of the Liberian Commonwealth, and the British traders refused to recognize the ACS as an authority. The indirect role of the USG made it challenging to hold the USG responsible for trade disputes between British traders and the Liberian colony. Therefore, British Minister, Henry Fox, issued a letter to the US Secretary of State, Abel Upshur, dated 9 August 1843, in which he states that the British government considered it

very necessary, in order to avert for the future serious trouble and contention in that quarter, that her Majesty’s Government should be accurately informed what degree of official patronage and protection, if any, the United States Government extend to the colony of Liberia, how far, if at all, the United States Government recognize the colony of Liberia, as a national establishment; and consequently, how far, if at all, the United States Government hold themselves responsible towards foreign countries for the acts of the authorities of Liberia (Mr. [Henry S.] Fox, British Minister to Mr. [Abel P.] Upshur, Secretary of State 1843, 7).

Fox further demands to be informed if the USG protected the colony of Liberia and what the USG considered to be the territorial limits, because “the authorities of Liberia have shown a disposition to enlarge very considerably the limits of the territory; assuming to all appearances quite unjustifiably, the right of monopolizing the trade with the native inhabitants along a considerable line of the coast, where the trade had hitherto been free; and thus injuriously interfering with the commercial interests and pursuits of British subjects in that quarter” (Mr. [Henry S.] Fox, British Minister to Mr. [Abel P.] Upshur, Secretary of State” 1843, 7–8).

In order “to avert causes of future dispute and contention” Fox notes that the British government should be informed “whether the authorities of Liberia are themselves alone responsible on the spot for their public acts; or whether, if they are under the protection and control of the United States Government” (“Mr. [Henry S.] Fox, British Minister to Mr. [Abel P.] Upshur, Secretary of State” 1843, 8).

In a reply on 25 September 1843, Upshur summarizes the USG’s position on Liberia, in which he states that the ACS funded Liberia to

introduce Christianity and promote civilization in Africa; to relieve the slave-holding States from the inconvenience of an increase of the free blacks among them . . . and to present to the slave-holder an inducement to emancipate his slaves, by offering to them an asylum in the country of their ancestors . . . It was not, however, established under the authority of our Government, nor has it been recognised as subject to our laws and jurisdiction . . . To the United States it is an object of peculiar interest . . . for twenty-two years it has been allowed, with the full knowledge of all nations, to enlarge its borders from time to time, as its safety or its necessities required . . . This Government will be, at all times, prepared to interpose its good offices to prevent any encroachment by the colony upon any just right of any nation; and that it would be very unwilling to see it despoiled of its territory rightfully acquired, or improperly restrained in the exercise of its necessary rights and powers as an independent settlement (“Mr. [Abel P.] Upshur, Secretary of State, to Mr. [Henry S.] Fox” 1843, 8–10).

Another communication followed on 30 December 1843, in which envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of the United States, Edward Everett, expressed to the British Foreign Secretary George Hamilton-Gordon (Lord of Aberdeen), the US concerns about the “difficulties which have arisen between the Government of Liberia [GoL] and the British cruising officers and British traders on the coast of Africa” (Everett 1843, 4, document 162). He emphasizes that in principle, it can rest on “no other foundation than that the settlement of Liberia is a private enterprise,” further, he states that he

greatly fears that, if the right of this settlement to act as an independent political community, and, as such, to enforce the laws necessary to its existence and prosperity, be denied by her Majesty’s Government, and if the naval power of Great Britain be employed in protecting individual traders in the violation of those laws, the effect will be to aim a fatal blow at its very existence; to invite the insults of slave traders and the aggressions of other powers; and to destroy the wholesome influence of Liberia over the natives. These are evils too great, in the estimation of the undersigned, to be willingly caused by her Majesty’s government (Everett 1843, 5).

In a reply to Everett on 31 January 1844, the Earl (Lord) of Aberdeen made it clear to the USG that the role of the British Navy was to “extend a general protection to British trade on the western coast of Africa, to avoid involving themselves in contentions with the local authorities of the Liberian settlements upon points of uncertain legality” which includes “improper assumption of power on the part to the Liberian authorities.” (Lord of Aberdeen 1844, 7, document 162). The example underpins theorist E. H. Carr’s (2001, 115) observation that trade cannot be separated from military power just as politics

and economics cannot be separated, which is attempted by the *laissez-faire* school. Carr refers to the historical role of the American fleet in Latin American waters and the British fleet elsewhere, which evidences that “if dollars were a humanitarian substitute for bullets, they could and would be reinforced by bullets in case of political need” (2001, 115).

As the tensions increased between the ACS and the USG on one side, and the British traders and the British government on the other, ACS agent and secretary, Ralph Randolph Gurley, wrote a personal letter to Pres. John Tyler on 2 February 1844. Within the letter, he acknowledges two main problems. The first problem relates to the struggle between the black settlers and the ACS, which Gurley refers to as “evils of disaffection and insubordination.” From the very beginning, the ACS had experienced difficulties with controlling the black settlers, and Gurley notes that “on some occasions, not only the good order but also the very existence of the colony was endangered” (Gurley 1844, 12). With the support of the US Navy, the ACS had resolved many disputes with the black colonialists but been forced to grant them concessions in terms of more political influence and civil rights. This included changes to the constitution in 1839, from where the preamble “speaks of this constitution as granted to the citizens of the colony.” Gurley notes that this grant “could not be of political power” and notes that the land was purchased by the ACS and not the settlers (Gurley 1844, 12). However, with the gradual ownership of the constitution, the black settlers continued to push for more political influence and ownership of land, which resulted in the appointment of Joseph Jenkins Roberts as governor of Liberia in 1841, after the death of the first governor of Liberia, Thomas Buchanan. Guannu (2009) notes that family relations were critical. For example, Thomas Buchanan was a cousin of James Buchanan, who held positions as US secretary of state from 1845 to 1949 and president of the United States and from 1857 to 1861. J. J. Roberts was a successful mulatto businessman who was loyal to the white ACS agents, but his appointment as governor of Liberia marked a point where the black colonialists gradually gained more political and economic power from the white administrators (Guannu 2009).

The second problem that Gurley (1844) referred to was the political status of Liberia regarding other foreign powers and the pressure from the British government, which he notes “may affect, to a great extent, the interests of our commerce” (12). Gurley notes that Liberia

can become “a mighty and independent commonwealth of freemen and Christians” which can “extend its power and beneficence over the wide regions of western Africa” (Gurley 1844, 12). However, in order for this vision to come true, Liberia must become an independent nation-state. Therefore, Gurley requests the president to “secure to the small, but well-organized State of Liberia, a permanent and independent existence, and such countenance from civilized nations as shall open before it an unlimited prospect of influence and improvement” (Gurley 1844, 12).

Subsequently, John Simon Greenleaf, professor at Harvard University Law School, wrote the constitution for Liberia, which came into force when Liberia declared independence on 26 July 1847. The motto “The Love of Liberty Brought Us Here” was adopted (Buell 1947, 22). The flag was copied from that of the United States, containing 11 instead of 13 stripes and only one star (Huberich 1947, 836). Britain recognized Liberia as an independent state in 1848, followed by France in 1852, Germany and Denmark in 1855, Belgium in 1858, and the United States on 10 October 1862. Italy and the Netherlands recognized Liberia shortly after the United States, followed by Norway, Sweden, and Portugal in 1865. Whereas “we the people” in the Constitution of the United States referred to the white male property-owning class (Parenti 2008, 3–5), “we the people” in the Liberian Constitution referred to the black settlers only, and as in the United States, the Republic of Liberia embarked on a system where the small ruling elite discriminated against and dominated the majority. This is reflected in the Liberian Declaration of Independence which states that “We, the people of the Republic of Liberia, were originally inhabitants of the United States of North America” (Declaration of Independence 1847). In an amendment to the Liberian Constitution of 1847, it is clarified that the word “people” is not synonymous with “inhabitants,” and it does not “include the white residents, just as the word ‘People’ as used in the preamble of the American Constitution did not include the Negroes” (Huberich, 1947, 865). The amendment further states that recaptured Africans are no more considered citizens than “the Indians are included under the designation of ‘People’ in the US Constitution” (Huberich, 1947, 865).

The Liberian Constitution established the republic exclusively as the “black man’s country” based on Black Nationalism (Witt 2007, 110), although the first four presidents of Liberia were all mulattos (Hlophe 1973, 248). The internal organization among the black

settlers—who from the beginning had been influenced by the skin pigmentation and the white and black division that the black settlers had experienced in the United States—was replicated in Liberia (Witt 2007, 96).

Before independence, intrasettler divisions had created the “True Liberian Party” and the “Old Whig Party” (Beyan 1991, 95). The most powerful of those parties at the time of independence was the True Liberian Party, led by J. J. Roberts, who therefore became the first president of Liberia. This party consisted of the commercial elite and the civil servants in Monrovia, who predominantly were identified by their brown skin color (mulattos). In 1957, this party was renamed the “Republican Party,” to follow the American tradition. In contrast, the Old Whig Party was marked by the composition of mostly dark-skinned poor settlers, who identified themselves as the “Common People’s Party” and the “True Black Man’s Party” dedicated to “Africa for Africans” and used their color differences “and unmixed African descent” as major political issues (Hlophe 1979, 90–91).

Abayomi Wilfrid Karnga’s 1926 *History of Liberia* (Hlophe 1979, 92) states that Liberia was formed as a “caste system” with four distinct orders: the “official class,” which was the “merchant princes”; the “common people,” consisting of settlers who were laborers and small farmers; the recaptured or “Congos”; and lastly the indigenous Africans (Hlophe 1979, 92). The mulattos were “by custom forbidden” to have social intercourse or marriage with the lower status (Hlophe 1979, 93). The Masonic Craft, which was established in 1848, became an all mulatto club, where merchants, politicians, administrators, and church officials established a brotherhood which sought to maintain the mulatto hegemony in the republic. They further subdivided themselves based on degrees of skin color as little fair, quite fair, very fair, and almost white. They argued that because the climate was more severe on the people with lighter skin, those with the darkest skin “should go to the soil for subsistence, whilst his brother with blue veins remain in the Government offices to conduct the affairs of the state” (Hlophe 1979, 93).

Many of the mulattos were children of white slaveholders in the United States who had had intercourse with their female slaves. For many slave owners, it was an embarrassment to have mulattos around, and Liberia provided an opportunity to send them away. Because of their light skin and family connections, the ACS administrators favored this group and placed them in the best positions in the colony

(Guannu 2009). However, the mulattos were a minority group, and the preponderant blacks did not trust J. J. Roberts, whom they considered “more White than Black” (C. Johnson 2000, 97).

In 1869, the Old Whig Party held a convention led by prominent dark-skinned politicians, such as Edward J. Roye, James L. Smith, and the early Pan-Africanist, Edward Blyden. This convention renamed the political party the National True Whig Party and took power in 1870 under President Roye (Beyan 1991, 100). In 1871, President Roye secured a British loan of \$500,000 for the development of Liberia, bearing a 7 percent interest rate in addition to the cost of \$150,000 for the service (G. Ellis 1911, 267). However, a large amount of the money disappeared before reaching the coffers of the Liberian state. Roye was arrested and killed by the displeased ruling elite in Liberia, which marks the first murder of a Liberian president. The state was left with a huge debt (Beyan 1991, 135; Brown 1941, 143; C. Johnson 2000, 99). The mulattos came back to power under the leadership of J. J. Roberts (C. Johnson 2000, 99–100). Whereas Roye had turned away from the ACS and went to Britain for support to develop Liberia, Roberts had strong sympathies and praise for the ACS. This is perhaps best reflected in his speech to the ACS in 1869, which praises the philanthropic and benevolent slave owners for having established Liberia and for continuing to support it (Roberts 1869, 3, 15).

However, as the minority, mulattos could not hold power for long, and the National True Whig Party regained power in 1877. Under the leadership of President Johnson from 1883 to 1892, the True Whig Party established a political structure in Liberia, which was a *de facto* one-party system that lasted until a military coup in 1980. The main objective of the one-party system was national unity—as Britain and France gradually seized large portions of Liberia—and to withstand the continuing resistance from the indigenous people (Beyan 1991, 99–101).

The distinction of color became less significant, and the Masonic Order ceased to be a mulatto club but remained as a mechanism to preserve the power of the settlers (Wreh 1976, 129). Government officials in the legislative, judicial, and executive branches were all Freemasons, which made the lines of power interwoven (Wreh 1976, 130). Until the early 1970s, there was “no separation of powers between the hierarchy of the Masonic movement and that of the government” (Wreh 1976, 130).

With the abstract notions of spirituality and divine forces, as reflected in American diplomat James Robert Spurgeon's 1899 speech to Monrovia Masons (1900)—“The Lost Word”—the Masonic Order coexisted with many different churches the ACS had established and constituted additional, significant institutions of power. Christian missionary activities started in the late 1820s with the Baptists led by Lott Cary and the Methodists led by Reverend Kissling, which were driven by the notions of the Enlightenment and the “civilising mission” (Harris 1985, 61–62). This was followed by Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Lutherans who spread throughout Liberia where they built large churches, schools, and health centers. Liberia became a profoundly religious country, where political and economic successes and failures were attributed to the will of God (Beyan 1991, 149–55). There was a close relationship between the Masonic Order and many of the churches, in contrast to the local “religious” societies such as the Poro and Sande societies, which predominantly remained indigenous “secret” societies (Fraenkel 1970, 194). In contrast to the local societies, membership in a church became a symbol of civilization, but within each church, people were subdivided into hierarchies, and many were also members of the indigenous societies (Fraenkel 1970, 158).

The Congo people were between the Americo-Liberians and the indigenous people. Many of the Congos were children when they had been “recaptured” by the US anti-slave trade ships and disposed of in Liberia. They attended the missionary schools and churches and learned English, and many were trained for the military. A few Congos committed suicide, and some ran away; however, most of the runaways were arrested and “brought back in order,” as the Liberian government offered three dollars for “each African recovered” (Younger 2008, 439). In general, the Congo people were loyal to the ruling elite (Younger 2008, 441).

## Great Power Rivalry in West Africa

Shortly after Liberia declared independence, the rivalry between Britain, France, and the United States intensified. In 1848 Britain offered its protection to the GoL and provided a small cutter armed with four-inch guns for coastal patrols as a gift to the new state. France followed suit and provided the GoL with arms and uniforms

in 1852 (McPherson 1891, 22). However, when an uprising took place in Grand Bassa in the same year, the USG deployed the USS *John Adams*, which demonstrated that the United States maintained its status as the chief protector of Liberia (Brown 1941, 132). Guannu (2009) maintains that many of the indigenous uprisings were covertly encouraged and supported by Britain or France as a way of putting pressure on the GoL to accept their protection and thereby turn Liberia into a protectorate and under the control of Britain or France.

Liberia provided a favorable business environment for the United States on the West African coast, and the ports were of strategic significance for broader US interests in Africa. On 21 October 1862, a “Treaty of Commerce and Navigation between the United States of America and Liberia” amplified the status that the Liberian Republic was in a unique economic sphere for US interests and a de facto US protectorate (Brown 1941, 133). However, the rivalry continued, and in 1869, the USG was involved in a major border dispute between Britain and the GoL (Fish 1869). In 1879, US Commodore R. W. Shuffled of the warship USS *Ticonderoga* reported that France made a new attempt to offer the GoL its protection (Hunter 1879), and in 1884 while a border dispute was negotiated between Britain and the GoL, France occupied some territories in Liberia. This occupation caused the USDOS to emphasize that Liberia was “entitled to the sympathy and, when practicable, to the protection and encouragement of the United States” (“Documents Relating to the United States and Liberia.” 1884, 222).<sup>6</sup> As numerous diplomatic documents demonstrate, these kinds of disputes were more the norm than the exception.

The GoL needed financial support to protect the borders that had not been clearly marked and for the development of the infrastructure, such as roads (McPherson 1891, 30). The debt burden dating from Roye’s presidency had increased significantly over the years, and in 1906, under the presidency of Arthur Barclay (1904–12), Liberia obtained another loan of \$500,000 from the London banking house of Emil Erlanger. Sir Harry Johnston, who wrote a two-volume reference work on Liberia, including a comprehensive survey of Liberia’s mineral wealth, saw opportunities for exploiting the wild rubber forest in Liberia and mediated the loan in London (C. Johnson 2000, 102). The loan conditions were that \$25,000 “should be used for imperative Liberian obligations,” \$125,000 for the payment of Liberia’s debt, and \$335,000 should be turned over to the Liberian

Development Company for “banking and road schemes in the republic” (C. Johnson 2000, 103). This company was “Johnston’s rubber plantation in Liberia” (Buell 1947, 24), where President Barclay “with the endorsement of his cabinet” acted as an advisor (C. Johnson 2000, 103). As security for the loan, two British officials were appointed as inspectors for the Liberian customs. The chief inspector served as a financial advisor, financed by the loan. Also, Liberia was obliged to employ British officers for the Liberian Frontier Force (LFF) (Buell 1947, 24; C. Johnson 2000, 104).

Within two years, most of the money entrusted to Harry Johnston’s company had disappeared, and only a small part of the infrastructure work had been executed. The company “indignantly declined to make an accounting” for the money it had spent (C. Johnson 2000, 103). When trying to negotiate a settlement, Johnston offered to sell the company to President Barclay for \$500,000. Liberia secured the unused balance of \$150,000, but this was under the additional required conditions from the British government: Liberia should employ an additional three British customs officers and reorganize the Frontier Force under the command of British officers. Shortly after the new conditions were put in place, the British consul general and the British officer of the Frontier Force engineered a coup to annex Liberia to the territory of Sierra Leone, but this coup was unsuccessful (C. Johnson 2000, 104).

At the end of the second loan episode, the national debt of Liberia was \$1,289,570. Since the Berlin Conference in 1884–85, Germany had increasingly become commercially engaged with Liberia. As a solution to the second debt crisis, Germany presented the “Lange Proposition,” which would provide Liberia with a loan of two million marks to support the foreign and domestic obligations of the country. Germany required similar conditions of foreign receivership at the Liberian customs. In contrast to the British loan, the Lange Proposition suggested the loan as a joint venture of American, British, French, and German bankers, but this was rejected by the United States (C. Johnson 2000, 104–5).

Around 1910, the rivalry for control of Liberia had sharpened. The secretary of the US Legation in Monrovia, George W. Ellis (1911, 273), notes that France and Britain had succeeded in absorbing substantial parts of the Liberian territory. Also, Germany had “established great trade and commercial centers along the Liberian coast and [was exerting] its diplomatic and financial influence on behalf of Liberian independence and sending more merchant ships to Liberian waters

than any other European power.” However, “Great Britain and France are the dynamic factors in the Liberian situation” (Ellis 1911, 273).

In 1909, the USG sent a commission to Liberia to make a loan agreement with the GoL. Goals included paying off the debt to Britain, establishing American customs receivership, establishing a naval coaling station, and providing American aid for the training of the LFF (Buell 1947, 24). However, the USDOS doubted if the Senate would approve the proposal and if US intervention would cause Britain and other powers withdraw from the territory. Therefore, in 1912, the USG proposed to use “private finance, from a number of countries, to establish outside control” of Liberia (Buell 1947, 24).

Under the leadership of the USG, an international loan of \$1,700,000 was allocated to Liberia by American and European banking groups, at the interest rate of five percent (Buell 1947, 24). This loan was predominantly created to pay off the existing debt, and the primary condition attached to the loan involved a general receiver and financial advisor to the Liberian government, who was “designated” by the president of the United States and “appointed” by the Liberian government (Buell 1947, 24). Under the leadership of the general receiver, Britain, France, and Germany had designated receivers, who were all responsible to their respective governments, and “disagreement between the receivers, as well as between the receivers and the Liberian government soon arose” (Buell 1947, 25).

In 1915 the Kru people rebelled against the GoL, which was “the most serious uprising in Liberian history” (Davis 1975, 222). The GoL suspected “British complicity in the uprising” (Davis 1975, 253), a suspicion that was supported by the appearance of the British warship HMS *Highflyer* in Liberian water in October 1915. Guannu (2009) states that from oral narrative research, it appears that Britain directly encouraged the Kru to rebel. On 19 October 1915, chargé d'affaires of the US legation in Monrovia, Richard C. Bundy, reported to US Secretary of State Robert Lansing that the HMS *Highflyer* had arrived in Monrovia “to offer Liberian government assistance in Kru disturbances” (Bundy 1915). Lansing contacted the British government and expressed the concerns of the USG regarding British neutrality if HMS *Highflyer* remained “in Liberian water more than twenty-four hours” (Lansing 1915). HMS *Highflyer* left on 19 October (Bundy 1915), and on 8 November the warship USS *Chester* arrived in Monrovia (Bundy 1915). USS *Chester* provided arms and ammunition to the GoL, transported Liberian soldiers along the

coast, and prevented direct British intervention (Buell 1947, 25). On 15 December, Liberian Pres. Daniel E. Howard informed the legislature that a commission had been “appointed to investigate and settle peacefully the questions between the Kru and the Government [GoL]” (Howard 1915). Howard further noted that “this revolt was initiated for the purpose of subverting, if possible, the government of Liberia, and that it is not without foreign sympathy and encouragement” (Howard 1915). If the Kru had won this war, “it was believed they would have placed themselves under British protection” (Buell 1947, 25).

The conflicts related to the loan agreements and the Kru rebellion led the United States to make a shift in policy toward Liberia. On 4 April 1917, US Secretary of State Robert Lansing stated in a note to the American chief representative in Liberia, Minister Curtis, that

the time has now arrived when this Government, as next friend of Liberia, must insist upon a radical change of policy. The Government of the United States can no longer be subjected to criticism from other foreign Powers as regards the operation of the loan agreement, and can no longer tolerate failure on the part of the Liberian Government to institute and carry out necessary administrative reforms. Unless the Liberian Government proceeds without delay to act upon the advice and suggestions herewith expressed, this Government will be forced, regretfully, to withdraw the friendly support that historic and other considerations have hitherto prompted it to extend (Lansing 1917, 877).

Lansing further states that the GoL must be informed that “it has no reason to fear any lack of interest in Liberia’s welfare from the Department . . . but that on the contrary, prompt and honest cooperation on the part of Liberia in carrying out the reforms . . . will result in closer and more friendly relations between the Governments” (Lansing 1917, 877).

The reforms included that the US financial advisors should be involved in “all matters directly or indirectly affecting the finances of the Republic, external or internal” (Lansing 1917, 879–80). The “General Receiver should countersign all commercial permits and all permits involving large transactions,” including the traffic of arms (Lansing 1917, 878), and have full control of the budget of the LFF (Lansing 1917, 881), which remained under the command of the US officers (Lansing 1917, 882). It must be noted that there are significant similarities with these reforms and the reforms imposed on Liberia by the US-led United Nations (UN) integrated mission in 2003.<sup>7</sup>

The Liberian government began to implement the recommended reforms (Buell 1947, 26), and in 1917 the USG pressured the GoL to declare war on Germany, which forced Germany to dismantle its wireless radio station and leave Liberia (Akingbade 1976, 189–91). Later, a German submarine attacked Monrovia in April 1917 and destroyed the French wireless communication station (Akingbade 1976, 189–91).

In 1918, the British government made a new attempt to gain economic control over the GoL, by proposing a loan of \$15 million through the Bank of British West Africa, which over the years had provided minor loans to the GoL. The agreement would terminate the 1912 loan and undertake a comprehensive reconstruction program under the leadership of officials appointed by the Bank (Buell 1947, 26). As a response, the US acting secretary of state wrote that “it is against the policy of this Government at the present time to permit the State of Liberia to be forced into a position where she will be dominated or controlled by any European Government or its agent” (Buell 1947, 27). In a memorandum of 1918, the USDOS acknowledged that the international loan had proved “expensive and cumbersome” and that “the multiple control of Liberian financial affairs” had not worked (Buell 1947, 27). Therefore, the United States wanted to turn the international receivership in Liberia into an all-American affair, and the USDOS began to negotiate a loan of five million to Liberia (Buell 1947, 27).

Britain and France were reluctant to accept the new US loan agreement. In return for French withdrawal from the international loan agreement, France suggested that the United States should support the construction of a port in Monrovia and a French railway from that port through Liberia to French Guinea (Buell 1947, 27). Meanwhile, Britain proposed that the rehabilitation of Liberia should be discussed at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. The United States rejected the French proposal, and Britain’s attempt to bring up the future status of Liberia at the Paris Peace Conference was likewise impeded by US diplomacy (“Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, The Paris Peace Conference 1919, Volume I,” Document 409).<sup>8</sup>

The negotiation of the US loan of five million resulted in an agreement signed by the Liberian government in 1920. In this agreement, the Liberian government accepted that its military and economic systems would be under the control of 13 American officials (Buell 1947, 28).

Liberia's secretary of state, Charles D. B. King, who accepted the agreement, wrote to Pres. Daniel E. Howard: "We shall have to give America a free hand in our affairs and be prepared to make some sacrifice of what we have called our sovereign rights. We shall have to put up with some of the bitter drugs which may be found necessary to put us on our feet in a sound and healthful condition" (C. Johnson 2000, 108).

However, when King shortly after became president of Liberia in January 1920, he took a more critical position toward the United States. The Liberian Legislature saw the agreement as a violation of the Constitution and rejected the plan (C. Johnson 2000, 108). In May 1920, the United States sent the warship USS *Chattanooga* to visit Monrovia, which according to the USDOS was a visit "quite beneficial to American prestige." At the same time, US Secretary of State Frank Colby telegraphed that if the Liberian government turned down the plan, the United States would have to "reconsider its objections to the establishment of a mandate over Liberia" (Buell 1947, 28).

In 1922, the Liberian Legislature reluctantly accepted the plan, as did the House of Representatives in Washington; however, the US Senate rejected it (Buell 1947, 29; C. Johnson 2000, 109). US Sen. William Borah was the primary opponent of the plan and stated he was "not in favour of taking over Liberia and bringing her under our protection and control, establishing our authority upon the West Coast of Africa, becoming a part of this imperial scheme of finance, which is now one of the curses which are leading the world into another war" (C. Johnson 2000, 109).

The loan agreement was temporarily delayed but was pursued again when Harvey Firestone, in cooperation with the USG, began to plan the establishment of the largest rubber plantation in the world. This endeavor created new tensions and conflicts in Liberia, which is demonstrated in the next chapter.

### Notes

1. Akosua A. Perbi, PhD, was a researcher of the West African slave trade and teacher for the Department of History, University of Ghana. Interview by Niels Hahn, 27 November 2008, Legon, Ghana.

2. For more information, see <https://franceintheus.org/spip.php?article620>.

3. See Table I. Population, 1870-1790, By States and Territories, in Aggregate, and as White, Colored, Free Colored, Slave, Chinese, and Indian in "1870 Census: Volume I. The Statistics of the Population," <https://www.census.gov/>.

4. Joseph Saye Guannu (associate professor of political science at Cuttington University College, Suakoko, Liberia), interview by Niels Hahn, 1 January 2009, Monrovia, Liberia. Guannu served as a government official in the GoL, including assistant minister of foreign affairs for foreign service at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1977, Liberia's ambassador to the United States, 1981–83, and minister of state for presidential affairs in the Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU) from 1990 to 1994.

5. Augustus Caesar was chief executive officer of Caesar Architects, Monrovia; president of the Liberian Chamber of Architects; and consultant to *Médecins Sans Frontières's* hospital construction programs in Liberia from 2002 to 2004. Discussions with Niels Hahn from August 2002 to June 2004.

6. The following statement, based entirely, as the notes indicate, on MSS. Records of the State Department, is taken from Moore, *International Law Digest*, Vol. V. pp. 772-773 in "Documents Relating to the United States and Liberia." *The American Journal of International Law* 4, no. 3 (July 1910): Supplement, Official Documents, 222.

7. See chapter 6.

8. See Paris Peace Conf. 882.51/9: Telegram: The Acting Secretary of State to the Commission to Negotiate Peace in "Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, Volume I," Document 409. Office of the Historian. <https://history.state.gov/>.

## Chapter 2

# Liberia and the Pan-African Movement

## Early Pan-Africanism

The early notion of Pan-Africanism is rooted in the transatlantic slave trade and was often understood as “Pan-Negroism” and primarily defined in racial terms (Geiss 1974, 4–9). It was predominantly the educated black people in the Americas and Britain that initiated the notion of Pan-Africanism, and due to the hostile racist environment many thought of themselves as Africans of one homogeneous social group (Thompson 1971, 18). The first Pan-African intellectuals such as Martin Delany (1812–1885), Henry M. Turner (1834–1915), Alexander Crummell (1819–1998), Edward Wilmot Blyden (1832–1912), and James Africanus Beale Horton (1835–1883) were shaped by western education (Gann and Duignan 1968, 88). Abolitionism and the founding of Liberia and Sierra Leone contributed significantly to different conceptualizations of Pan-Africanism, which gradually evolved into a social movement (Geiss 1969, 188; Shepperson 1962, 351).

Blyden was born on the Danish West Indian island of St. Thomas. He emigrated to Liberia in 1850 (Lynch 1967, 3) and became the most influential Pan-Africanist by the end of the nineteenth century (Geiss 1974, 82; Henriksen 1975; Lynch 1967, 82). He is sometimes referred to as the “father of Pan-Africanism” (Deutsch 2001, 206). Blyden saw a need for segregation of the black race from the white race (Deutsch 2001, 134), and he saw Liberia as the land of liberty that could elevate the black race. Blyden held many influential positions, such as professor at Liberia College (Deutsch 2001, 37), Liberian commissioner to the United States in 1862, and secretary of state in 1864 (Deutsch 2001, xv). In these roles, Blyden encouraged black people to come “back to the Fatherland,” which aligned with the work of the ACS. He admired their work and saw it as the most effective way “for carrying on the work of civilization in Africa” (Blyden 1883, 5). He was the first scholar to promote the notion of a special “African personality” (Legum 1965, 20), and he believed that Africans were a superior, distinct race (Deutsch 2001, 206). He also believed Africans had a more profound spiritual faith than the Europeans, because, in his view, religion originated from the great ancient civilizations in Ethiopia (Gann and Duignan 1968, 88). He romanticized the nature of the black

people by arguing that the true nature of the African personality was of cooperative socialism, family solidarity, communal landownership, and government, which brought equal justice to all (Gann and Duignan 1968, 89).

In 1900, the West Indian barrister Henry Sylvester-Williams (1869–1911) called for the first Pan-African conference, which took place in London. Blyden did not attend because he did not approve of such a conference being held in a “foreign capital” rather than in Liberia. Nevertheless, the conference was influenced by the ideas of Blyden (Lynch 1967, 250), and it was at this conference that the term Pan-Africanism was first introduced (Edwards 2007, xiv; Geiss 1974, 176). It was also at this conference that US-born William Edward Burghardt (W. E. B.) Du Bois (1868–1963) famously stated that “the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line” (Hooker 1974, 23). In 1903, he disseminated further in his work *The Souls of the Black Folk* where he specified that this color line was “the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea” (Du Bois 2007, 15).

Subsequently, Du Bois and the Jamaican born Marcus Garvey (1887–1940) gradually became the two most significant Pan-African figures at the beginning of the twentieth century, often referred to as the fathers of Pan-Africanism (Pobi-Asamani 1994, 17; M’Bayo 2004, 20; Padmore 1947, 5; M. Williams 2008, 13).<sup>1</sup> However, the rivalry between Du Bois and Garvey caused a severe split in the Pan-African movement (M. Williams 2008, 13). Du Bois considered Garvey “insane” (Thompson 1971, 42), and Garvey considered Du Bois a “traitor to the race,” a “White Man’s Nigger,” and denounced his light skin color and his cooperation with the white American liberals in the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) (Legum 1965, 25). They both aimed at emancipating black people outside Africa through education and capitalism. Du Bois advocated for social advancement of black people through peaceful integration into the “white” capitalist system, while Garvey advocated, in arguments similar to Blyden’s, for a black capitalist system in complete separation from the white race. For Garvey, Liberia was an outstanding example and model of separation (M. Williams 2008). He advocated that black people should apply force when necessary, which was why Garvey’s newspaper *The Negro World* was illegal in most colonial territories. Punishment for having a copy, could range from five years to life in prison (Thompson 1971, 44–45).<sup>2</sup>

By 1920, Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) was the most significant and active Pan-African movement with more than four million members. UNIA owned restaurants and newspapers and had established the shipping company Black Star Line, the African Black Cross nurses, a motor corps, and the African Legion, whereas the latter was considered as its militant wing (Sundiata 2003, 18). All these assets were part of UNIA's grand plan for a Pan-African project that would expand from Liberia. For Garvey, this was the "central nation for the race," and the means to achieve the goal were "capitalism and authoritarianism," where "socialism and trade unionism" represented anathemas (Sundiata 2003, 20).

Garvey's race focus echoed Blyden's work, and the first UNIA delegation was warmly welcomed by President King when it arrived in Liberia in 1920 (Martin 1976, 122). UNIA was concerned about US economic control of Liberia, and Garvey had expressed that "we of the UNIA . . . have a solemn duty to . . . free Liberia of any debt that she owes to any white government" (Martin 1976, 31). The idea was to raise \$2 million for Liberia's development. This would have contributed to paying off the debt and finance construction of roads, a small railway, and a shipping service. In January 1921, the Liberian legislature incorporated UNIA, and when the second UNIA delegation arrived in Monrovia in March 1921, they were informed by acting president Edwin Barclay that Liberia would be happy to host a large UNIA settlement and headquarters as land had previously been set aside for this purpose (Martin 1976, 31).

The third UNIA delegation arrived in 1923 to get final agreements in place for the arrival of the first 500 settlers. However, when the final team of experts arrived in May 1924 to prepare for the reception of the settlers, they were all detained by the Liberian authorities and in July 1924, deported. Six months later, the Liberian legislature ratified the exclusion of UNIA upon request of President King, which marked the end of UNIA in Liberia (Sundiata 2003, 33–35).

There are many different views regarding why UNIA fell out of favor with the GoL (Martin 1976, 122). Partly based on reports from the French chargé d'affaires in Monrovia and the USG, Sundiata (2003, 35–47) argues that it was not external pressure that led to the rejection of UNIA in Liberia, "but because key members of the Liberian political class opposed it from the outset" (Sundiata 2003, 36).

This argument, however, is not valid because UNIA was not, *per se*, a threat to the ruling elite in Liberia and also because the political

power of UNIA was subordinated to the GoL. The father-in-law of President King and mayor of Monrovia, Gabriel Johnson, was elected potentate head of the UNIA in 1920. Furthermore, the GoL had established well-structured committees to deal with the arrival of UNIA, where the Liberian elite were in control of the process and not UNIA (Martin 1976, 123). UNIA provided an alternative to the Liberian debt burden. This is because UNIA had more than four million members in the United States and money could have been raised to pay off the loans, which would make the US receivers and military advisors in Liberia redundant. UNIA could have united the Pan-African movement in the United States with the GoL. This could have transformed Liberia into a platform from which the Pan-African movement could have encouraged anti-colonial race wars in the neighboring British and French colonies.

At a meeting with the UNIA delegation in Liberia in March 1921, Barclay stated that the British and the French had expressed concerns about a UNIA threat to the neighboring colonies and inquired about the Liberian attitude toward the movement. At that meeting, Barclay informed the UNIA that

there isn't a Negro in the world, if given the opportunity and the power to do certain things, will not do them. But it is not always advisable nor political to openly expose our secret intentions—our secret thoughts. That is the way we do—or rather don't do—in Liberia. We don't tell them what we think; we only tell them what we like them to hear—what, in fact, they like to hear (Martin 1976, 124).

In line with this statement, Barclay wrote three months later to the British consul that Mr. Marcus Garvey's movements and activities are . . . of no practical interest to this government as they have not given and will not give endorsement to his fantastic schemes" (Sundiata 2003, 40). This was followed by a statement from President King in an open letter where he stated that Liberia would "under no circumstances . . . allow her territory to be made a center of aggression or conspiracy against other sovereign states." A month later Garvey confirmed that "we are not trying to use Liberia as a wedge to conquer all Africa. But we believe Africa rightfully belongs to the Negro race" (Martin 1976, 125).

Prior to 1924, UNIA delegations had been welcomed by the GoL. March 1924 was the first change in Liberian policy toward the UNIA, which was apparent when President King suddenly refused to meet with the UNIA delegation. King's actions were applauded by the US Secretary of State, Charles E. Hughes, and in 1925, President King

received praises from the British governor for “slamming the door on spurious patriots from across the Atlantic, men who sought to make Liberia a focus for racial animosity on this Continent” (Sundiata 2003, 40).

As UNIA had prepared to move to Liberia in the early 1920s, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) had worked on how to disband UNIA permanently. The head of the FBI, J. Edgar Hoover, considered Garvey “a notorious Negro agitator” and stated that he would expedite “prosecution . . . in order that he [Garvey] may be once and for all put where he can peruse his past activities behind the four walls in the Atlanta clime” (Sundiata 2003, 21). In the summer of 1923, Garvey was found guilty of mail fraud in New York federal court—after a long struggle in the court system—and was sentenced to five years in prison. UNIA fell victim to factionalism and lost its cohesion, and many UNIA members began to look to Ethiopia as a proposed land of freedom (Sundiata 2003, 288).<sup>3</sup>

### **Firestone in Liberia**

Concurrent with Garvey’s UNIA expulsion from Liberia, Firestone arrived with the support of Du Bois. In 1923 and 1924, Du Bois was instrumental in establishing contacts between Firestone and the Liberian government under the quasi-authority of the USG (M. Williams 2008, 14). According to Robinson (1990, 39–43), Du Bois was “blinded by the elitism characteristic of his [own petit-bourgeois] class” (1990, 39), which is why he failed to see how the Firestone project would exploit the indigenous population in Liberia. Du Bois later stated that he “had not then lost faith in the capitalistic system” and “believed that it was possible for a great corporation, headed by a man of vision, to go into a country with something more than the mere ideal of profit” (Du Bois 1933, 684).

The political economy of Firestone’s project in Liberia related to the USG’s goal to break the British rubber monopoly. By 1922, Britain controlled around 75 percent of the rubber production in comparison to the United States’ 2.8 percent. The United States consumed 72 percent of all rubber produced, which made US industry overly dependent on British rubber (Lawrence 1931, 17). In October 1922, Churchill launched the Stevenson Restriction Act that was aimed at enhancing British control over rubber production and prices (Lawrence 1931, 38).

This drove the US Department of Commerce to undertake studies on how to secure adequate control over the rubber needed by US industries—by establishing rubber plantations in “territories under the American flag, or subject to American control” (Lawrence 1931, 53).

Firestone explored four areas for rubber production in the first half of the 1920s—in Liberia, Mexico, the Philippines, and Sarawak. The Philippines, a US colony, was struggling for independence and Firestone could not ensure protection of its property (McCoskey 2008, 4). Firestone leased a rubber estate in Mexico, but it was abandoned after a year because of “unsettled political conditions and an inadequate labor force” (W. Taylor 1976, 46). Next, an attempt to establish a plantation in Sarawak was abandoned after pressure from the British government (W. Taylor 1976, 47). After these failures, Liberia was identified as the most promising place for a large-scale rubber plantation. This was easily established due to the special relationship between the United States and Liberia. Furthermore, the Mount Barclay Plantation—which included 2000 acres of rubber plantation established by a British company in 1910, but later abandoned because of financial problems—produced exceptionally positive yield tests (Lawrence 1931, 53–55).

Negotiations between Firestone and the GoL were opened in 1924 with the arrival of Du Bois, a US minister, and a Firestone Rubber expert. US Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover made it clear that these negotiations were “an important factor in the administration program for combating the high price of crude rubber, due to British export restrictions” (Brown 1941, 193). On 5 June 1924, the first of three agreements was signed between Firestone and the GoL. The first agreement provided Firestone with the rights to exploit the Mount Barclay Plantation for 99 years at a rent of \$1 per acre the first year, and afterward for a fixed rent of \$6,000 per year. The second agreement provided a 99-year lease of one million acres for the development of a new rubber plantation. The third agreement detailed establishing infrastructure, such as roads and ports (Brown 1941, 194).

Firestone proposed that his investment should be made contingent on a loan from the USG for the amount of \$5 million, which would build up the underlying infrastructure and replace Liberia’s existing non-US loans. This would help eliminate the non-American foreign influence. However, the US Congress did not support the loan, and Firestone prepared a private loan by setting up a subsidiary called the Finance Corporation of America. This subsidiary provided

the loan with the support from the National City Bank of New York (C. Johnson 2000, 110).

The Liberian legislature felt uncomfortable about the Firestone agreements, which they saw as a loss of sovereignty. As the negotiations became increasingly complicated, Firestone wrote to the USDOS that the GoL “must accept the agreements without [a] single change if we go into Liberia” (Buell 1947, 31). The USG pressured the GoL to accept Firestone’s terms for the rubber concession and the loan agreements (Lowenkopf 1976, 39). The Liberian government was involved in a new border dispute with France and feared that if they refused the Firestone contract, the USG would withdraw its support for Liberia in this dispute (Buell 1947, 31).

On 30 January 1926, all the concession agreements were adopted by an act of the legislature, and on 8 December 1926, the loan agreement was approved became effective 1 July 1927. The new loan of \$5 million at seven percent over 40 years paid off the international loan of 1912. European receivers were replaced by “eight US officials headed by a financial adviser designated by the president of the United States” (Buell 1947, 33). The loan agreement further stipulated that the “strength of the Frontier Force shall be fixed by agreement between the president of Liberia and the financial adviser, and it shall not be increased or decreased in number without the agreement of the financial adviser.” Moreover, an “officer of American nationality shall be employed for the government by the president of Liberia who shall report directly to the president of Liberia.” This officer “shall be senior in rank to the commanding officer of the said Frontier Force.” In addition, the agreement provided for the construction of a port in Monrovia, paid by the GoL (Loan Agreement of 1926, article XII, 3).

The Firestone agreement made the French government withdraw its threats of annexing the hinterland of Liberia, because Firestone would begin cultivation of rubber throughout the interior (Brown 1941, 197). However, as the GoL finally escaped European encroachment, they now found themselves completely controlled by the United States (N. Azikiwe 1934, 132). The tensions between the GoL and Firestone increased in the following years and eventually resulted in a major crisis over the inadequate supply of labor Firestone needed. Initially, Firestone had estimated an investment of \$100 million in the rubber plantation for an annual production of 200,000 tons of rubber, which would be about half of the world’s output. In order to reach

these goals, Firestone expected to employ around 350,000 workers (Buell 1947, 30), which Buell (1928) considered utterly unrealistic. Firestone estimated that Liberia had an indigenous labor supply that was almost inexhaustible—with an estimated total population of two million—however, it would not be possible to utilize the total number of workers needed for the land. To meet demand, Firestone had to develop a system of forced labor analogous to slavery in order to meet the number of workers needed for the required labor force (Buell 1928, 818–36).

Forced recruitment of labor had existed in Liberia for decades, based on agreements between the GoL and local chiefs. The labor was exported to other colonies, and in 1922 the GoL renewed and expanded recruitment agreements with planters from the Spanish colony Fernando Po (Sundiata 1974, 107).<sup>4</sup> Between 1919 and 1926, the number of workers recruited from Fernando Po was 4,268.<sup>5</sup> The LFF was used to support the recruitment and safeguard the export of labor to English, German, Spanish, and Portuguese colonies (Akingbade 1976, 219). In 1927, the US legation in Monrovia reported that “Firestone is experiencing some difficulty in recruiting labor” (Sundiata 2003, 116), and the American financial advisor noted that “the rubber industry here will be in active competition with Fernando Po for a supply of labour, unless some powerful influence is brought to bear that will separate by compulsion the traffic from actual government support” (Sundiata 2003, 116).

According to the *Firestone Planting Agreement of 1926*, the GoL agreed “that it will encourage, support and assist the efforts of the Lessee to secure and maintain an adequate labour supply” (article II, h). Despite this agreement, it was more profitable to export labor to Fernando Po, and this created tensions between Firestone and the GoL. By 1928, relations between the GoL and the United States were de facto suspended (Brown 1941, 198). Firestone accused the GoL of obstructing the development of the project, and GoL accused Firestone of dominating a sovereign nation (Sundiata 2003, 100).

The USG took the labor crisis very seriously and accused Spanish planters of using forced labor in Fernando Po at the 1929 International Labor Conference in Geneva. In a memorandum from the conference, the USG states that

the United States Government from a political point of view and American manufacturers from an economic point of view are interested in the extent to which their competitors are using forced labour. If American owners of rub-

ber plantations and oil nut concessions in Africa . . . are forced to compete with competitors using forced labor, the disadvantage they will suffer is obvious. An instance, however, may be cited in the case of Liberia where, according to published reports of the Firestone Company, approximately 300,000 men will be needed when the proposed rubber plantations come to fruition. The contract labor which is being shipped yearly out of the country to a Spanish concession along the coast may have serious effects upon American enterprise in limiting the available labour supply in that part of Africa unless a similar system of forced or contract labour is used by an American company (Sundiata 2003, 117).

Firestone was already using forced labor in Liberia, because as Buell notes “as long as the Firestone Company makes it financially profitable for the chiefs to supply labor, the available men must work whether they like it or not” (Buell 1929, 119). However, Firestone’s problem of sufficient labor was immense—by 1930 Firestone had only recruited 18,000 workers and had cultivated less than 60,000 acres (Sundiata 2003, 100). On 8 June 1929, the USG accused the GoL of endorsing slavery and the slave trade in Fernando Po, which was a direct violation of the League of Nation’s Slavery Convention of 1926. The USG ordered the slave systems to be eradicated and advocated that many high officials in the GoL should be removed from office. Additionally, the USG stated that the GoL should submit to an inquiry by the League of Nations to assess the extent of slavery and slave trade in Liberia (Stanfield 2000, xxi).

The USG had not yet ratified the Slavery Convention of 1926 (University of Minnesota 2011), and Britain had just abolished domestic slavery in neighboring Sierra Leone (Grace 1975). However, world public opinion had turned against slave labor and forced labor, which was ultimately expressed in the International Labor Organization’s Forced Labor Convention of 1930 (Sundiata 2003, 100). As is demonstrated by the following section, the accusation of slavery and slave trade became a useful tool to undermine the legitimacy of the GoL. Eventually, it resulted in a regime change and redirected the labor supply from Fernando Po to Firestone’s plantation.

### **The Liberian Labor Crisis**

The accusations of slavery and slave trade in Liberia led to the establishment of the League of Nations International Commission of

Inquiry into the Existence of Slavery and Forced Labor in the Republic of Liberia (Stanfield 2000, xxv).

Initially, Belgium, Portugal, Spain, and France objected to the idea of an investigation, because it could have created a dangerous precedent for other parts of Africa (Stanfield 2000, xxi). As the preliminary steps toward an investigation proceeded, the Spanish government attempted to elect a representative for the commission. However, the assistant secretary of state, William C. Castle, ensured that Spain was excluded because “the Liberian representative and the Spanish representative would be likely to vote together against the American representative” (Stanfield 2000, xxv).

The commission was carefully put together with a representative from Britain, Liberia, and the United States. The USG chose as its representative a black scholar, Dr. Charles S. Johnson, who was a race relations researcher and was the head of the department of sociology at Fisk University (Stanfield 2000, xxxi). Johnson consulted with USG officials for two months before traveling to Liberia in March 1930. After the commission had completed its work, it culminated in the 8 September 1930 *Report of the International Commission of Inquiry into the Existence of Slavery and Forced Labor in the Republic of Liberia*. The report did not find the presence of slavery and slave trade in Liberia (International Commission of Inquiry 1930, 133).<sup>6</sup> However, it did find pawning in the hinterland. Pawning is defined as “an arrangement by which, in return for money, a human being, usually a child relative, may be given in servitude for an indefinite period, without compensation to the person held, and without privilege” (International Commission of Inquiry 1930, 19). It also found a demoralizing, wasteful use of labor in road construction projects as well as identified key government officials who had connived the forcible export of labor. The commission recommended that Liberia abandon its “closed door” policy in order to encourage foreign investment, re-establish the authority of the chiefs, appoint more Americans to administrative positions in the government, declare domestic slavery and pawning illegal, cease the shipment of laborers to Fernando Po and other foreign places, increase discipline over military forces, and encourage African-American immigration (Sundiata 2003, 134).

US Secretary Henry L. Stimson informed Liberia’s President King that he was “profoundly shocked” (Mower 1947, 292) by the findings of the commission in Liberia and demanded immediate reforms. On 17 November 1930, Stimson sent a message to the GoL stating that

unless there is instituted by the Liberian Government a comprehensive system of reforms, loyally and sincerely put into effect, it will result in the final alienation of the friendly feelings which the American government and people have entertained for Liberia since its establishment nearly a century ago (Mower 1947, 292).

In December 1930, USG pressure led President King and many other officials to resign. Secretary of State Edwin Barclay became acting president of Liberia and was subsequently elected its president in May 1931. However, the United States made their establishment of the Barclay administration dependent “upon the attitude taken by Liberia toward the report of the International Commission” (Buell 1947, 36). Barclay declared that “he would not surrender Liberia’s independence in accepting outside assistance” but enacted laws “prohibiting the export of labour and pawning” (Buell 1947, 36).

The British, French, and USG then accused the GoL of having “massacred” hundreds of Kru people in order to stop them from providing testimony to the International Commission, although there was not any evidence of a massacre. During the Commission’s investigation, many Kru people also believed rumors that the white man would have the opportunity to “take over Liberia” and abolish the unpopular taxes imposed on the Kru people by the GoL. These rumors made the Kru people revolt in favor of such a takeover (Buell 1947, 36).

In January 1931, a new committee was established by the League of Nations. The goal was to develop a plan for assisting Liberia and would establish “temporary control of Liberia by the League” (Berndahl 1932, 502). The committee became known as the Brunot Commission and was led by the French representative, Charles Brunot, and assisted by Theodoros Ligthart, financial expert from Holland, and Dr. Melville D. Mackenzie, a medical expert from Britain. They performed a six-week follow-up investigation in Liberia, which resulted in the Brunot report that was accepted by the League of Nations Council (Brown 1941, 199–200). The report required “abolition of all compulsory labor” except communal labor on roads in tribal areas. Further, it recommended that the Liberian hinterland should be divided into three parts. The western province should be under the administration of a French commissioner, the eastern province under a British commissioner, and the central province under a Dutch commissioner. These commissioners would report to the president of Liberia and their work would be administered by a foreign chief advisor

(Sundiata 2003, 151–53). The nationality of chief advisor was not specified in the report. However, it was stated that the chief advisor should be appointed by the League Council and could not be of the same nationality as that of the powers holding neighboring colonies or that of the existing financial advisor. This ruled out American, French, and British nationalities for the role of chief advisor (Buell 1947, 38). The chief advisor would report to the League of Nations and could be removed only by the consent of the League of Nations, which excluded US influence since the United States was not a member of the League (Sundiata 2003, 153).

The report further challenged US interests by proposing the deployment of over 20 foreign experts in key administrative positions, the provision of a new loan, and renegotiation of the Firestone contracts (Sundiata 2003, 151–53). The Brunot Commission also noted that the Planting Agreement between Firestone and Liberia was “very favourable to the lessee” and that Firestone appeared reluctant to cooperate with the League’s investigation (Sundiata 2003, 158). The Spanish representative in the League Committee further challenged Firestone’s position in Liberia by pointing out that “the coexisting in Liberia of a weak state and a powerful foreign undertaking gives rise to disadvantages” in favor of Firestone, and it is “indispensable that the rate of development of the plantations should be adapted to the economic and social conditions of Liberia” (Brown 1941, 201). The League Plan suggested that the Firestone concession should be reduced and renegotiated with the assistance of League experts, including an increase in the land lease cost (Buell 1947, 40).

The US representative in Geneva objected to the League’s recommendations because they were “thoroughly unworkable and impractical.” Harvey Firestone had proposed another plan to the League which would be administered by a high-powered American commissioner. The USG agreed with Firestone’s plan, and the US secretary of state noted that unless “complete executive and administrative control is granted [to an American] for a period of probably ten years, no genuine reforms or rehabilitation could be achieved in Liberia” (Sundiata 2003, 154).<sup>7</sup> The GoL fiercely rejected any attempt to transmute Liberia into an official trusteeship of the USG, and tensions between the GoL and the USG reached a point where official and unofficial diplomatic relations ceased. US President Hoover sent the judge advocate general of the US Army, Maj Gen Blanton Winship, to Monrovia with the aim of restoring relations between the two governments

(West 1933, 29). Harvey Firestone advocated for a regime change in Liberia and informed the new US secretary of state, Cordell Hull, that the only viable solution was US armed intervention in Liberia. Firestone further advocated to the USDOS the possibilities of executing an internal coup in Liberia, with the encouragement of the USG, but the USDOS rejected his proposal because “to encourage a revolutionary body would be to incur a frightful responsibility if it failed to work out” (Sundiata 2003, 182–83).

On 18 May 1934, the League Plan was abandoned (Sundiata 2003, 184) and in an official message to the USG, the British government acknowledged that “Liberia is rendered dependent upon the United States Government by the extent to which her financial machinery is already in American hands and organized in conformity with a contract entered into between the Liberian government and an American corporation” (Mower 1947, 294). The message added that “His Majesty’s government are ready to co-operate to the utmost of their power in any well-considered measure which the United States government may consider appropriate to the occasion” (Buell 1947, 41).

With the League Plan out of the way the USG was able to negotiate bilaterally with the GoL, and in July 1934, the USG sent a delegation to Monrovia to make a settlement with the GoL. President Barclay realized that “he could survive only if recognized by the United States” and accepted a three-year plan where eight American “emergency” specialists would be deployed in Liberia (Buell 1947, 41). In January 1935, the GoL and Firestone began renegotiating the concession agreements, which materialized into three amendments in 1935, 1936, and 1937 (Buell 1947, 42). As it appears from the amendments, the interest rate of the loan was reduced from seven percent to five percent. However, the tax exemptions increased, and Firestone reserved the “exclusive right to take by mining or any similar operations the mineral contents of the subsoil of the leased lands” with a “royalty payment to the Government not to exceed ten per centum (10 percent) of the value thereof” (Planting Agreement of 1926 with amendments from 1935, 1936, 1937, and 1939, Article II, g).

The labor crisis challenged the notion of race, color, and class within the Pan-African movement, but in general, there was united support for the GoL across the political spectrum of the movement.

From the liberal right, Nnamdi Azikiwe argued that Firestone paved the way for “Yankee imperialism in Africa” (N. Azikiwe 1932, 30).<sup>8</sup> He

further pointed to the hypocrisy of the United States, which had failed to curb forced labor within its territory, and noted that “the United States has no right to charge Liberia with slavery because the United States itself is a slave state” (N. Azikiwe 1932, 40–41). Nnamdi Azikiwe considered Liberia as subordinated “to the forces of economic imperialism” and noted that although Liberia “proclaimed itself a free state, its history makes its claim to independence illusory” (1932, 16). Nevertheless, he defended the GoL because it was a symbol of black self-governance and he feared that a bad reputation for Liberia could be exploited by racists to justify imperialism elsewhere (Esedebe 1989, 104).

From the left, George Padmore—who had headed the Negro Bureau of the Communist International of Labor Unions in the USSR since 1929—acknowledged the findings of the League and the abuse of labor. He stated that the “labour conditions under Spanish imperialism are no better than those found in other parts of Africa, with reference to the fascist Italian rule in Somaliland, where people are forced to work by ‘means of bayonets and machine guns’” (Padmore 1931, 44). In the article “Workers Defend Liberia,” Padmore (1932) defended the GoL which led the Communist International (Comintern) organization to criticize Padmore for failing to “recognize the fact that the condition of the two million natives in Liberia is not the same as the condition of the ruling stratum of the Americo-Liberians and that the natives must also fight against these black oppressors and imperialist lackeys” (Woodson 1934, 14–15).<sup>9</sup> This resulted in a conflict between Padmore and the Comintern. In August 1933, the Comintern expelled Padmore from the Negro Trade Union Committee (Browder 1935, 372). He was expelled because he supported the bourgeoisie in Liberia and undermined the “unity of Liberian workers in their struggles against exploitation and oppression by the Imperialist and the Americo-Liberian ruling class” by focusing on race unity rather than class unity and “thereby strengthening the hands of the Imperialist oppressors and their Negro allies” (Sundiata 2003, 218).

Liberia was a key to recruitment for Padmore, who had established extensive networks and Communist cells inside Liberia and had planned for Liberia’s workers to be trained in Moscow (Weiss 2007). After his expulsion from the Comintern, these programs stopped, and Padmore accused the Comintern of letting down Liberia as “an economic colony of American imperialism” (Weiss 2007, 14).

In addition to N. Azikiwe and Padmore, Du Bois had also defended the GoL; however, the entry of Firestone into Liberia and the labor crisis had made it clear to Du Bois that the issue of race was subordinated to class and used by the bourgeoisie to divide the global proletariat along the color line (M. Williams 2008). Du Bois broke with the NAACP movement and gave up his editorship of *The Crisis* in June 1934 (Sundiata 2003, 186). In the following decades, he gradually moved to the far left of the political spectrum. At the same time, the Pan-African movement was increasingly influenced by socialism (M. Williams 2008).

The Firestone Plantation was opened for tapping of rubber in 1934 (Clower et al. 1966, 145), and after the labor dispute with the GoL, Firestone gradually co-opted many members of the Liberian ruling elite by encouraging them to become petty rubber producers (Dalton 1965, 578). Firestone did so by providing the rubber trees and technical assistance to establish small rubber plantations on the land owned by the Liberian elite and by purchasing the rubber they produced. In this way, it was in the interest of the ruling elite to keep labor costs low and to keep the workers divided along ethnic and religious lines to limit the risk of organized labor uprisings (Massaquoi 2009).<sup>10</sup>

With the assistance of western anthropologists, the local knowledge of the Liberian elite, and the legislative and executive power of the GoL, Firestone established a system which divided labor along the lines of ethnicity, language, religion, and gender in order to complicate any unification of workers. This was done through simple methods such as recruiting most drivers from one ethnic group, security guards from another ethnic group, administrative staff from a third ethnic group, and tappers from a fourth group (Logan 2009; Brandy 2009).<sup>11</sup> Workers from different ethnic groups were displaced from their homeland and sent to live in housing units inside the Firestone Plantation, which were also subdivided along ethnic lines. The central principle was to exploit old conflicts between different ethnic groups and keep them divided so they would not form a united front against Firestone in demand for higher wages and better living standards (Logan 2009; Brandy 2009). When conflicts among the workers and between the divided social groups became too intense, they were settled internally by the application of Firestone's private militia force, in cooperation with the police and the LFF (Logan 2009; Brandy 2009). The GoL provided a public court, a prison, and military barracks in

Bonoway village, which was located inside the Firestone Plantation (Logan 2009; Brandy 2009).

As the GoL became more compliant with the financial interests of Firestone and the labor crisis was settled, a Treaty of Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation was signed between the GoL and USG in 1938. This treaty allowed expanded access for US economic and cultural penetration. The treaty allowed nationals of each country to “enter, travel and reside in the territories of the other” and to engage, within the parameter of national law, “in professional, scientific, religious, philanthropic, manufacturing and commercial work of every kind without interference” (Office of Trade Agreements Negotiation and Compliance [TANC] 1938, Article I). Furthermore, the treaty ensured limited taxation on foreign investments, optimal protection of property rights, and “freedom of commerce and navigation” (TANC 1938, Article VII). This, in turn, allowed the high contracting parties “to come with their vessels and cargoes to all places, ports, and waters of every kind within the territorial limits of the other” (TANC 1938, Article VII).

When the Second World War broke out, Liberia declared its neutrality while accepting expert US assessment in Liberia in establishing military bases. This began with the *Air Navigation Agreement of 1939*, which gave special privileges to US aircraft in Liberia, followed by the *Defence Areas Agreement* signed in March 1942 (Akingbade 1976, 240–45; USG and GoL 1942). This agreement expanded US military facilities and presence in Liberia and gave the USG the “exclusive jurisdiction over any such airports and defence areas in Liberia and over the military and civilian personnel of the government of the United States” (USG and GoL 1942, article 2). Furthermore, it allowed US personnel, military goods, equipment, and construction material to move freely without being submitted to customs, duties, taxes “or any other charges” (USG and GoL 1942, article 4). Early in 1942, detachments of black American service members and engineer troops arrived in Liberia to identify an appropriate site for an airbase. The location chosen was adjacent to the main entrance to the Firestone Rubber plantation, and the construction contract was awarded to the Firestone Corporation. This air base became central to the US transatlantic string of bases, and with the buildup of American troops in Liberia, it was not possible for Liberia to claim neutrality. In July 1942, the GoL expelled all German citizens from Liberia, upon a request from the USG (Akingbade 1976, 250; 1985, 30).

Then, in June 1943, the Defence Areas Agreement was expanded by the Principles Applying to Mutual Aid for Defence agreement between the GoL and USG and followed by an agreement for Construction of a Port and Port Works in December 1943. This Agreement allowed for a US-based private company to construct a port, financed by a loan granted to the Liberian government by the USG. The agreement ensured that the port would be operated by private US-based companies and granted to the USG the

right to establish, use, maintain, improve, supplement, guard and control, in part or their entirety . . . naval, air and military facilities and installations at the site of the port, and in the general vicinity thereof, as may be desired by the Government of the United States of America for the protection of the strategic interests of the United States of America in the South Atlantic (USG and GoL 1943, article 7).

According to the agreements, the military airbase and seaport should be open for commercial use but also be available for the US military immediately upon request. By the end of the Second World War, Liberia had become a strategic military base from which US interests could be projected further into Africa.

### **Liberal Expansion Under President Tubman**

In 1943, the USG supervised the Liberian general election (Buell 1947, 9–10), which brought to power preferred US candidate William Tubman. He previously worked as a lawyer for Firestone and served as associate justice in the GoL (Padmore 1996, 47–48). Tubman became the most US-friendly president in Liberia's history. For the next 27 years, Tubman was able to suppress any opposition to his regime due to USG support of his leadership (Guannu 2009; Coleman 2003, 57). World War II changed the global balance of power, and colonial empires in Africa began to disintegrate. As the main US foothold in Africa, the strategic importance of Liberia increased, and the GoL became a crucial ally in projecting US power into Africa.

The vision of the USG's expansion of power is captured in a *Memo-randum of the War and Peace Studies Project of the Council on Foreign Relations* with participation from the USDOS in 1940. This expansion enabled the United States to “hold unquestioned power,” and embark on a policy to ensure the “limitation of any exercise of sovereignty” by states that might oppose US foreign policy. The planners

outlined “an integrated policy to achieve military and economic supremacy for the United States” in a “Grand Area” which included the western hemisphere, the British Empire, the Far East, and as much of Eurasia as possible (Shoup and Minter 2004, 130).

Subsequently, the US Committee on Africa, the War, and Peace Aims, elaborated in a comprehensive report, *The Atlantic Charter and Africa from an American Standpoint*, in 1942, which presumed that there would be a “new world situation in Africa” after the war (Scott 1943, 39). The report outlined the significance of Africa in terms of natural resources and geopolitics and emphasized that “Liberia both historically and contemporaneously is of special interest to the United States” (Scott 1943, 18). Liberia, “as the only independent African Republic, has a great responsibility and opportunity” because “other African peoples and the outside world are watching her successes and failures with intense interest” (US Committee on Africa, the War, and Peace Aims 1942, 27).

Studies of the major revolutions and popular uprisings pointed at a strategy of “indirect rule” imbued with Wilson’s idealism of self-determination (Wieschoff 1944, 26), and Liberia stood out as an important example (Wieschoff 1944, 78). President Tubman’s speeches from 1944 to 1971 reflect this notion of self-determination, and his policies can be summarized as supporting African independence from the European colonial powers and promoting liberal capitalism across the African continent. The guiding policy for Liberia’s national development was an expansion of the Open Door Policy (Tarr 2009), where the guiding principle was that the government should “provide the necessary infrastructure and a climate favourable to foreign investors” and where the private sector should be responsible for the direct economic activity in the economy” (Carlsson 1981, 68).<sup>12</sup>

Tubman’s Open Door Policy did create economic growth and is often described in the literature as progressive and successful with Liberia surging ahead of other African states on economic growth indexes, as is reflected in Liebenow (1969, 171). However, a more thorough study of the Open Door Policy provided by Clower and others (1966) details that wealth was concentrated in a small group of the elite and enhanced the income gap between rich and poor. There was little investment in social development and infrastructure, as reflected in the title of their book *Growth without Development* (Clower et al. 1966). The Open Door Policy provided an opportunity for foreign companies to optimize the exploitation of Liberia’s natural

resources while keeping wages low (Kraaij 1983, 68). It attracted foreign companies to the mining industry, in particular iron ore, which made Liberia one of the largest iron ore exporters in the world (Hasselmann 1979, 4).<sup>13</sup>

The liberal policies in Liberia were facilitated by USG officials in combination with private investors, which is perhaps best reflected in the setup of the corporate offshore registration system in Monrovia. The main architect behind this system was Edward R. Stettinius Jr., who had been in influential positions with General Motors and US Steel before he became undersecretary of state in 1943 and afterwards secretary of state under President Roosevelt. In cooperation with a few US oil companies, USG officials, and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Stettinius and key aides wrote the *Liberian Maritime Code* (Carlisle 1980, 180–81). It was “promoted in non-profit, humanitarian terms” (Carlisle 1980, 178) that would facilitate development in Liberia, and Stettinius expressed that if this system failed, “Communism, already at work in Africa, would rejoice” (Carlisle 1980, 177–78). After the *Liberian Maritime Code* had been approved by Standard Oil, it was approved by the Liberian legislature in November 1948 and signed into law by Tubman the following month (Carlisle 1980, 183).<sup>14</sup>

In March 1947, US Pres. Harry S. Truman introduced the Truman Doctrine, which pledged American aid to governments that resisted Communism. In May 1947, the US Under Secretary of State, Dean G. Acheson, explained that a major roadblock for the United States was how to find an outlet for its “great surplus.” The Communist threat and need for US expansion into new markets was confirmed by US Secretary of State George Marshall when he introduced the Marshall Plan for the reconstruction of Europe in 1947 (W. Williams 1988, 170–71). On 20 January 1949, in his inauguration speech, Truman introduced the Point Four Program. The program included “plans for reducing the barriers to world trade and increasing its volume” and a new form of foreign aid that would be delivered to underdeveloped nations in “cooperation of business, private capital, agriculture, and labor” with the United States (Truman 1949).<sup>15</sup>

Liberia was among the first countries to be incorporated under the Point Four Program and received \$850,000 to finance the activities of 67 American technicians working in health, agriculture, power, transport, and public administration. In 1950, the chief of the US economic mission to Liberia, Oscar Meier, confirmed that Liberia

was a “striking illustration of what can be done with technical assistance toward the development of economic and human resources” (Gary 1951, 3). Liberia was also among the first countries to receive USG-subsidized rice under the Agricultural Trade Development Assistance Act, Public Law 480 (United States Agency for International Development [USAID], 2004). This act was signed into law by US Pres. Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1954, with a statement that the law “lay the basis for a permanent expansion of our exports of agricultural products with lasting benefits to ourselves and peoples of other lands” (Eisenhower 1954, in USAID 2004, 7). In a special message to the US Congress in 1959, Eisenhower emphasized that in relation to the US “farm surplus problems” that “food can be a powerful instrument . . . in building a durable peace” and emphasized that the United States’ “abundance of agricultural products” should be utilized in the “interest of reinforcing peace and the well-being of friendly peoples throughout the world; in short, using food for peace.” Under Pres. John F. Kennedy, the PL 480 became known as “Food for Peace,” defined as “food is strength, and food is peace, and food is freedom, and food is a helping to people around the world whose good will and friendship we want” (USAID 2004, 7).<sup>16</sup>

In contrast to this positive notion, PL 480 created problems for many of the Liberian rice farmers. Rice had for centuries been the staple food source in Liberia, and surplus from the local rice production was traded on the local market and along the coast (Logan 2009).<sup>17</sup> This gradually changed early in the 1900s when German companies began to import cheap rice into Liberia (Radke and Sauer 1980, 40), which enabled Liberian peasants from the rice farms to instead become wage laborers (Massaquoi 2009). Since 1926, Firestone had been the prime impetus for the development and expansion of the wage labor system in Liberia, but it met resistance from local peasants (Clower et al. 1966, 149), who were reluctant to stop cultivating their land in order to become food dependent wage workers for foreign companies (Logan 2009). The problem of labor shortage, as experienced in the late 1920s, continued in the 1950s and 1960s with expansions of the Firestone Plantation and establishment of additional rubber plantations, such as Goodrich, the African Fruit Company, and the Liberia Company (Clower et al. 1966, 147). This put pressure on the existing wage system (Clower 1966, 150).<sup>18</sup> As referenced previously in this chapter, the recruitment technique was again predominantly “involuntary labor recruitment under govern-

ment auspices” (Clower et al. 1966, 150), but this method was very similar to slavery. This type of recruitment created a number of labor uprisings in the plantations, which were contained by the police and military force (Massaquoi 2009).<sup>19</sup>

The importation of inexpensive food into Liberia under PL 480 allowed Firestone to reallocate farmers who were working the land to become wage laborers at Firestone and other companies in Liberia (Logan 2009). Rice imports increased from 19 million pounds in 1955 (Lowenkopf 1976, 79) to 119 million pounds in 1971 (Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs 1972), while local production decreased by 20 percent in the 1950s (Lowenkopf 1976, 79) with an output of 225 million pounds in 1971 (Hasselman 1979, 24). Firestone imported low-cost, American-produced rice subsidized by the USG through the Food for Peace Program to feed its wage laborers as partial payment and then also deposited the surplus rice into the local market (Logan 2009; Sayndee 2009).<sup>20</sup> Rice prices were manipulated so local rice farmers would earn less than the basic daily wage at Firestone (Lowenkopf 1976, 80).<sup>21</sup> This was accompanied by massive advertisement campaigns via radio, which turned many Liberians against their own homegrown rice by denouncing it as “that country rice,” while instead favoring parboiled rice from the United States (Tipoteh 1982, 25).

As the rice market became unattractive to the local rice producers, Firestone assisted by transforming their fields into rubber plantations (Brandy 2009; Logan 2009; Massaquoi 2009). This was done by providing “free rubber seedlings to independent growers” and technical advice “in connection with the development of their plantations” (Browne 1955, 115), which was similar to how Firestone had converted many key government officials into rubber producers after the labor crisis in the 1930s. From 1941 to 1955 the number of Liberian independent rubber farms increased from 150 to 991 and reached 2,312 in 1960. At the same time, the rubber produced by the Liberian producers increased from 475,000 pounds to 13,926,000 pounds (Dalton 1965, 578–79). Firestone purchased “all their output for processing and export” (Qureshi et al. 1964, 288), and the rubber was often tapped by the children of local farmers who had been offered employment at the Firestone Plantation (Logan 2009).<sup>22</sup>

By 1967, there were nearly 4,000 Liberian rubber producers, and among the largest producers were politicians such as President Tubman, who owned 1,600 acres, and Vice Pres. William R Tolbert, who owned 600 acres (Lowenkopf 1976, 68). Liberian government officials ensured a low-wage and disciplined labor force since it benefited them directly (Massaquoi 2009). For example, when the plantation workers

went on strike in 1963, Firestone stopped purchasing rubber from the Liberian petty bourgeoisie, who were therefore motivated to quickly quell the strike (Lowenkopf 1976, 68). The platforms for negotiation were the Labor Union of Liberia, founded in the late 1940s; the Labor Congress of Liberia (LCL), founded in 1953; and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), founded in 1959. All of these organizations were under the control of the GoL and functioned as institutions for the organization of wage laborers. The president of the LCL was President Tubman's social secretary, and the president of the CIO was "Shad" Tubman Jr., the son of President Tubman (Lowenkopf 1976, 100).

When the PL 480 program was first introduced, Liberia only imported a small percentage of the rice consumed in the country. In 1970, more than one-third of the rice was imported from the United States, and many Liberian intellectuals and government officials began to see PL 480 as problematic because it created a situation where Liberia was dependent on imported food and foreign aid (Brandy 2009; Logan, 2009). Liberia became very vulnerable to changes in the price of rice, and minor fluctuations could spark civil unrest. This was most clearly evident at the Rice Riot in 1979, which the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Liberia considered as marking the beginning of more than two decades of conflict and war (Verdier 2006).<sup>23</sup> People who were influenced by the Pan-African movement (such as Kwame Nkrumah) and Marxism also saw PL 480 as a form of primitive accumulation, which helped foreign corporations transform peasants into wage laborers by destroying the local food production and market. In this manner, a larger and more disciplined labor force was created that had to sell their labor power to foreign corporations in order to survive (Brandy 2009; Logan 2009; Massaquoi 2009).

## **Countering Socialism and Pan-Africanism**

The fifth Pan-African conference took place in Manchester in October 1945, one year after Tubman had come to power, and was convened by W. E. B. Du Bois and organized by Peter Milliard, George Padmore, Kwame Nkrumah, Peter Abrahams, and Jomo Kenyatta (Padmore 1956, 154–55). This conference marked the beginnings of an organized, socialist-oriented, Pan-African movement, and in con-

trast to the previous Pan-African conferences that were dominated by a small intellectual elite, this conference consisted of more than 200 delegates representing political organizations, trade unions, and civil society organizations (Padmore 1956, 161).

The conference was dominated by socialist consciousness and it condemned the “monopoly of capital and the rule of private wealth and industry for private profit” (Padmore 1956, 170). In the *Declaration to the Colonial Workers, Farmers and Intellectuals* the conference stated that “all colonies must be free from foreign imperialist control, whether political or economic” and “calls on the workers and farmers of the colonies to organise effectively” and “be in the front of the battle against imperialism.” The conference further called upon “the intellectuals and professional classes of the colonies to awaken to their responsibilities,” and “highlights how important it was for the educated elite to join the organization of the masses,” and ends with the clause “Colonial and Subject Peoples of the World—Unite!” (Padmore 1945, 6–7).

The USG considered the growing global socialist movements as a major threat to capitalism and took significant actions after World War II. In 1947, the USG launched a new, global anti-Communist policy, which became known as the Second Red Scare, or McCarthyism, named after US Senator Joseph McCarthy (Saunders 2000; Schrecker 1994).<sup>24</sup> This policy was interlinked with the global fight against socialism and, combined with the Congress for Cultural Freedom run by the CIA, which established more than 20 prestigious magazines, news and features services, and high-profile international conferences, had the goal of nudging intellectuals away from Marxism (Saunders 2000, 1). George Kennan became the chief architect behind Truman’s National Security Council (NSC) directive NSC-4 in 1947 (Saunders 2000, 33–38), which together with directive NSC 10/2 marks “a departure in American history,” because they “created the semi-autonomous Office of Policy Coordination (OPC) in the Central Intelligence Agency” and directed the CIA to conduct “covert” rather than merely “psychological” operations (PSYOPs) (Warner 1998, 211). This was defined as operations that are conducted or sponsored by the USG

against hostile foreign states or groups or in support of friendly foreign states or groups but which are so planned and executed that any US government responsibility for them is not evident to unauthorized persons and that if uncovered the US government can plausibly disclaim any responsibility for

them. Specifically, such operations shall include any covert activities related to propaganda; economic warfare; preventive direct action, including sabotage, demolition and evacuation measures; subversion against hostile states, including assistance to underground resistance movements, guerrillas and refugee liberations [sic] groups, and support of indigenous anti-Communist elements in threatened countries of the free world (Warner 1998, 212).

Within three years, the OPC budget had increased to \$82 million, and it employed close to 3,000 people. In 1950, the NSC had completed a top-secret draft of NSC-68 to expand the program (Warner 1998, 216), and the office built “a permanent covert action structure” that grew even faster than its creators and administrators had envisioned” (Warner 1998, 217).

Liberia became a frontline country for the USG in the fight against socialism in Africa. Tubman banned all leftist literature in Liberia and his administration applied its repressive security networks, the National Intelligence and Security Service, National Bureau of Investigation, Special Security System, Executive Action Bureau, and the Public Relations Officers, to spy on citizens and infiltrate any social groups with left-wing or Pan-African tendencies (Tokpa 2009; Fahnbulleh 2009; Wreh 1976, 27).<sup>25</sup> The Liberian intelligence community was interconnected with the CIA, which had established its largest African base in Liberia (Fahnbulleh 2009).

The textbooks in the education system were American textbooks, and many of the courses offered at the University of Liberia were established and taught by American expatriates, who selected the most pro-American students for scholarships in the United States (Borishade 2009; Guannu 2009; Sayndee 2009).<sup>26</sup> However, Pan-African socialist ideas still influenced Liberian intellectuals and politicians, and on several occasions, the police raided the university and arrested academic staff and students who were suspected of socialist tendencies (Bowier 2009; Tarr 2009; Fahnbulleh 2009; Tokpa 2009).<sup>27</sup>

Liberia was among the first countries to receive expatriates from the American Peace Corps shortly after it was established by the USG in 1961 (Peace Corps, 2009). When the Peace Corps was introduced by President Kennedy (1961), he emphasized that the Peace Corps was “not designed as a weapon of propaganda” or “designed as a tool in the Cold War” (Kennedy 1961). However, in Liberia, most of the Peace Corps volunteers had strong anti-socialist positions, which they projected into the education system (Borishade 2009; Tokpa 2010). Also, the United States Information Agency (USIA) estab-

lished the largest Voice of America (VOA) facility in Africa, with six 250,000-watt transmitters and two 50,000 watt transmitters (USIA 1963, 5).<sup>28</sup> The expansion of the VOA was a strategic component of propaganda for the Cold War (USIA 1963, 11), where “American stations could neutralize and eventually defeat Radio Moscow in the crucial ‘war’ for the control of minds” (Uttaro 1982, 110).<sup>29</sup>

The Food for Peace Program, the Peace Corps, VOA, and other US initiatives in Liberia were presented as altruistic aid from the American people, and it was difficult for many Liberian intellectuals and politicians to understand the underlying political and economic interests (Borishade 2009; Tokpa 2009; Tipoteh 2009).<sup>30</sup> A similar confusion about aid and interests existed in the United States, which made one of the most influential international relations theorists, Hans Morgenthau, publish the article “A Political Theory on Foreign Aid” in 1962. Morgenthau notes that the underlying politics of foreign aid has become so well disguised in the post-World War II era that it has become difficult for most politicians in the US Congress to understand the real intentions of foreign aid. He, therefore, reminds that “what goes by the name of foreign aid today is in the nature of bribes” (Morgenthau 1962, 302), which appear “in the guise of aid for economic development” (Morgenthau 1962, 303). Foreign aid has “as actively and successfully participated in the semicolonial exploitation of backward nations” and is “frequently suspect, as serving in disguise the traditional ends of colonialism” by the recipients (Morgenthau 1962, 306). Foreign aid “is no different from diplomatic or military policy or propaganda. They are all weapons in the political armory of the nation” (Morgenthau 1962, 309).

As Liberia became a strategic country for the United States in the Cold War, Tubman’s administration became instrumental in combating the Pan-African movement outside Liberia, which gradually had transmuted into a socialist movement.

This transformation accelerated in March 1957 when the Gold Coast achieved independence. The independence struggle was headed by the Conventional People’s Party (CPP) and administered by Kwame Nkrumah, whom the opponents considered “a dangerous Communist conspiracy” (Padmore 1956, 180). Nkrumah became the first president of the Republic of Ghana, and the country became the main center for the promotion of socialist Pan-Africanism with a commitment to actively support the liberation struggle in all of Africa (Asante 2008).<sup>31</sup> This support was based on Nkrumah’s notion

that Ghana's "independence is meaningless unless it is linked up with the total liberation of the African continent" (Nkrumah 1957, 121).<sup>32</sup>

On 2 October 1958, Guinea became the first African state to achieve independence from France, under the leadership of Ahmed Sékou Touré. As the only former French colony in Africa, Guinea rejected Charles de Gaulle's offer to become a part of a Franco-African community. This was expressed in a public speech by Sékou Touré, who said that Guinea prefers "freedom in poverty to prosperity in chains" (Mundt 1979, 14). Guinea's rejection of the French Commonwealth resulted in complete French withdrawal from Guinea, and French administrators stripped the public buildings of items such as wall telephones and file cabinets, which left the new government in a chaotic situation (Mundt 1979, 14).

In November 1958, Ghana and Guinea entered into the Ghana-Guinea Union in an attempt to "start the unification process" by "setting up an embryo organization which other States could join as and when they wished" (Nkrumah 1972, 135). From 8 to 13 December 1958, Ghana hosted the sixth Pan-African conference, the first on African soil, which became known as the first All-African People's Conference (AAPC) (Padmore 1956, 185). This was followed by two other AAPCs in 1960 and 1961, which then led to the formation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), in 1963, which transmuted into the African Union (AU) in 2002 (AU 2011; Packer 2002). The first AAPC was attended by more than 300 political and trade union leaders from 28 African countries and colonies and included observers from Canada, China, Denmark, India, the UK, the United States, and the USSR. It was chaired by the general secretary of the Kenya Federation of Labor, Tom Mboya, and the opening speech was given by Kwame Nkrumah (International Organization 1962, 429). In this speech Nkrumah pointed out four main stages of Pan-Africanism:

1. National independence
2. National consolidation
3. Transnational unity and community
4. Economic and social reconstruction on the principles of scientific socialism (Nkrumah 1972, 131)

The final resolution of the conference states that "the imperialists are now coordinating their activities by forming military and economic pacts such as North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO),

European Common Market, Free Trade Area” with the aim of “strengthening their imperialist activities in Africa and elsewhere” (AAPC 1958, point 8). Also, the AAPC declared its “full support to all fighters for freedom in Africa” and condemned all legislators who considered “those who fight for their independence and freedom as ordinary criminals” (AAPC 1958, point 10). It was further decided to institutionalize the struggle for African independence by establishing a permanent secretariat in Accra with the aim of coordinating the national liberation movements in Africa (Nkrumah 1972, 131). George Padmore became the first general secretary of this secretariat, and after his death in 1959, he was succeeded by Abdoulaye Diallo, the former trade union leader in French West Africa, and Guinea’s resident minister in Ghana (Wallerstein 2005, 114). Ghana and Guinea began to host and train soldiers from all over Africa who were willing to participate in the liberation struggle and sent military support to countries such as Congo and Algeria (Asante 2008). Personal relations between the state leaders were crucial for the organization of the liberation struggle. It provided them certain flexibility for maneuvering and for restructuring the Pan-African movement, which had moved beyond the issue of color, and had joined forces with the North African countries (Wallerstein 2005, 115). Nkrumah and Touré were aware that the GoL under the leadership of President Tubman was under the control of the USG and that it could, therefore, be a severe obstacle to the Pan-African project. Therefore, they arranged for an official meeting with Tubman, with the goal of wresting him out of the hands of the Americans (Asante 2008).

This resulted in the Sanniquellie Conference, which took place in Liberia on 16 July 1959, between the leaders of Ghana, Guinea, and Liberia. In a speech at the conference, Tubman made his vision on African unity clear. It should be a formula that would be “sufficiently flexible for each nation to maintain its national sovereignty” (Tubman 1959, 673).<sup>33</sup> The Sanniquellie Conference resulted in the Declaration of Principles on the Community of Independent African States, which aimed at strengthening the cooperation between the independent African states as an economic, cultural, and social organization; however, it failed to move toward a united Africa. The most radical clause in the declaration states that “its main objective will be to help other African territories, subjected to domination, with a view to accelerating the end of their non-independent status” (Nkrumah 1972, 135; article 6, c). Liebenow (1969, 203) notes that this meeting

is “one of the landmarks in the history of the Pan-African movement,” because Tubman “effectively undermined the Nkrumah approach and in the process loosened the bonds between Touré and the Ghanaian leader” (Liebenow 1963, 203). However, Asante (2008) recalls that the meeting in Sanniquellie confirmed Nkrumah’s and Touré’s fear that Liberia was so firmly subjugated to US power that it could make Liberia a frontline state against a socialist united Africa.<sup>34</sup> Eastman (2009) states that he, as secretary of state, and Tubman were so closely aligned with the policies of the USG that it was natural for the GoL to oppose Nkrumah’s and Touré’s socialist Pan-African vision.<sup>35</sup>

Six months later, from 25 to 31 January 1960, the second AAPC took place in Tunis. It was attended by approximately 180 delegates from about 30 African countries, with over 40 observers such as China, Greece, India, the UK, the United States, West Germany, and Yugoslavia (International Organizations 1962). This conference was predominantly concerned with new forms of imperialism exerted by the French community and other European imperial powers and expressed its full support for the Greater Somali movement and the National Liberation Front (FLN) in Algeria. The conference asked for intensification in the struggle against colonialism and called for a corps of all-African volunteers to support and fight with the FLN in Algeria (International Organizations 1962).

Congo declared independence on 30 June 1960, six months after the second AAPC, with Patrice Lumumba as its first prime minister. The Ghanaian government immediately assisted Lumumba by deploying military forces to Congo in mid-July (Nkrumah 1972, 145). On 8 August, Nkrumah and Lumumba signed a “Secret Agreement between Ghana and the Congo,” which committed the two countries to seek national public support for the establishment of a union of African states as the solution to block western imperialism (Secret Agreement between Ghana and the Congo 1960, in Nkrumah 1972, 150). However, in the following month, the UN intervention in Congo resulted in the fall of Lumumba’s government, and the murder of Lumumba in September (Nkrumah 1972, 147), which had been planned by the CIA (Devlin 1999).<sup>36</sup> After the murder of Lumumba, a new regime was installed under the leadership of Mobutu, who aligned the government of Congo with the USG, which led Ghana to redirect its resources to other liberation movements operating inside Congo (Asante 2008).<sup>37</sup> By September 1960, most former French colonies in sub-Saharan Africa had become independent, and Pres. Houphouët-

Boigny of the Ivory Coast convened the Abidjan conference in October, which subsequently led to the Brazzaville meeting in December where the Union Africaine et Malgache (UAM) was established (Wallerstein 2005, 120). According to Nkrumah (1972, 219) the UAM, also known as the Brazzaville Group, was established over several meetings. However, the second conference was the most important, where the group included 12 African states represented by Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo Brazzaville, Dahomey, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Malagasy, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, and Upper Volta. The only French-speaking countries not participating in the conference were Guinea and Mali (Nkrumah 1972, 219). The Brazzaville Group sought to cooperate in economic, cultural, and diplomatic matters and agreed to set up a joint Afro-Malagasy Economic Cooperation Organization. The group was dissolved in March 1964 as a result of the formation of the OAU, but until that time, the Brazzaville Group played a significant role in slowing down the unification of Africa (Nkrumah 1972, 219).

The consolidation of one bloc resulted in the consolidation of another bloc. In November 1960, Nkrumah visited Pres. Modibo Keita of Mali and the two countries established a “joint parliament” in principle, and in December 1960, the Ghana-Guinea Union was expanded with the inclusion of Mali (Wallerstein 2005, 46). Next, the leaders of Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Libya, Egypt, Morocco, and the Algerian FLN met in Casablanca from 3 to 7 January 1961, which, in turn, marks the establishment of the Casablanca Group. The countries of the Brazzaville Group, Tunisia, Nigeria, and Liberia were invited but refused to participate. At the Casablanca Conference the countries reaffirmed their commitment to African liberation and unity, as a necessity to withstand Western imperialism. They agreed to set up an African Consultative Assembly, a Heads of State committee, economic and cultural committees, and a joint African high command as soon as conditions were favorable (Nkrumah 1972, 139).

The third and largest AAPC took place in Cairo from 25 to 31 March 1961 and was attended by more than 200 delegates representing 58 political parties and trade union groups from over 30 countries (International Organizations 1962, 432). The agenda was dominated by the Casablanca Group, where the deputy speaker of the United Arab Republic, Sayed Fuad Galal, was elected chair and Abdoulaye Diallo of Guinea was elected conference secretary. In the opening speech, Diallo addressed the issue of neocolonialism, which became

the dominant topic of the conference. He pointed out that although the French were pretending to leave Africa, they had, in reality, created a chain of puppet states (AAPC 1961, 4). Pres. Gamal Abdul Nasser of Egypt stated in his opening speech that “it was always a moving occasion for those fighting a common cause to share their experiences, learn from each other’s lessons and to replan their strategy” and noted that “this new meeting was in the wake of the battle for the Congo” (Nasser 1961, 5).<sup>38</sup> He further commented that while many believed imperialism was on the retreat, it had shown itself to be flexible, skillful, and had turned the UN to its advantage. “Lumumba was killed and his blood will drip from the UN flag till that flag proves its worth and safeguards what it symbolises” (Nasser 1961, 5). After careful consideration of the recent disintegration of the African colonial empires, and in particular, the history of Liberia and Tubman’s relations with the USG, Nkrumah and Sékou Touré drafted a resolution on neocolonialism, which was adopted at the conference (Asante 2008). This resolution conceptualizes neocolonialism as

the survival of the colonial system in spite of formal recognition of political independence in emerging countries . . . When the recognition of national independence becomes inevitable, they try to deprive these countries of their essence of real independence. This is done by imposing unequal economic, military and technical conventions [or] by creating puppet governments following false elections . . . Whenever such machinations appear insufficient to hamper the combativity and determination of popular liberation movements, dying colonialism tries, under the cover of Neocolonialism or through the guided intervention of the United Nations, the balkanisation of newly independent States or the systematic division of the political or syndical vivid forces, and in desperate cases . . . goes as far as plots, repressive measures by army and police, and murder . . . Neocolonialism manifests itself through economic and political intervention, intimidation and blackmail in order to prevent African States from directing their political, social and economic policies towards the exploitation of their natural wealth for the benefit of their peoples (AAPC 1961).

The resolution identifies the United States, West Germany, Israel, Britain, Belgium, Holland, South Africa, and France as the main perpetrators of neocolonialism and notes that these neocolonial powers install “puppet governments” through “fabricated elections” and force African states into “economic blocks which maintain the underdeveloped character of African economy” (AAPC 1961, 11). The neocolonial state is infiltrated “through capital investments, loans and monetary aids” and “direct monetary dependence.” Military

bases have been introduced as “scientific research stations or training schools,” and the foreign embassies are the “nerve centres of espionage and pressure points on the local African governments” (AAPC 1961, 11).

Other agents of neocolonialism are the national “military personnel in armed forces and police . . . who remain loyal to their former masters” as well as “representatives from imperialist and colonial countries under the cover of religion, moral re-armament, cultural, Trade Union and Youth or Philanthropic Organisations” (AAPC 1961). Propaganda by radio, press, and literature and controlled by imperial powers is considered a central neocolonial instrument. Additionally, puppet governments in Africa are being used by “imperialists in the furtherance of Neo-Colonialism, such as the use of their good offices by the neo-colonial powers to undermine the sovereignty and aspirations of other African States” (AAPC 1961).

The resolution was formulated in radical terms and popular rhetoric, but it was based on a combination of Marxism, realism in international relations, and the historical experience of Liberia (Asante 2008). Wallerstein (1967, 52) notes that it was at this conference that the notion of neocolonialism was first conceptualized as a critical concept in the revolutionary movement for African unity. He did field research in West Africa and followed the development of the Pan-African movement in the early 1960s (Wallerstein 1967, viii), and the conceptualization of neocolonialism corresponds in many ways to Wallerstein’s concept of strong state/weak state relationship in the *World-Systems Analysis*, which he explains as follows:

strong states relate to weak states by pressuring them to keep their frontiers open to those flows of factors of production that are useful and profitable to firms located in the strong states. Strong states relate to weak states by pressuring them to install and keep in power persons whom the strong states find acceptable and to join the strong states in placing pressures on other weak states to get them to conform to the policy needs of the strong states. Strong states relate to weak states by pressuring them to accept cultural practices—linguistic policy; educational policy . . . [and] by pressuring them to follow their lead in international arenas. And while strong states may buy off the individual leaders of weak states, weak states as states buy the protection of strong states by arranging appropriate flows of capital (Wallerstein 2004, 55).

The AAPCs had reoriented the Pan-African movement from “the realm of idealism and romanticism to that of practical politics” (Thompson 1971, 126). All of the African leaders agreed upon the

disintegration of the traditional colonial structures (Asante 2008), which is reflected in the adoption of the *Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples* at the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in December 1960 (UNGA 1960). However, the divisions between the socialist and capitalist blocks deepened with the formation of the Monrovia Group led by Tubman and Nnamdi Azikiwe, governor-general of Nigeria. The group was established with support from the United States and advisors from the Benelux countries less than two months after the third AAPC (Eastman 2009). From 7 to 13 May 1961, the 12 countries from the Brazzaville Group, including Ethiopia, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Togo, and Tunisia, met in Monrovia. The Monrovia Group officially became known as the Conservatives group, advocating for a slow, gradual approach to African unity with focus on state sovereignty. Tubman denounced the Casablanca Group and ensured that members of the Monrovia Group would not transition to the Casablanca Group. One powerful tool used by the GoL was to disseminate the rumor that Nkrumah was power hungry and wanted to become the leader of the entire African continent (Eastman 2009).

The Monrovia Group subsequently held a conference in Lagos from 25 to 30 January 1962, where N. Azikiwe denounced the Casablanca Group and emphasized that the Monrovia Group represented 133.1 million people, in contrast to the Casablanca Group which only represented 53.1 million people (Thompson 1971, 175). N. Azikiwe advocated for a concert of African states with structures similar to the UN and promoted a non-violent strategy for achieving independence—similar to Mahatma Gandhi's (Esedebe 1989, 107–9). A charter for a permanent Inter-African and Malagasy Organization was drafted, with focus on cooperation between African states rather than unity, again undermining the idea of a united Africa (Nkrumah 1972, 220–21; Thompson 1971, 174). This charter was confirmed four months later in Lagos with only minor adjustments (Nkrumah 1972, 220).

The meetings of the Monrovia Group took place in private, and opposition groups, such as the African Trade Union Confederation, were denied access (Wallerstein 1967, 199). The Casablanca Group denounced the Monrovia Group as puppets of the neocolonial powers (Asante 2008). Notions of Pan-Africanism, neocolonialism, nationalism, and the possibility of transformation to socialism were widely debated among political groups across Africa (Arrighi and Saul 1969).

The Addis Ababa Conference that established the OAU in May 1963 was marked by a sharp division between the Monrovia Group and the Casablanca Group (Thompson 1971, 181). Before the conference, Nkrumah published and disseminated his book *Africa Must Unite*, which argued why it was necessary for a united socialist Africa. In his opening speech at the conference, Nkrumah stated that imperialism has “grown stronger, more ruthless and experienced, and more dangerous in its international associations” and that not a single African state is strong enough to resist neocolonialism. He argued that if Africa did not unite quickly, then the continent would “sink into that condition which has made Latin America the unwilling and distressed prey of imperialism after one and a half centuries of political independence” (Nkrumah 1963, 218–20). In contrast, Tubman’s (1963) speech at the conference was extremely moderate. He acknowledged that “never before has unity of action been more desirable and urgent,” but emphasized that the Liberian delegation had “its own view” on African unity, which Liberia would promote during the conference (Tubman 1963, 527).

The OAU Charter was signed on 25 May 1963, with a preamble stating that African heads of states were determined to “fight against neo-colonialism in all its forms” (OAU 1963). However, Wallerstein (1967) notes that the conference was a victory for the Monrovia Group, and Arrighi and Saul (1969, 66) argued that the institutionalization of Pan-Africanism through the OAU became “the guarantor of defensive, conservative ‘nationalism’ and a force for smothering significant challenges to the *status quo*.”<sup>39</sup> In a letter to Ernesto Ché Guevara, Mehdi Ben Barka, and Malcolm X, Nkrumah stated that the OAU “has been rendered virtually useless as a result of the machinations of neo-colonialists and their puppets” (Nkrumah 1972, 422). For Nkrumah the OAU Charter became a “charter of intent, rather than a charter of positive action” (Nkrumah 1972, 249), but he considers the OAU as “being preserved as an innocuous organization” that may one day revitalize and create an effective Pan-African organization which will lead to genuine political unification” (Nkrumah 1972, 422).

After the Addis Ababa Conference, the Monrovia Group and the Casablanca Group dissolved their formal structures. However, the struggle between capitalism and socialism continued, and the Cold War intensified in Africa, which materialized into changes of regimes by coup d’état and constant realignment of African states (Wallerstein 1971, 4). The Monrovia Group had succeeded in slowing

down the formation of the AU, but the Casablanca Group had promoted socialist Pan-Africanism to such a degree that it continued to gain momentum throughout the African continent and beyond (Asante 2008).

With backing from the USSR, Ghana and Guinea supported armed independence movements, such as the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola and the Liberation Front of Mozambique. They denounced African leaders acting as puppets of the neocolonial powers through public speeches, conferences, publications, and radio and TV broadcasts. The socialist-oriented Pan-Africanists emphasized the connection between capitalism and imperialism, which made most African leaders claim that they were in favor of a form of *African socialism* in order to distance themselves from imperialism (Asante 2008), but not without a few exceptions, as in the case of President Tubman of Liberia and Pres. Léon M'ba of Gabon (Grundy 1964, 175; Klinghoffer 1969, 17).

In the United States, Malcolm X had been inspired by leftist Pan-African ideology. From childhood, he had been influenced by Marcus Garvey, and his political outlook was based on the color line (Malcolm X 1999). However, after visiting many leftist Pan-Africanists during his trip to Africa in early 1964, he began to redirect his focus from race to class. Malcolm was invited to Ghana in May 1964 by the Marxist Forum at the University of Ghana. During a meeting with the Algerian ambassador, it was pointed out that Malcolm's dominant focus on race excluded "white" revolutionaries in North Africa from the Pan-African struggle against imperialism, which made Malcolm rethink his notion of the color line (Malcolm X 1994, 212). During a meeting with Kwame Nkrumah he discussed Pan-Africanism as "the key to the problems of those of African heritage" (Malcolm X 1999, 363), and upon his return to the US, Malcolm began to speak about links between racism and capitalism (Malcolm X 1994, 64–69). He established the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU) in June 1964, which was a non-religious and non-sectarian group organized to unite Afro-Americans (Haley 1999, 423) and also allowed white people to join the black people's struggle (Malcolm X 1994, 70).

The OAAU was directly inspired by the idea of African unity that was promoted by leftist Pan-African leaders such as Nkrumah, Ben Bella, Nasser, and Touré (Malcolm X, 1994). Malcolm X was invited to the OAU summit in Cairo 17–21 July 1964 to introduce the OAAU to the OAU (Malcolm X 1994, 72–73). After a meeting with the Chi-

nese ambassador in Ghana, Malcolm X stated that he used to be viewed as a racist but after his conversation with the Chinese ambassador, he realized that “it’s not wise and intelligent for a person to take the position of a racist because you can’t defend it” (Malcolm X 1994, 215). Marable (2005) notes that as Malcolm X “became more internationalist and Pan-African” and “began to incorporate a socialist analysis” into his program, he became “a threat” to the USG. After Malcolm X was assassinated during a speech at an OAAU meeting in New York, “Black Nationalists and Trotskyists” accused the New York Police Department and the FBI of being involved in his assassination (Marable 2011, chap. 16). The new leadership of the OAAU was not open for support from the left, and the OAAU collapsed shortly after the death of Malcolm X (Marable 2011, chap. 16). However, Malcolm X had inspired other black movements in the United States, in particular the Black Panther Party (Alkebulan 2007, 8), which was influenced by Marxism (Alkebulan 2007, 40).<sup>40</sup> Nkrumah, Touré, and other leftist Pan-Africanists sought to enhance the relations between black movements outside Africa in support of a united socialist Africa, and they had a good partnership with the Black Panther Party (Asante 2008).

The debate on race and class complicated the promotion of socialism in Africa, which became mixed up with the term ‘African socialism.’ The notion of African socialism became blurred and without a clear definition (Friedland and Rosberg 1964, 1; Nwoko 1985, 23). It appeared as a “mixture of utopian, Marxist, pre-Marxist and even anti-Marxist concepts with many varied and complex origins and manifestations” (Lopes 1988, 9). Lopes (1988, 9) notes that there was not a clear structure or organization behind the notion of African socialism, which in reality had more to do with nationalism and populism driven by “an autocracy based on personal charisma.” Seidman (1979, 17) defines African socialism as a form of “disguised state capitalist measures which led to increased dependence on transnational corporate and financial institutions.”

This resulted in abstract and obfuscated notions of African socialism as perhaps best reflected in the work of Senegal’s Pres. Léopold Sédar Senghor who denounced scientific socialism as a European invention that Africans should reject. According to Senghor scientific socialism could not be applied to Africa because:

in contrast to the classical European, the Negro-African does not draw a line between himself and the object . . . the Negro-African sympathises, abandons his personality to become identified with the Other . . . He lives a common life with the Other; he lives in a symbiosis . . . Subject and object are dialectically face to face in the very act of knowledge. It is a long caress in the night, an embrace of joined bodies, the act of love (Senghor 1964, 73).

Senghor romanticized the nature of African people as a distinct race and described the traditional African peoples as a homogeneous mass that were not stratified into a class structure (Senghor 1964, 95). He called for a return to the traditional African classless communalism, which he defined as “Négritude,” while at the same time calling upon “all the French technicians” needed to help Senegal in the transition to African socialism, which included French university professors, elementary school teachers, judges, engineers, physicians, economists, and public administrators (Senghor 1964, 101).

Nkrumah (1972, 46) criticized African leaders such as Senghor and Houphouët-Boigny by arguing that they tended to claim that the “traditional African society was a classless society imbued with the spirit of humanism.” This stood in sharp contrast to the historical evidence that points to the fact that the traditional African society was built on class structures and slavery, as elsewhere in the world (Nkrumah 1972, 440). According to Nkrumah, African socialism “appears to be more closely associated to anthropology than with political economy” and had become popular in the West “precisely because of its predominant anthropological charm” (Nkrumah 1972, 440). African socialism, therefore, ignores that “socialism depends on dialectical and historical materialism” and that human society is “part of nature and subject to its own laws of development.” The supposition that there “are tribal, national or racial socialism is to abandon objectivity in favour of chauvinism” (Nkrumah 1972, 445).

Nkrumah stands out as one of the chief promoters of scientific socialism in Africa, which in Liberia became known as “Nkrumahism” (Fahnbulleh 2009). Most Liberian intellectuals and politicians were familiar with US-style liberal capitalism, and few scholars distinguished sharply between African socialism and scientific socialism. Nkrumah’s work was therefore often referred to as African socialism in Liberia. His book *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*, published in 1965, became the single most influential work at the University of Liberia, even though it was prohibited under Tubman’s regime (Fahnbulleh 2009; Tokpa 2009).

In this book, Nkrumah outlines the processes and mechanisms of neo-colonialism and includes names of individuals, corporations, financial institutions, and government intelligence agencies, with a particular focus on the United States as “foremost among the neo-colonialists” (Nkrumah 1965, 8). It was the first publication to use the word “neocolonialism” in the title, and despite its non-academic style, Nkrumah’s analysis and arguments are similar to those of the dependency school of thought, such authors as Amin (1973, 1977), Galtung (1971), Frank (1970, 1975), Leys (1974), and Wallerstein (2004). Many of these anti-imperialist works, known as “underdevelopment theory,” emerged in conjunction with revolutionary struggles in various parts of the world (Sklar 1986, 17).<sup>41</sup> Nkrumah’s government invited many left-wing scholars to Ghana from across the world to study the Pan-African struggle against colonialism and neocolonialism (Asante 2008; Antwi-Dantzo 2008; M. Williams 2008).<sup>42</sup>

Nkrumah’s work was so controversial that the USG officially condemned the book and considered it “deeply disturbing,” “offensive,” and “unacceptable.” In a circular telegram from the USDOS to embassies in Africa, the USDOS stated that it would hold the government of Ghana “fully responsible for whatever consequences the book’s publications may have” (USDOS 1965, point 3). Former CIA station chief in West Africa, John Stockwell (1991), stated that the United States saw Nkrumah as a serious threat to their national interests in Africa and had him removed from power in 1966. This was accomplished by a military coup executed by the Ghanaian army when Nkrumah was on a state visit to China. It was engineered by the CIA station chief in Accra, Howard Bayne, and executed without producing “one shred of paper . . . that would nail the CIA hierarchy as key responsible” (Stockwell 1992, 06:30 min to 07:20 min.). It was in line with the US NSC directive 10/2 of 1948, which specified execution of USG covert operations should be conducted without the ability to be traced back to the USG (Warner 1998, 211–220).

After the coup, Nkrumah’s political party, CPP, was made illegal in Ghana, and all documents and books associated with Nkrumah were burned. People in possession of literature written by Nkrumah would risk prosecution by the new regime. Nkrumah moved to Guinea where he became co-president with Sékou Touré. He continued his political activities and promoted socialist Pan-Africanism through any possible means, such as radio broadcasts from Conakry, the formation of the All-African People’s Revolutionary Party (A-APRP),

and publication of additional books (Asante 2008; Nkrumah 2009), most notably the *Handbook of Revolutionary Warfare, Guide to the Armed Phase of the African Revolution* (Nkrumah 1968) and *Class Struggle in Africa* (Nkrumah 1970).<sup>43</sup>

As Dar es Salaam became a center for radical thinking in East Africa, Conakry became the center in West Africa, and many Liberian students and intellectuals secretly traveled to Conakry to hear Nkrumah speak and study Marxism (Fahnbulleh 2009).<sup>44</sup> From many letters sent by Liberians to Sékou Touré, Nkrumah (1968) noted that “these people are also waking up,” and he saw this as having great potential for the advancement of the All-African People’s Revolutionary Army (A-APRA), armed wing of the A-APRP, because it evidenced that “the human and material forces in Africa are poised. All that is needed is coordination and inspiration to spur them on to action” (Nkrumah 1968, 239).<sup>45</sup> On 22 November 1970, Portugal attempted to prevent Guinea from spreading socialist Pan-Africanism by sending a seaborne mercenary army from Portuguese-ruled Guinea-Bissau. The army bombarded Conakry from the sea to create bridgeheads for the invading forces. Some of the invading soldiers went directly to where the radical thinkers and political activists lived. Nkrumah and Amilcar Cabral were targets, but the Guinean government was expecting the attack and had moved Nkrumah and Cabral to an alternate location. The Guinean military mobilized rapidly, and within 24 hours, Guinean forces had repelled the military invasion (Milne 2001, 355–57).

Nkrumah continued his political activities in Conakry until he became ill and died at a hospital in Bucharest on 28 April 1972 (Pan African Program 1982, 76). About a year before, on 23 July 1971, Nkrumah’s primary opponent, President Tubman of Liberia, who considered socialism “a mystical illusion” that he would “fight to the death” (Liebenow 1969, 107), died in a hospital in London (W. Tolbert).

### Notes

1. Dr. Michael Williams was interviewed in relation to this research because of his extensive knowledge about historical and contemporary Pan-Africanism. At the time of the interview he was professor and director of the Center for African Studies and executive director at The AUA Center, Legon, University of Ghana. Interviewed 14 November 2008 in Chec Afrique, Accra.

2. Whereas the colonial powers saw Garvey as dangerous to their interests in Africa, the left saw Garvey as a tool of imperialism for “keeping the Negro’s mind off

the real problems” (Martin 1976, 244). In the program of the Communist Party it was stated that the “Negro problem is a political and economic problem. The racial oppression of the Negro is simply the expression of his economic bondage and oppression, each intensifying the other. This complicates the Negro problem, but does not alter its proletarian character” (Martin 1976, 222). The US Communist Party would “actively support the Negroes in their desperate struggle,” but for the communists the only possible solution was “the abolition of wage slavery through the overthrow of the capitalist State” (Martin 1976, 223).

3. After the crowning of Ras Tafari (Haile Selassie) as emperor of Ethiopia, an area of 800 acres near Lake Tana was granted for African-American settlement (Sundiata 2003, 288).

4. Fernando Po, better known as Bioko or Bioco, is an island in the Gulf of Guinea belonging to Equatorial Guinea.

5. See Sundiata (1974) for details about the labor market in West Africa from 1880–1930.

6. Please see <https://babel.hathitrust.org/> for the Commission of Inquiry’s entire report.

7. In a meeting at the USDOS, in January 1933, Harvey Firestone made it clear that he saw a “vast British conspiracy to do away with [their] rubber plantations in Liberia” (Sundiata 2003, 165).

8. Nnamandi Azikiwe (1904–96) became Prime Minister of Nigeria in 1960 and remained a significant actor in Nigerian politics until he died in 1996 (Olisa 1989, 394). He rejected socialism and considered private business as the way to development (Ejiofor 1989, 133). The Nigerian election in 1960 was undertaken and rigged by the British government (Thomson 2007). Azikiwe played a central role along with President Tubman of Liberia in the formation of the Monrovia Group, which aimed at preventing the promotion of a united socialist Africa by the Casablanca Group.

9. Comintern, also known as the Third International (1919–43), was an international organization that promoted international solidarity and unity among workers, and the abolition of the capitalist system. See also “History of the Communist International,” Marxists Internet Archive, <https://www.marxists.org/history/international/comintern/index.htm>, and “Fifteen Years of the Communist International,” Marxists Internet Archive, <https://www.marxists.org/history/international/comintern/1934/fifteen-years.pdf>.

10. Roland Massaquoi was interviewed for this research. He served as minister of agriculture from 1993 to 2003 and carried out research on Firestone and labor exploitation. As a central member of the National Patriotic Front (NPP), he was considered as presidential candidate for the NPP in 2005.

11. James Logan and Othello Brandy contributed to this research through several interviews. Logan served as deputy minister of agriculture for planning and development. In the 1970s he received a scholarship from the Tolbert administration to study the political economy of agriculture at the Karl Marx University of Economic Sciences in Hungary, later renamed Corvinus University of Budapest. At the time of the interviews, Othello Brandy served the Liberian Governance Commission as lead consultant in land commission. He served as minister of agriculture from 2002 to 2005 and as ambassador to the European Union (EU) and the Benelux from 1997 to 2002. Most of their documentation is from Firestone employees and local chiefs’ oral narratives.

12. Byron Tarr contributed to this research through a number of interviews and email correspondence. Tarr served as special assistant to Finance Minister Stephen Tolbert in 1972 and assistant/deputy minister for revenues from May 1972 to 1974

and was responsible for state enterprises as the controller general for public enterprises in 1977. He subsequently served as minister of planning from 1981 to 1982 and minister of finance from 1991 to 1992.

13. Some of the major companies operating in Liberia were the Liberian-American-Swedish Mining Company, with Grängesbersbolaget and Bethlehem Steel Company as the main investors; the German-Liberian Company in Bong County, DELIMCO, which started the exploitation of iron ore between 1953 and 1955; the Liberian Mining Company in Bomi Hills; and the National Iron Ore Company in Mano River (Hasselman 1979).

14. Liberia hosts the world's second largest merchant fleet, with more than 3,500 ships flying under the Liberian flag of convenience in 2010 (Liberian International Ship and Corporate Registry 2011).

15. The US commitment to Open Door policy is perhaps best expressed by US Pres. Woodrow Wilson (1907), "Since trade ignores national boundaries and the manufacturer insists on having the world as a market, the flag of his nation must follow him, and the doors of the nations which are closed must be battered down . . . Concessions obtained by financiers must be safeguarded by ministers of state, even if the sovereignty of unwilling nations be outraged in the process" (Alstynne 1961, 300).

16. The Food for Peace Program led to the establishment of the UN World Food Program (WFP) under the leadership of the Special Assistant to US President Kennedy, George McGovern, who was the director of the Food for Peace Program (Shaw 2001, 6–9) Today WFP is predominantly funded by the USG with an annual contribution ranging between \$1.1 billion and \$2 billion, followed by the European Commission with an annual contribution ranging between \$ 250 million and \$355 million (WFP 2011).

17. James Logan, deputy minister of agriculture for planning and development, since 2006. Interview conducted and recorded on 22 January 2009 by Niels Hahn, at the Restaurant at the JFK Hospital, Monrovia.

18. The basic daily wage rate was 25 cents in 1950 and 30 cents in 1955. Shortage of labor could increase wages (Clower, et al. 1966, 150). T. Debey Sayndee, a long-term commentator and analyst of Liberian politics, contributed to this research through a number of interviews. At the time of the interviews, Sayndee was the director of the Kofi Annan Institute for Conflict Transformation at the University of Liberia,

19. Roland Massaquoi, minister of agriculture in the National Patriotic Reconstruction Assembly Government (NPRAG): agriculture in the National Patriotic Reconstruction Assembly Government (NPRAG) from 1993 to 1997 and minister of agriculture of the GoL from 1997 till 2002, presidential candidate for the NPP in 2005. Interview conducted and recorded by Niels Hahn on 14 May 2009, at the University of Liberia, Monrovia.

20. USAID (2009, 24) states that Firestone still imports rice from the United States, which "it uses as in-kind partial payment for its employees." Much of this rice "is sold on the Liberian market" (USAID 2009, 24). T. Debey Sayndee. Interview conducted and recorded by Niels Hahn on 2 February 2009, in his office at the University of Liberia.

21. Lowenkopf does not provide an analysis of the connection between the labor shortage and the rice import but instead argues that "Liberian farmers are acting quite rationally when they put their land and labor to production for export" (Lowenkopf 1976, 79).

22. In recent years, Firestone's use of child labor received more media attention after the establishment of the organization Stop Firestone, and the lawsuit against Firestone in 2005, for the use of child labor in Liberia (International Labor Rights

Forum 2009; Hoffman 2009). Paul Hoffman is a partner at Schonbrun, De Simone, Seplow, Harris & Hoffman LLP, a law firm in California. He has brought lawsuits against a number of international corporations and is in close contact with the people leading the case against Firestone. Personal communication with Niels Hahn on 3 December 2009, in Friend's House, 173–77, Euston Road, London.

23. Jerome Verdier served as the chair of the TRC of Liberia. He contributed to this research through several interviews and email correspondence in 2006 and 2009.

24. The first Red Scare took place in 1919 (Schrecker, 1994).

25. Alaric Tokpa and H. Boima Fahnbulleh contributed to this research through several interviews. At the time of the interviews, Tokpa served as assistant professor of political science at the University of Liberia. He was head of the Liberia National Student Union in the 1970s and an active member of the Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA). Tokpa was sentenced to death by the military junta in 1980 for promoting leftist views but eventually released two years later. He is cofounder of the political party the New Deal Movement. Fahnbulleh served as national security advisor of Liberia at the time of the interviews. He is cofounder of MOJA and served as minister of foreign affairs from December 1981 to 4 July 1984.

26. Adetokunbo K. Borishade and Joseph Saye Guannu contributed to this research with interviews. Borishade detailed her research on education in Liberia and cultural imperialism. At the time of the interview she was the director-curator of the Africana Museum and chair of the Africana and Liberian Studies Department at Cuttington University in Liberia. Joseph Saye Guannu interviewed by Niels Hahn, 1 January 2009, in Monrovia. Guannu was an associate professor of political science at Cuttington University College in Suakoko, Liberia. He has served as a government official in the GoL, including assistant minister of foreign affairs for foreign service at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1977, Liberia's ambassador to the United States, 1981–83, and minister of state for presidential affairs in the IGNU from 1990–94.

27. Emmanuel Bowier, minister of information, 1987–990. Interview conducted and recorded by Niels Hahn on 16 February 2009 at the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, (MICAT), Monrovia.

28. The VOA was originally established in 1942—in the battle against the Axis powers—and then joined by its shortwave sisters, Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. In the early 1950s, the VOA was placed under the auspices of the “newly organized propaganda organization,” the United States Information Agency (Alexandre 1988, 2–4). Before the VOA in Liberia, the Eternal Love Winning Africa (ELWA) established in 1954 by the Sudan Interior Mission had been the dominant broadcasting system in Liberia. ELWA broadcasted programs that supported the policies of President Tubman (US Army 1964, 218), and was predominantly funded by Protestant churches in the US (US Army 1984, 235).

29. Morgenthau attributed this form of information warfare to cultural imperialism as the subtlest and the most effective form of imperialism, which seeks “control of the minds of men as an instrument for changing the power relations between two nations” (Morgenthau 2006, 71). Cultural imperialism plays a secondary role to military and economic imperialism by aiming to displace one culture with another culture through various means, such as projection of language, moral values, and religion, in order to soften the enemy's image and prepare the environment for military dominance or economic penetration. Its modern manifestation is the “fifth column” mechanism through the support of particular civil society organizations and political parties (Morgenthau 2006, 72).

30. Tipoteh was interviewed for this research, as the cofounder and chair of MOJA.

31. Kwaku Bapru Asante contributed to this work with over 15 hours of interviews conducted over four weeks. Asante served as principal secretary at African Affairs Secretariat, Office of Pres. Kwame Nkrumah. Previously, he held the positions of ambassador of Ghana to Switzerland, Austria, and Belgium, UN Organizational positions in Geneva and Austria, and served as Ghana's high commissioner to London.

32. Extract from the "Midnight Pronouncement of Independence. 5th-6th March, 1957." In *Revolutionary Path*. London, PANAF, 1957, 120-121.

33. It must be noted that Liberia's Vice Pres. William R. Tolbert, who became president of Liberia in 1971, was present at this meeting (Tolbert Presidential Papers 1972). Tolbert increasingly became inspired by Nkrumah during the 1960s, which influenced his leadership in the 1970s.

34. Kwaku Bapru Asante participated in the Sanniquellie Conference as Nkrumah's principal secretary for the African Affairs Secretariat (Asante 2008).

35. Earnest Eastman participated in the Sanniquellie Conference as the secretary of state (foreign minister) of Liberia. He contributed to this research with an interview regarding this event, which clarifies important details. Eastman later served as minister of foreign affairs in both Doe's and Taylor's administration.

36. Larry Devlin was the CIA station chief in the Democratic Republic of Congo Field Office in 1961. According to Devlin (1999) he received orders from the USG to assassinate Lumumba.

37. K. B. Asante was responsible for supplying arms from Ghana to the Congo in the early 1960s.

38. Gamal Abdul Nasser in All-African People's Conference. *Africa on the March!* Cairo: United Arab Republic Information Department, March 1961.

39. During his trial, on 14 July 2009, Charles Taylor stated that "Tubman was financed" by the USG to "divide African leaders to prevent the unity of Africa (C. Taylor, 2009).

40. The Black Panther Party (Alkebulan 2007, 8) stated that it "was Malcolm that was the motivating force in the founding of the Black Panther Party."

41. Leys (2010) notes that after the coup that overthrew Nkrumah's government in 1966 the main center for the study of neocolonialism moved to Tanzania after Julius Nyerere presented the Arusha Declaration in February 1967. There he announced that Tanzania would embark on a form of African socialism under the name Ujamaa. Around the same time the People's Republic of China engaged in the construction of the nearly 2000 kilometer long railway between Tanzania and Zambia that became a main supply line for the African liberation movements in Southern Africa. Leys was interviewed on this topic in order to get firsthand information about how Nkrumah inspired the dependency school of thought and the Pan-African movement.

42. Vladimir Antwi-Dantzo, professor at the Legon Center for International Affairs, was interviewed regarding his role as spokesperson on foreign affairs for the CPP in Ghana.

43. Samia Nkrumah was interviewed as she is the daughter of Kwame Nkrumah. In 2008, she became a member of the Ghanaian parliament of the CPP, and in 2011, she became the chairperson of the CPP. In this position, she is promoting the works and ideas of her father. Samia Nkrumah further contributed via email correspondences.

44. Inspired by Nkrumah, Fahnbulleh became one of the leading academics and political activists in Liberia (Tokpa 2009; Tipoteh 2009; Sawyer 2009). In the early 1980s he held the position of foreign minister of Liberia and was behind the coup

attempt against Doe in 1985. He became the national security advisor of Liberia in 2006 (Fahnbulleh 2009).

45. A-APRP is the military wing of the All People's Republican Party (APRP), which Nkrumah established in Conakry. The aim of the A-APRA is to enforce the socialist revolution in Africa. Stokely Carmichael, an influential member of the Black Panther movement, headed the A-APRP with the goal to coordinate the fight against neocolonialism using the A-APRA and to build socialism on the African continent (A-APRP 2011). Stokely Carmichael took the name Kwame Ture, after Kwame Nkrumah and Sékou Touré, but the relation between Nkrumah and Carmichael appears as problematic as is reflected in a letter to June Milne (Nkrumah's secretary). Nkrumah writes that "Stokely Carmichael and his wife Miriam are in town and want to see me. I refused point blank to see them. I don't know where they are now. I understand they are visiting Liberia. That Stokely is really mixed up" (Nkrumah 1968, 256).



## Chapter 3

# **Tolbert and the New Policy Direction**

## **Moving Toward Socialism**

On 23 July 1971, shortly after the death of Tubman and in accordance with the Liberian constitution, Vice Pres. William R. Tolbert was sworn in as the president of Liberia. This marked a significant shift in the GoL's relationship with the United States government (USG).

As Tubman was dying, McKinley A. Deshield, the grand master of the Masonic Order and secretary general of the True Whig Party, had received a warning that the US Embassy in Monrovia suspected that Tolbert was influenced by the ideas of Kwame Nkrumah and Sékou Touré (Sayndee 2009).<sup>1</sup> There were rumors about plans for a military coup led by Henry Kobo Johnson, the chief of staff of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), to prevent Tolbert from becoming president (Dunn and Tarr 1988, 69).<sup>2</sup> Critical decision makers of the GoL gathered for a crisis meeting at the Liberian Department of State; however, they were not allowed to leave the department until Tolbert had been sworn in as the twentieth president of Liberia (Sayndee 2009). Tolbert was in the countryside and immediately upon his arrival at the Department of State was sworn in while still wearing his short-sleeved, blue working attire, which subsequently became known as the “swearing in” suit (W. Tolbert).

Tolbert was advised by senior government officials to take immediate security measures due to a possible attempt of the USG to instigate a coup d'état via the Liberian army (Sayndee 2009). Tolbert established a temporary presidential office in his own home and this became the nerve center of the government (W. Tolbert 1971, 46). During his first days in office, Tolbert dismantled parts of Tubman's security apparatus and restructured both the military and security services (Lowenkopf 1976, 178). This included dismantling a comprehensive spying network where selected Liberians known as “relations officers” were paid monthly salaries for spying on their fellow citizens and colleagues. With the announcement of dismantling the spy network, Tolbert also promised to “uphold freedom of speech.” According to Tolbert, “it is through freedom of speech that a leader can effectively adjust his policies to suit his people if he is sincere” (Smith 1971, 24). This opened up a period of greater political freedom,

especially at the University of Liberia (Wreh 1976, 126), and younger generations of politicians did not need to be members of the Masonic Order to participate in politics (Wreh 1976, 30).

On 10 September 1971, Tolbert cautiously outlined Liberia's new economic direction in a nationwide broadcast. His direction resonated not only with proponents of liberal capitalism but also with groups who were oriented in a socialist direction. The policy was launched with the slogan "Higher Heights," aiming at achieving a "Wholesome Functioning Society" through the total involvement of the Liberian people who "should lose themselves in new levels of alert," where "merit" and not favoritism, connections, or selfish individualism would "form the criteria for real distinction" (W. Tolbert 1971, 154). The vision was for a society whose "opportunities are equally opened to all" and where "there is enduring loving care for the poor, the helpless and the underprivileged, and where there is compelling sympathy for the disadvantaged" (W. Tolbert 1971, 154). Tolbert reaffirmed the government's commitment to the Open Door Policy and pledged "to support and protect legitimate foreign investments," however; he indicated that the new direction would include "closer resource control" by the government. Tolbert further announced a new "Liberianization" plan to review and strengthen the "existing institutions. . . [and] study the possibility of creating new institutions. . . to enhance a greater participation" of Liberians in the economy (W. Tolbert 1971, 160). This was a component of a comprehensive development strategy aiming at "industrialization of the nation" as an "urgent priority" which Tolbert announced weeks earlier at the University of Liberia (W. Tolbert 1971, 108). The approach was a "National Development Plan" to "provide for a planned economic growth," which would ensure satisfactory housing for wage earners, and within a decade make Liberia "self-sufficient in rice—the nation's main staple food—and other basic foods; for the Wholesome Functioning Society must be able to feed itself" (W. Tolbert 1971, 160). This marks the beginning of an attempt to reverse the impact of the US Agricultural Trade Development Assistance Act, Public Law 480 (PL 480) program and make Liberia less dependent on food imports.

Tolbert had a strong power base in the True Whig Party and in several secret societies. In addition to serving as a grand master in the Masonic Order, he also was ranked past master in the United Brothers of Odd Fellows (W. Tolbert 1972, 73). Furthermore, Tolbert was a senior member of an umbrella organization of the Poro Society,

which is the most important traditional semi-secret society in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea, and Ivory Coast (Tarr 2009).<sup>3</sup> From 1965–70, Tolbert served as president of the Baptist World Alliance (Ryan 2014, 41). On 30 December 1971, he won the general election and was inaugurated on 3 January 1972 as the elected president of Liberia (W. Tolbert 1972, 286). This marked the beginning of a four-year term in office that afforded the “opportunity for the projection of the total image of. . . [the GoLs] new philosophy” and “a noticeable departure from the past. . . specifically designed to blaze new trails to national progress” (W. Tolbert 1972, 550).

In February 1972, school fees were abolished at primary and secondary levels and tuition fees for higher education were reduced by 50 percent, based on the philosophy that “democracy requires a well-informed citizenry” and that education should be available to all (W. Tolbert 1972, 393). Plans were provided for expanding the health care sector, and social security and welfare programs were initiated (W. Tolbert 1972, 554). This was based on the new philosophy that “shelter, health, education, concern for the poor and underprivileged, and the cost of living” were some of the “many problems which cry out for a satisfactory solution” (W. Tolbert 1972, 554).

To finance these services, the GoL initiated the process of gradually shifting from a regressive tax system to a progressive tax system. This system focused on the “ability to pay” where “the rich pay more, and the poor relatively less” rather than the tax system under the Tubman administration where “the relative tax liability of the rich . . . [was] lower than that of the poor” (W. Tolbert 1972, 559).

In April 1972, Tolbert was one of the pallbearers of Nkrumah’s coffin at his funeral in Guinea. In contrast to Tubman, Tolbert was sympathetic to Nkrumah’s ideas and he accepted Sékou Touré’s invitation to chair a two-day symposium of tributes to Nkrumah on 13 May 1972. In his speech at the symposium Tolbert portrays Nkrumah as the “most renowned politician” of the African continent, who could “analyze and visualize the results long before they occurred,” and noted that Nkrumah’s idealism “will live on as long as there is struggle for freedom, liberty, dignity and justice for mankind” (W. Tolbert 1972, 482–84). The next day, Tolbert participated in the Silver Jubilee of the Democratic Party of Guinea, where he praised President Touré for having rejected the French commonwealth and for the struggling against the “diehards of colonialism, racial discrimination, oppression, suppression and neo-colonialism.” He further noted that the

people of Guinea had been “ideologically educated” to “never accept foreign domination, enslavement and exploitation nor be ever reduced to a state of inferiority” (W. Tolbert 1972, 486).

A month after Tolbert’s election, on 9 June 1972, the GoL made the most significant policy shift by establishing diplomatic relations with the USSR. After a number of meetings with I. F. Filippov, USSR ambassador to Sierra Leone, an agreement was reached that facilitated the exchange of diplomatic missions at ambassadorial levels between Monrovia and Moscow, with the aim of developing “friendly relations . . . to the benefit of the Soviet and Liberian peoples” (W. Tolbert 1972, 507).

The policy shift became even more apparent when Tolbert subsequently engaged in the promotion of Pan-Africanism. At his first OAU meeting in Rabat on 14 June 1972 as head of state of Liberia, Tolbert praised the leading role of Nkrumah in the formation of the OAU and noted that “one of the greatest achievements since 1963 is that we now understand ourselves better than we did . . . which is a great step forward” (W. Tolbert 1972, 510). Echoing Nkrumah, Tolbert further stated that the problems of Africa were enormous and

it would be a great error for us to think that the developed nations owe us anything. Indeed, it is not unreasonable to consider that their own national self-interests will dictate and influence their attitudes and actions towards us. Our economic emancipation must be underwritten by ourselves. Political independence, as we have learned by bitter experience, is only the beginning of the struggle, not the end. New forms of imperialism are continuously being formulated with the objective of retarding the progress of our Organization in its prime purpose of achieving the speedy emancipation of all of the remaining pockets of colonialism (W. Tolbert 1972, 511).

Tolbert called for increased support to the “Freedom Fighters in Mozambique, Namibia, Angola and Guinea-Bissau” (W. Tolbert 1972, 514) and insisted that the OAU change from rhetoric and ceremony to active engagement in “arresting injustice and exploitation” of the African continent (W. Tolbert 1972, 516). To do this, the OAU should have promoted Inter-African trade, established a Radio Africa broadcasting complex, and created a research and information center to counteract the propaganda that is disseminated “by enemies and by so-called friends” (W. Tolbert 1972, 517). He promised that “Liberia will spare no efforts . . . to join whatever collective action we shall determine is necessary to achieve . . . freedom, independence and economic emancipation for Africa and all its peoples” (W. Tolbert 1972, 518). For Tolbert, the only meaningful ideology for OAU mem-

bers was “Africa for the Africans,” which “connotes African socialism, the root of our traditional society” (W. Tolbert 1972, 512). To make African socialism meaningful, “every state should be left free to develop according to its own genius and tradition and national aspirations.” Liberia, he stated, is committed to developing “technological, economic, cultural and social institutions along these lines” (W. Tolbert 1972, 512).

It is not clear what Tolbert meant by African socialism. Rhetorically, it appears to be closer to Senghor’s notion of African socialism. However, as shown in the next section, the actual policy implementation appears to be closer to the development strategy applied by Ghana during Nkrumah’s administration. His administration was marked by national development and industrialization with support from socialist-oriented countries.

### Revising the Open Door Policy

Foreign investors feared that Tolbert would change the liberal economic environment that Tubman had ensured (Smith 1971, 18), and on Liberia’s 125th Independence Day on 26 July 1972, Tolbert introduced the GoL’s new direction on the Open Door Policy. The policy stated that Liberia’s “minerals, forests and other natural resources are being steadily depleted . . . and [the] environment polluted” while the people of Liberia have received “comparatively insufficient . . . compensation” (W. Tolbert 1972, 556). Liberia, he continued, “made every concession in order to accommodate the needs of our partners” while the needs of Liberia have not been met. Liberia has contributed with “natural resources, extraordinary investment incentives and a particularly favorable political and economic climate,” whereas in return the foreign investors “repatriate his capital and his high profits” (W. Tolbert 1972, 156–57). Therefore, in “principle” the GoL intend to adhere to the concession policy, but “it is time to think in terms of the conditions as they exist today and will exist tomorrow rather than those which prevailed in yesteryears” (W. Tolbert 1972, 157). Previous policies have provided an “overwhelmingly liberal incentives” to ensure a “rapid and balanced development of the country,” but this liberal system has “accrued to a few individuals” and “not to the nation” (W. Tolbert 1972, 558).

Tolbert defined the liberal policies as a violation of the laws of the country and stated that the new government is, therefore “obligated

to ensure that benefits derived from its policies accrue to the masses and not to a privileged few” (W. Tolbert 1972, 558). He announced that the new government had started the process of reviewing all the concession agreements to implement a 50–50 sharing system, where foreign investors must reinvest 50 percent of their profit in Liberia. In cases where foreign investors are “unwilling” to do so, the GoL would be primarily responsible “to ensure the collection and investment.” At the same time, foreign investors would be compelled to build up a Liberian knowledge base, where Liberians must be trained to take over the jobs done by expatriates, under the policy of “Liberianization” (W. Tolbert 1972, 557).

After Tolbert’s speech, President Sékou Touré made a special tribute and praised Tolbert for “his progressive policies” and offered Tolbert any support he might need from Guinea. He advised Tolbert to bear in mind that some people “would brand him as a socialist if their interests were affected by his policy to develop Liberia for the benefit of the masses” (“President Touré Offers” 1972, 567). Touré further stated that foreign expertise was needed to facilitate industrialization (“President Touré Offers” 1972, 567), but in this context Touré referred to socialist countries rather than capitalist countries, since it was a common perception of the Pan-Africanists that the West was unwilling to assist Africa to industrialize, because industrialization would make Africa less dependent on the neocolonial powers (Tarr 2009).

At the Third National Conference on Development Objectives and Strategy held 12 to 16 March 1973, it was suggested that the GoL should “redefine the Open Door Policy” and consider “how wide the door should remain open” (Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs 1973). These considerations transmuted into a policy that became known as “Humanistic Capitalism,” a term which Tolbert linked to the notion of African socialism and a “Christian ethic” (Sankawulo 1977, 17). As in the case of African socialism, Tolbert did not specify what he meant, and Humanistic Capitalism remains a blurred concept. In an interview with a German television station, Tolbert explained that the aim of humanistic capitalism was that the “profit generated from the exploitation of natural resources by industrialized countries” should be “equitably shared with the country of origin of those resources” (Executive Mansion 1978, 76).

The practice behind the concept was not favored by the USG, and the relations between the Tolbert administration and the USG can be compared with the same tensions evident between the Barclay

administration in the early 1930s and the USG (Tarr 2009). Tolbert's policies "clashed with the powerful multinationals in Liberia, [in] particular Firestone" when the GoL began to review the Firestone concession agreement (Dunn and Tarr 1988, 172). Firestone was officially informed in early 1974 that the GoL wished to renegotiate the agreement; however, Firestone reacted in a very hostile way to the proposal, with an "exceptional arrogance" and a "negative reaction towards the Government of Liberia" (Kraaij 1983, 78). In the initial negotiations, the GoL sought to impose upon Firestone the general laws of the country in terms of tariffs and taxation and to "limit activities to present agricultural pursuits" by excluding the rights of mining "with royalty of not more than 10%." Furthermore, the GoL's proposal wanted to limit the concession area from one million acres to the 181,000 actually used by Firestone. This would include the removal of the clause that gave Firestone the right to use "any Government land not already devoted to some other incompatible use" (Kraaij 1983 Item 1, concession area). On the land rental, the GoL wanted to increase the real rent from 6 cents per acre per year to 50 cents per acre per year. Regarding the social welfare of the laborers, the GoL further required Firestone to provide "medical and primary school facilities in keeping with work force" (Kraaij 1983, Item III, e) and include a policy for the "establishment and encouragement of economical viable communities" (Kraaij 1983).

Firestone rejected almost all the changes proposed by the government in such an arrogant way that the government officially demanded a change of attitude and an apology (Kraaij 1983, 78). The negotiations were led by the minister of finance, Stephen A. Tolbert (President Tolbert's brother), who made it clear to Firestone that "it was difficult to play games with the new Administration" (Kraaij 1983, 79). The negotiations were interrupted after Minister Tolbert died in a plane crash in April 1975. This was a major setback for the GoL, and many people in the GoL saw the death of Minister Tolbert as an assassination ordered by Firestone and the USG to stop the renegotiation of the concession agreement. The negotiations resumed under the leadership of the acting minister of finance, Edwin Williams (Tarr 2011), and a final agreement was reached on 5 May 1976. Many of the changes initially proposed by the government were suppressed, but Firestone agreed to be subjected "to the laws of general application as pertaining to the Liberian Tax Code" (Kraaij 1983, 79).

The tensions between the GoL and the USG intensified when the USG discouraged further foreign investment in Liberia as a result of the renegotiations of the Firestone agreement. Subsequently, the Liberian minister of foreign affairs, Charles Cecil Dennis, participated in the 199th anniversary of American independence at the US Embassy in Monrovia, on 4 July 1975, with “mixed feelings.” He described the US attitude toward Liberia as “somewhat ambivalent,” while expressing a wish for “a more reassuring relationship” in the coming century of American independence (Dunn and Tarr 1988, 173). In September 1975, a Liberian review committee of United States–Liberian relations concluded that “the so-called ‘special relationship’ had declined significantly from the American point of view” (Dunn and Tarr 1988, 173).

## The New Political and Economic Order

Another significant shift in Liberia’s foreign policy was the decision of the GoL to break the diplomatic relations with Israel in 1973 after Tolbert had stated at the UNGA that

we must equally insist on full recognition and respect for the national rights of the Palestinian people by the state of Israel, especially their right to self-determination and a state of their own. Israel must withdraw from all occupied Arab territories (Bright 2002).

Dunn and Tarr (1988, 72) noted that this was a “political move designed to align Liberia with African progressives” and to move Liberia closer to the USSR and other socialist-oriented countries.

The GoL moved further toward the East on 28 August 1974, when Tolbert accepted letters of credence from H. E. Petrachi Trofin, the first Romanian ambassador to Liberia (W. Tolbert 1976, 15). Subsequently, on 30 September, Tolbert made a state visit to Romania, which marked the first visit to a Communist country by a Liberian head of state (W. Tolbert 1976, 5). This visit was significant because it lasted almost three weeks and resulted in a significant agreement meant to help Liberia to industrialize.<sup>4</sup> In a joint communiqué, Tolbert praised Pres. Nicolae Ceausescu for his “dynamic leadership” and the “successes achieved in economic, social, and cultural development” by the Romanian Communist Party (W. Tolbert 1974, 186). The two presidents expressed determination to act “in concert for the development of economic and industrial cooperation between the two

nations in such fields as mining, metallurgy, wood processing, and natural rubber processing.” They asserted the right of individual nations to pursue “their own freedom from foreign domination and colonialism” and praised the OAU’s effort “in the struggle against colonialist and neo-colonialist domination.” This was followed by a statement calling for “Israel’s retreat from occupied territories and adherence to UN resolutions; adherence to the Paris agreement on Vietnam; and an end to bloodshed in Southeast Asia” (W. Tolbert 1974, 187). Through the Agreement on Scientific and Technical Cooperation, Romania sent advisory teams and specialists to Liberia to help the industrialization process. They built a metallurgical plant, a fertilizer plant, a wood processing complex, and processing plants for rubber products, including a program for Liberians to be educated in Romania (W. Tolbert 1974, 188).

Afterwards, Tolbert engaged in the promotion of a new economic order based on the “Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order” (NIEO) adopted by the UNGA in 1974. This declaration can be seen as having been attractive in light of the political and economic policies pursued by the GoL, as reflected in article 1, stating that

the remaining vestiges of alien and colonial domination, foreign occupation, racial discrimination, apartheid and neo-colonialism in all its forms continue to be among the greatest obstacles to the full emancipation and progress of the developing countries and all the peoples involved (UNGA 1974, article 1).

Among several recommendations for a new economic order, the declaration emphasized “the right of every country to adopt the economic and social system that it deems the most appropriate for its own development and not to be subjected to discrimination of any kind as a result” (UNGA 1974, section 4, article d). This includes “full permanent sovereignty of every State over its natural resources,” and in order to “safeguard these resources, each State is entitled to exercise effective control over them and their exploitation . . . including the right to nationalization or transfer of ownership to its nationals.”

The idea of an NIEO stood in sharp contrast to US global interests (Livingston 1992, 317). Tolbert promoted this idea internationally, which first materialized in a speech during a state visit to Guyana on 11 November 1974, and more significantly during the welcoming speech to H. E. Werner Schedlich, the ambassador of the German Democratic Republic, when he presented his letter of credence to

Tolbert on 27 November 1975. On this occasion, Tolbert stated that the significant threat to humanity came from “economic imbalances between privileged and deprived nations,” which he asserted made a new economic order necessary in order to avoid global conflicts, and welcomed an “economic and technical cooperation between the two countries” (W. Tolbert 1976, 170).

While promoting the NIEO, the GoL began actively to support the armed liberation struggle in Africa. For many decades, Tolbert had been inspired by revolutionaries such as Amilcar Cabral, Frantz Fanon, and Kwame Nkrumah, who were convinced that the struggle against colonialism and neocolonialism had to be backed by armed resistance. For example, Tolbert named his low-cost social housing complex in Monrovia after Cabral and raised a monument “in honour of the great freedom fighter” after he had been murdered “by agents of imperialist forces on September 24, 1973” (Sankawulo 1979, 30).

After Cuba became involved in the liberation struggle with Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique (Lowenthal 1977), the GoL established relations with Cuba on 1 April 1976 (W. Tolbert 1978, 50). The GoL backed Cuba’s effort to become a nonpermanent member of the security council, which the United States saw as another confrontation with its interests (Tubman 2009).<sup>5</sup> On African Liberation Day, 25 May 1976, Tolbert stated that there was a need for “the rededication of peoples of Africa to the objective of the total liberation . . . from the scourges of colonialism, neo-colonialism and racism” (W. Tolbert 1976, 316). The day after he made it clear in an interview to German television, Liberia would also be willing to send troops to Southern Africa if requested by the OAU “in order to bring about majority rule . . . if the voices of reasons had failed and the only inevitable alternative . . . [is] bloodshed” (W. Tolbert 1976, 76).

At the same time, in a joint communiqué with President Kaunda of Zambia on 20 January 1977, Tolbert expressed his “fullest support for efforts directed toward the total elimination of all forms of racism, apartheid, colonialism and neo-colonialism” in combination with an encouragement of promoting “a new international economic order” (W. Tolbert 1978, 155). This was followed by the establishment of the Liberia Fund for the liberation of Southern Africa on 18 February 1977. The GoL provided “financial means to the African Liberation Movements, through existing channels prescribed by the OAU, to be used exclusively for the liberation of Southern Africa” (Tolbert 1977, 3). Tolbert further noted that Liberia, as Africa’s oldest republic, had “an

obligation to become even more totally involved in the struggle for the complete emancipation, politically and economically, of Mother Africa” (W. Tolbert 1977, 6). In a welcome speech to the Tanzanian ambassador to Liberia on 5 May 1977, Tolbert praised President Nyerere of Tanzania for his commitment to the liberation struggle and confirmed that “Liberia will continue to lend fullest support to the intensification of armed struggle in Southern Africa until there are positive signs that emancipation is at hand” (W. Tolbert 1978, 188). At the OAU meeting in Libreville on 3 July 1977, Tolbert talked about the rights of the Palestinian people and encouraged stronger Afro-Arab cooperation. He pledged the GoL’s full support for the South West Africa People’s Organization and other liberation struggles in Africa. From the Liberia Fund for the Liberation of Southern Africa, he handed over a check for over \$600,000 to OAU Chairman Omar Bongo for the “notable and sacred cause of African liberation,” with an encouragement of other countries to collect money for the liberation struggle (W. Tolbert 1977, 434–37).

On the domestic level, the GoL’s notion of a new political and economic order further challenged the interests of the foreign corporations operating in Liberia. In early 1977, Tolbert announced that the policy of Liberianization would be enhanced, which did “not mean the nationalization of any enterprise or industry,” but significant participation of Liberians within the foreign companies at all levels. Foreign corporations “should increasingly accept . . . Liberians in positions of management” (W. Tolbert 1977, 406) in order to improve the skills of Liberians so they could become future managers in secondary industries, which should include steel production and rubber manufacturing (W. Tolbert 1977, 406). This was an attempt to expand the Liberianization Act of 1975 to include heavy and technical industrial production. The Liberianization Act named 26 business sectors in the light industry as restricted to Liberian citizens (Foreign Investment Advisory Service 2006, 10), as a protectionist measure for infant industries whose products should substitute basic imported goods, in particular, fish, flour, and rice products (Tarr 2009). The Liberianization Act did not produce the expected outcome, and the contribution from the light industry to the GDP only increased from \$37.2 million in 1975 to \$48 million in 1977, in real terms. This was because the only oil refinery company in Gardnerville partly reduced its production (Haselman 1979, 37) and prioritized delivery to foreign companies, often leaving Liberian-owned factories with a shortage of fuel (Tarr 2009).

This oil refinery had been established by a US company based in Oklahoma, and as tensions between the foreign corporations and the GoL increased over the Liberianization policy, the managers of the oil refinery slowed production (Tarr 2009). This provided an example of how problematic it was to have foreign corporations in control of key industries and services, and it created severe tensions between the GoL and the management of the oil refinery (Tarr 2009).

Support for establishing a steel industry could have come from the People's Republic of China (PRC); however, this did not occur. Tolbert's administration inherited a policy from Tubman's government where Liberia recognized the Republic of China (RoC) in Taiwan as the government of China (GoC) (Tolbert 1971, 242). The RoC supported a sugar processing plant in Maryland County, and 25 Liberians were sent to Taiwan for training in sugar manufacturing (W. Tolbert 1975, 263). The relationship between the GoL and the RoC was valued by the United States because it kept the PRC out of Liberia, and the GoL knew that the shift in relations from the RoC to the PRC would not be appreciated by the USG (Tarr 2009).

Plans for recognizing the Communist Party of China as the legitimate GoC had been discussed for many years (Tarr 2009). In 1974, a delegation from the Austrian steel producer, Voestalpine AG, had been invited to Liberia to update a feasibility study on steel production from 1963 (W. Tolbert 1975, 264). However, as in the 1963 study, the updated study showed negative indicators on all aspects of steel production in Liberia (Hasselman 1979, 40). Since Liberia possessed some of the highest quality iron ore in the world and received the highest amount of rain in Africa—which can be utilized for the production of cheap electricity by hydropower—many people in the GoL considered the study as an expression of a western, anti-developmental attitude toward Africa. It was also considered as a way of keeping Liberia underdeveloped and subordinated to the neocolonial powers (Tarr 2009).

The GoL was “not optimistic about the realization of this project through discussions with European nations and America” and had therefore started “discussion with the Government of India, under the technical cooperation and assistance programs to assist in the realization of this project” (Hasselman 1979, 40). In contrast to the Austrian company, the Indian study proposed four alternatives for the establishment of a steel mill. In order for the project to materialize, the Liberian government began to consider establishing “firmer contacts

with Western anti-developmental attitude Communist China . . . for assistance in financing the Iron and Steel Project . . . [and] other major projects” (Hasselman 1979, 40).

The GoL had been reaching out to the PRC for several years. When Chairman Mao Zedong died in September 1976, Tolbert sent a message of condolences to Prime Minister Hua Guofeng, in which he described Mao as “one of the greatest statesmen of the contemporary world” (W. Tolbert 1978, 112). In February 1977, Tolbert received a delegation from the PRC to whom he assured that the GoL sought to “cement bilateral relations and cooperation” with the PRC and expressed “appreciation for China’s policy of friendship and economic cooperation with Third World countries.” In return, the Chinese delegation assured that China was “ready to stand by all developing countries in their struggle for political and economic independence” (W. Tolbert 1978, 163). On 20 July 1977, Tolbert received letters of credence from Wan Jen-San, the first ambassador to Liberia from the PRC, who noted that this relationship was a historical milestone (W. Tolbert 1978, 216). Subsequently, on 9 November 1977, Wan Jen-San announced that the Chinese government would build a modern sports stadium in Liberia. China would also provide assistance for Liberia’s plan to become self-sufficient in rice (W. Tolbert 1978, 250), which was one of the main goals of the Liberian government since 1971.<sup>6</sup>

Advisors from the PRC assumed management of the Liberian Sugar Corporation after the Taiwanese management departed Liberia (Ministry of Information and Cultural Affairs and Tourism [MICAT] 1978, 24), and the GoC provided support to the Liberian state-owned enterprise, Agrimeco, which was established to facilitate modernization of the agricultural sector. Agrimeco carried out land clearing and construction of roads, dams, and drainage systems as a part of the government’s Agricultural Development Program that was predicted to make Liberia self-sufficient with rice by 1980 (MICAT 1978, 24). Hasselman (1979) noted that the state intervention provided new technology and improved the yield of rice production, which is reflected in the higher output relative to the expansion of rice fields. Between 1971 and 1977 the number of rice holdings grew 5.3 percent per year, and total rice production increased from 225 million pounds to 564 million pounds (Hasselman 1979, 24).

The socioeconomic and development plan introduced in July 1976 enhanced a centralized, coordinated government intervention into

all sectors of the economy (MICAT 1978, 9). A central mechanism to advance the development plan was government control of the banking sector and price controls. Finance for development was made available through the establishment of the National Housing and Savings Bank, the Agricultural and Cooperative Development Bank, the Social Security and Welfare Corporation, and the Liberian Bank for Development and Investment. Executive order number 2 of 1973 established the Division of Price and Marketing Analysis within the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Transportation. This ordered fixed prices “at which imported as well as locally manufactured and agricultural commodities would be sold” (MICAT 1978, 15). Toward the end of the 1970s, the Liberian government created more than 30 public corporations, such as Agrimeco, the Forestry Development Authority, Liberian Produce Marketing Corporation, Liberian Rubber Processing Corporation, and the Liberian Sugar Corporation. Many Liberians were sent to Moscow for training, where they acquired technical skills and became inspired by socialist ideas (Logan 2009; Tokpa 2010).<sup>7</sup>

A study of the Liberian tax system conducted by Shoup et al. in 1970 estimated that tax revenues would only increase by 2.5 percent annually, on average, in the coming decade with the current economic policies (3). This study laid the foundation for a complete revision of the tax system, which transformed the regressive tax system into a progressive tax system (Tarr 2009). For example, a higher tariff was imposed on luxury goods, while the tax on “necessity” commodities was lowered for the benefit of the poorest people (W. Tolbert 1979, 266). All foreign concession agreements were renegotiated in order to increase the tax revenues from foreign investors. Negotiation with Firestone was considered the biggest achievement (Tarr 2009), because Firestone lost its “special tax privileges” (MICAT 1978, 7–8), and was subjected to government auditing (Logan 2009; Tarr 2009). The vigorous tax collection was unpopular and created tensions between foreign corporations and the GoL, however, it brought exceptional achievements (Tarr 2009). From 1970 to 1978 tax revenues increased in nominal terms from \$66.5 million to \$185.1 million, an improvement of 23.5 percent per year as compared with the 2.5 percent increase projected in 1970 (Hasselman 1979, 57).

Part of the revenue was used to finance social services such as education and health. Primary and secondary education were free and university fees were reduced by 50 percent. Health care was free for

prenatal mothers and infants up to two years. General services were subsidized to lower the financial barrier to health care, with the aim of providing “free medical care throughout the length and breadth of the Republic” as resources were gradually made available (W. Tolbert 1979, 269).

To fund the development projects, the GoL acquired additional loans from domestic and external lenders which increased the national debt from \$150.1 million in 1975 to \$470.1 million in 1979 (Dunn and Tarr 1988, 144). According to the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, real GDP only increased from \$354 million in 1972 to \$384.4 in 1979, which is an annual average growth rate of around 1.5 percent.

**Table 1: Nominal and real GDP from 1971 to 1979<sup>8</sup>**

	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
Nominal GDP in million\$	342.5	372.2	427.3	459.7	559.1	568.6	633.2	670.0	766.3
Real GDP in million\$ (in 1971 \$)	342.5	354.0	368.8	356.6	343.5	357.2	354.2	368.2	384.4
Annual Change (%) Real GDP		3.4	4.2	-3.3	-3.7	4.0	-0.8	3.9	4.4

There were significant fluctuations in the real GDP growth because of the international oil crisis and the drop in the price of iron ore and rubber, which resulted in negative growth for some years (Hasselman 1979, 47). Opponents of the GoL used the negative figures and low growth rate to argue that the economic policy had failed (Tarr 2009). In contrast, the proponents of Tolbert’s administration argued that industrialization takes time and the impact of the economic policy cannot be measured in terms of GDP over such a short period (Tarr 2009). The GoL also attempted to measure the informal economy, which was labeled the “traditional economy” as a way to prove that economic growth benefited rural and poorest people (Dunn and Tarr 1988, 134). Based on estimates from essential products such as rice, coffee, and cocoa, the GoL claimed that the real average annual growth rate in the traditional economy was 6.7 percent between 1973 and 1977 (Hasselman 1979, 47).

In order to identify new opportunities for exploiting Liberia’s resources and finance the development plan, the Department of Lands, Mines, and Energy was established to conduct geological surveys for

the eventual occurrence and mining of gold, diamonds, iron ore, oil, uranium, and other natural resources. Oil was of particular interest; a French corporation conducted a seismic survey of Liberia's territorial waters (W. Tolbert 1977, 397), and four wildcat wells provided promising data (W. Tolbert 1971, 270). According to Jenkins Dunbar (2006), former minister of Lands, Mines, and Energy, the prospect of oil exploitation in the 1970s became another central factor for the conflict in Liberia.<sup>9</sup>

## US Responses to Tolbert's Policies

From the beginning, Tolbert's government was aware that its development strategy, promotion of Pan-Africanism, and relations with the USSR and other socialist-oriented countries was perilous because it would upset the USG and foreign corporations operating in Liberia. However, the general view was that the GoL could not discern any alternatives because policy recommendations coming from the USG were seen as anti-developmental, aiming to keep Liberia dependent on US military protection and financial aid, and prevent industrialization (Karpeh 2009; Wallace 2009). This dependence would allow the USG to dictate Liberia's economic policies in favor of foreign corporations and a small Liberian elite, as during the Tubman administration. Although the socialist-oriented countries also had their agendas, they were not seen as being anti-developmental and were willing to assist Liberia with the implementation of industrialization projects (Karpeh 2009; Wallace 2009).<sup>10</sup>

The GoL was also aware of how vital Liberia was for the United States in terms of military installations and intelligence operations in Africa that were often carried out from Liberia (Karpeh 2009; Wallace 2009). Liberia hosted the most significant US Embassy in Africa with more than 250 American employees (Ray et al. 1980, 502–4), and the VOA in Liberia had some of the most powerful radio transmitters in the world, covering the African continent. Liberia also hosted the US Diplomatic and Intelligence Communications Relay for US embassies in Africa and West Asia, and in 1973 the USG had signed an agreement with the GoL for the installation of the OMEGA antenna as a part of the comprehensive US OMEGA navigation system.<sup>11</sup> The Monrovia deep seaport and Roberts International Airport had been turned over to Liberian civilian authorities, but the United

States maintained the rights to use these facilities for military purposes (Dunn 2009, 195).<sup>12</sup>

The GoL expected that the USG would try to instigate regime change in one way or another. Several intelligence reports indicated that the US Embassy had attempted to bribe key government officials to turn against Tolbert and create internal splits. Therefore, Tolbert had placed some of his most trusted supporters, including some family members, in crucial positions to make it more difficult for the USG to create internal splits. It was therefore expected that coup attempts would come from the military because the USG had a significant influence on the AFL—former LFF—relating to loan agreements. This was one of the reasons Tolbert did not trust the AFL. In preparation, in 1978, the GoL signed a mutual defense pact with Guinea where the GoL would have the recourse of Guinean troops in case of an emergency (Karpeh 2009; Wallace 2009).

The fear of a military coup was justified, as a number of Pan-African leaders were assassinated through covert action initiated by western intelligence agencies in the 1960s. For example, Cameroon's Felix Moumie in 1960 (Whiteman 1997) and Congo's Patrice Lumumba in 1961 (Devlin 1999)<sup>13</sup> were assassinated. Nkrumah in 1966, and Modibo Keita of Mali, in 1968, were removed from power through military coups (Stockwell 1992). Between 1966 and 1976, African nations experienced 109 coup attempts and 51 were successful (Frank 1981, 293). In 1975 and 1976, the US Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities—better known as the Church Committee—published 14 reports on US overseas intelligence activities (Assassination Archives and Research Center 2010). The report recorded 900 major operations and 3,000 minor operations (Stockwell 1991). These reports came out during ongoing Firestone negotiations, and the information contained in the reports reinforced the Liberian people's belief that the death of Minister Tolbert was linked to the CIA. There was not any evidence of foreign involvement in the aircraft accident; however, there was still significant concern and suspicion regarding CIA activities in Liberia (Tarr 2009).<sup>14</sup>

Nevertheless, the GoL continued to support initiatives that could have placed Liberia at the forefront of advancing African liberation. In 1978 the GoL inscribed in "Fundamental Guidelines" its "commitment to the total liberation of Africa from the scourge of colonialism, neocolonialism, racist minority rule and apartheid" (MICAT 1978, 11).

Liberian politicians, intellectuals, and activists had connections to influential black movements in the United States, such as the Black Panther Party, who supported the Pan-African liberation struggle. Stokely Carmichael, a Black Panther member, changed his name to Kwame Ture in 1978, in honor of Kwame Nkrumah and Sékou Touré, and sought to organize the A-APRP and associated army in West Africa (Tokpa 2010).

The political space provided by the GoL gave birth to the Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA). It was established at the University of Liberia on 21 March 1973 to support the liberation struggle in the continent (Kpei 1979, 318). Tolbert had supported the founding of MOJA and its Pan-African ideology inspired by Nkrumah (Tokpa 2009). The movement grew fast in Liberia and had representatives in the United States. Within six years, MOJA had become an international movement with branches in Nigeria, Ghana, and Mauritius and representatives in east, central, and southern Africa. Political education was provided for thousands of members through public lectures, radio, TV programs, and mass rallies. Several Liberian members gained firsthand experience with the armed liberation struggle through visits to military training camps in Guinea (Kpei 1979, 319).

The main leaders of MOJA were intellectuals such as Amos Sawyer, H. Boima Fahnbulleh, Dew Tuan-Wleh Mayson, and Togba Nah Tipoteh, who was the chairperson. MOJA appeared as a radical, left-wing, Pan-African movement. However, according to Tipoteh (2009), “MOJA should have been seen as a popular movement that focused on human rights and justice in Africa, not in terms of left and right, because this left-right political concept was a Western invention that cannot be applied to the African context.”<sup>15</sup>

MOJA was split into several subsections, and significant parts of MOJA were strongly inspired by Marx, Lenin, and Nkruma. Many of the members had strong connections to the USSR, East Germany, Libya, and Guinea (Fahnbulleh 2009; Guannu 2009; Logan 2009; Tokpa 2009).<sup>16</sup> MOJA is often represented as an opposition movement to the GoL, which was unhappy with MOJA’s activities (Kpei 1979, 319; Nyong’o 1987). However, many of the leftist members of MOJA supported Tolbert’s policies—which in practice were more radical than the general discourse of MOJA—mainly because the GoL used state power to promote the liberation struggle internationally and supported it financially (Logan 2009; Tokpa 2009).

Tokpa (2009) stated that it was difficult, if not impossible, to get a clear picture of the Liberian political environment in the 1970s. Many Liberian intellectuals and activists were inexperienced in political organization, and there was not a deep-rooted understanding of Marxism. They used Marxist-Leninist terminology because it was popular, but often in awkward ways, which created confusion about race and class. Furthermore, the knowledge about USG campaigns against left-wing Pan-African leaders and the US Counterintelligence Program that targeted black activists and socialists in the United States created an atmosphere of suspicion and fear (Tokpa, 2009). The political environment was influenced by contradictory information, rumors, propaganda, and allegations of CIA infiltration in MOJA and the Student Union. For example, one of the top leaders of MOJA, Amos Sawyer—who later became head of state in 1990—was accused of being connected to the CIA by Commanry B. Wesseh, another influential MOJA leader and personal friend. Wesseh based his accusation on information he received from the East German intelligence service.<sup>17</sup>

In his writings and public pronouncements, Sawyer used strong anti-imperialist and socialist wording, which was captured in the article “Capitalism and the Struggle of the Working Class in Liberia,” co-authored with Dew Tuan-Wleh Mayson.<sup>18</sup> This article provides an analysis of Liberian society based on the dichotomy between Americo-Liberian and the indigenous people, which they refer to as the “dominant class” and “exploited class” respectively (Mayson and Sawyer 1979, 143–44). They do not address the significant shift between the Tubman administration and the Tolbert administration but argue that the ruling class in Liberia relies on the “imperialist power—principally the United States and its European allies—for political, economic, military, and ideological support.” In return “these powers, and the international corporations based in them, are assured continued domination and exploitation” (Mayson and Sawyer 1979, 144). By drawing on the ideas of Kwame Nkrumah, Mayson and Sawyer argue that “the struggle against neocolonialism . . . heralds the death of imperialism through the destruction of the deformed capitalist structures” which “will never be a dinner party affair” but will result in acts of violence. They conclude that it is necessary to “formulate a strategy for liberation based on a compelling understanding of our realities” to confront “imperialism and its

faithful running dogs servants” by mobilizing “class friends and isolate . . . class enemies” (Mayson and Sawyer 1979, 156).

Another influential movement that used left-wing rhetoric to delegitimize the GoL was the Progressive Alliance of Liberia (PAL). PAL was a grassroots movement established on 31 December 1974 in the United States among Liberian university students. PAL viewed MOJA as an elitist intellectual movement. After meeting with Tolbert in the United States during a state visit in 1976, PAL was encouraged to register in Liberia and to participate in political life. PAL did so in 1977, and in 1979 PAL was established as a political party under the name the Progressive People’s Party (PPP) (Dahn 2009).

The movement was headed by Gabriel Baccus Matthews, with the aim of “bringing about a revolution” in Liberia (Matthews 1978, 89). PAL applied Marxist revolutionary rhetoric, as reflected in their “Revolutionary Action Program” of 1978, which states that

the people must gain control of state power and therefore, their government . . . Capitalism, the alien ideology identified in Liberia . . . must be expunged along with the prejudices of bourgeois society. A socialist state must be built on the true values of our people . . . Americo-Liberianism, or Black colonialism, must be eroded . . . Liberia must cease to be a staging base for American imperialism and a relay station for transmitting counterrevolution in Africa . . . Corporations wielding a massive concentration of economic power over the people must be nationalized . . . those guilty of the exploitation of the people must pay reparations . . . Totally free education must be provided . . . all medical services . . . must be free . . . improved and effectively delivered. The state must ensure manpower development and the total employment of the labor force through the establishment of State enterprises and agricultural communes throughout the Republic (“Revolutionary Action Program” 1978, 95).

Despite the Marxist outlook, Matthews made it clear in an interview with *West Africa Magazine* in 1980 that PAL was not a Marxist group; however, they used Marxist theory “as a source for understanding the historical formation of classes” (“Three Voices of Liberia” 1980, 387). PAL had “espoused the principles of African socialism,” which, according to Gabriel Baccus Matthews, existed in Africa before Marx and “cannot therefore be an alien ideology” (Matthews 1980, 387). He further claims that there was a significant difference between PAL and MOJA; PAL, in only a few years, became one of the most powerful popular movements in Liberia (Matthews 1980, 387). Gabriel Baccus Matthews was a frequent guest at the US Embassy in Monrovia, and it was perceived by many intellectuals, politicians, and activists in Liberia that PAL was directly linked to the CIA (Bowier 2009;

Fahnbulleh 2009; Guannu 2008; Tarr 2009; Tokpa 2010). However, when Matthews was asked in the same interview by the *West African Magazine* how he responded to the allegation that “PAL is more or less a ‘front’ organization for some ‘big shots,’” Matthews rejected such connections (*West African Magazine* 1980).

Former general secretary of PAL, Marcus Dahn (2009), states that he was not aware of any CIA involvement, but when looking back it is likely that PAL was infiltrated by the CIA, because “the Americans felt angry” regarding Tolbert who “in the heat of the Cold War invited communist countries into Liberia” (*West African Magazine* 1980).<sup>19</sup> However, it was difficult for most members of PAL to know what was occurring because PAL lacked the intellectual, political analysis needed. They did not have knowledge concerning differences between socialism and communism, and had little understanding of Marxist analyses. They acted upon general feelings of grievance, and they saw the Americo-Liberians as their class enemy (Dahn 2009). In contrast, Wesley Johnson (2010), former vice chairperson of PAL, noted that both MOJA and PAL were motivated by the USG and the top leadership had “access to US functionaries [where] they sought advice, [and] they studied in the States” (Johnson 2010, 01:03–01:06 min).<sup>20</sup> He further stated that some people were naïve and did not see the danger in the CIA connection. To the leadership of PAL, the people from the CIA “were like our friends.” Communication took place

through telephone . . . and visits, personal talks in the United States and in Liberia, through letters, but coded letters . . . [so once when] a message reached the government they could not decode it . . . only the executive members knew what was in the messages . . . much of the knowledge was divided into cells—compartmentations—one cell would not know what another cell knew . . . we knew the coup would come but we didn’t know when or how it would take place (Johnson 2010, 01:05–01:09 min.).

When the GoL announced that it would increase the price of imported rice from \$20 to \$22 per 50-kilogram bag, PAL claimed that this was a way to boost the profit of the already wealthy rice importers and to promote Tolbert’s own private rice production. Dahn claimed that that rice imported from the United States under the PL 480 program should only cost \$5 per 50-kilogram bag and if sold on the Liberian market for \$15, the Liberian government would still get \$10 in revenues per bag and the Liberian people would get cheap rice (Dahn 2009).

PAL began to mobilize thousands of people and prepared for a major demonstration in Monrovia on 14 April 1979. Gabriel Baccus Matthews applied for permission to demonstrate (Dahn 2009), which the government rejected because it considered that the demonstration “would not serve any useful purpose except to incite public violence and discontent” (Coleman 2003, 108). MOJA was split on this issue, but many people in leadership such as Togba Nah-Tipoteh supported the argument that the increase in rice prices was for the benefit of Tolbert himself (Tipoteh 2009). PAL ignored the GoL ban on the demonstration, which still occurred and became uncontrollable. Shops were looted and cars were burned. Many sections of the police force and the AFL “showed sympathy for the demonstrators by looking the other way,” whereas other sections of the security forces confronted the demonstrators and opened fire into the crowds (Dunn and Tarr 1988, 77). The number of people who died is disputed. Coleman (2003, 108) states 30 people, while Dunn and Tarr (1988, 77) state that around 100 people died and 500 were injured.

The incident became known as the “Rice Riot,” and the GoL saw it as the work of foreign powers that used latent revolutionary spirit embedded in the poor people to destabilize the GoL (Guannu 2009). In a speech to the nation on 5 May 1979, Tolbert stated that the incident was a result of

an illegal demonstration in defiance of law . . . designed and executed by a group of misguided persons calling themselves the Progressive Alliance of Liberia, aided and abetted by its internal and external collaborators, using the rice-price issue as an alibi . . . The true objective of the illegal and diabolical action was to create a civil disturbance so as to adversely affect our economy and destabilize our government (W. Tolbert 1979, 263).

Based on an investigation of the event, Tolbert further stated that

we now know that the agitation was fomented by covert and overt opponents to our policies . . . We now know that a number of those involved in the illegal demonstration were misled and incited by motives of a subversive and treasonable character . . . We now know that conspirators and those who aided and abetted the civil disturbance include a few inordinate individuals unappreciative of our chosen course . . . We also know that there are still others who have sought every means of defeating our program for social cohesion, the building of mutual confidence and the virtue of patience (W. Tolbert 1979, 271).

Tolbert further noted that the University of Liberia was closed temporarily for a few days to impede subversive activities conducted by PAL (W. Tolbert 1979, 275). To ensure the restoration of law and

order, Tolbert called for assistance from Guinea under the Mutual Defense Pact, and President Sékou Touré promptly sent soldiers to Monrovia. The deployment of foreign soldiers from Monrovia made it clear that Tolbert did not trust the AFL or the officers who received military training in the United States that maintained personal friendships with officers in the US Army. Some people in the Tolbert administration also believed that some of the security officers that shot at the demonstrators had received orders from the CIA, in order to legitimize the GoL. Several journalists, members of PAL, and MOJA described the deployment of foreign soldiers from socialist Guinea as unpatriotic (Guannu 2009; Sayndee 2009; Tokpa 2010). Tolbert stated that the Guinean troops would go back to Guinea shortly. He indicated that the deployment should be seen as an exercise, noting that a contingent of the AFL was to be sent to Guinea in order to “participate in military exercises with them as well” (W. Tolbert 1979, 278).

As the Rice Riot took place in Monrovia, a small group of Liberians led by Charles Taylor—who at that time was unknown in Liberian politics—occupied the Liberian Permanent Mission and traveled to the UN in New York and insisted that Winston Tubman, the ambassador, should contact President Tolbert in Liberia and demand his resignation. The Liberians refused to leave the office, and Ambassador Tubman called the police, who then arrested the group while the media covered the event. The arrest was broadcasted by several US television stations, presenting the Tolbert administration as brutal and repressive (Geebro 2009).<sup>21</sup> Tubman (2009) notes that this event was not viewed as significant as it was just one of many anti-Tolbert events that occurred in the United States. Many of these events appeared to be well-coordinated and funded; however, most significant was that they received extended media coverage in the United States and in Liberia. The media depicted the GoL as a brutal dictatorship. Therefore, it was assumed by many Liberian government officials that Liberian associations in the United States were being used by the CIA to create hostile public opinion against the Tolbert government.

About six months after the Rice Riot, a confidential White House memo stated the riot in Monrovia “severely jolted” the political system in Liberia. “The depth of popular economic and political grievances and the government’s underlying weakness at a time of accelerating change” had severely damaged the GoL, which would not make it likely for Tolbert to “survive until the end of his term in 1983” (Dunn 2009, 103).<sup>22</sup>

The GoL continued with preparations for the 16th OAU summit scheduled in Monrovia from 17 to 20 July 1979. As a strong proponent of African Unity and NIEO, Tolbert wanted this summit to be of extraordinary quality, and the GoL invested heavily in new infrastructures—bridges, roads, conference halls, and five-star hotels that could attract other international conferences and help expand the tourist sector (Caesar 2003; Songa 2002).<sup>23</sup> At this conference, Tolbert rigorously continued to promote a NIEO (OAU 1979), which then led to the signing of the Lagos Plan of Action in 1980 (Arrighi 2002, 20).

After the OAU meeting, Tolbert frequently broadcasted warnings against “global economic exploitation” if Africa did not unite (W. Tolbert 1980) and called for sanctions against South Africa, in order to promote majority rule in that country (W. Tolbert 1980).

In the second week of April 1980, the Liberian Baptist Education and Missionary celebrated its 100th convention in Monrovia, which involved a large number of foreign guests. At the same time Tolbert, as the chairperson of the OAU, was planning for the celebration of Zimbabwe’s independence on 18 April, which he considered a significant occasion because the Liberian government supported the independence struggle (W. Tolbert 1996, 123–25).

On 12 April, Tolbert and his wife had decided to spend the night in the presidential apartment at the Executive Mansion. About midnight, as they were preparing for bed, a group of men entered the Executive Mansion and forced their way to the presidential apartment. Tolbert’s wife, Victoria, who was the closest witness, states that six “horrifying masked men” entered the presidential apartment. Their bodies were “painted for war, in tribal fashion,” wearing only “jagged and weathered scraps of fabric hung securely about their loins.” They shot several security guards on their way to the apartment and as soon as they entered the apartment, one of the men shot President Tolbert. Subsequently, two children who were crying were also shot, and one of the men rejoiced and yelled, “Victory! . . . We got our twenty-five thousand dollars!” (W. Tolbert 1996, 138–39).

Before the coup, three main rumors circulated in Liberia: (1) high ranking army officers planned a coup while Tolbert was in Zimbabwe; (2) Tolbert would not return from Zimbabwe but go into self-imposed exile in Lesotho; or (3) the president’s cabinet planned to stage a coup (Guannu 2009). After the coup, four main theories about who killed Tolbert began to develop in different variants: (1) Tolbert was killed by a foreign guest from the Baptist church who stayed in

the guest wing of the Executive Mansion (Allen 2009);<sup>24</sup> (2) he was killed by a white man from the CIA, (Sayndee 2009); (3) an “unknown soldier,” later named Jebo—for whom a monument was later raised—killed Tolbert (Cheapoo 2008, 56); or (4) it was one of the 17 noncommissioned soldiers, led by 32-year-old MSgt Samuel Kanyon Doe, who entered the Executive Mansion that evening (Doe 1985).<sup>25</sup>

These speculations created confusion surrounding the murder; however, the 17 noncommissioned soldiers subsequently formed the People’s Redemption Council (PRC) and assumed power over the GoL under the leadership of Samuel Doe.<sup>26</sup> According to Doe (1985), the conspiracy to remove Tolbert was planned by several people who had formed the “council” without his knowledge. These people informed him that Gabriel Baccus Matthews and other imprisoned people would be executed on 14 April, the anniversary of the Rice Riot, and persuaded him to plan and lead the coup. Doe further states that he perceived the Tolbert administration as “rotten through and through” and referred to nepotism, corruption, and poor working conditions for the AFL. Doe states that it was because of his political position that he decided to plan the coup, which, according to him, took less than five hours to plan (Doe 1985). It is unclear, however, what Doe’s political position was, other than being in opposition to the Tolbert government.

Albert Toe (2009), one of the 17 soldiers that carried out the coup, recalls that after killing Tolbert they released a number of political opponents from prison, most notably Gabriel Baccus Matthews, Oscar Quiah, George Boley, and Chea Cheapoo. They had been arrested shortly before the coup in order to prevent them from arranging a midnight march to defend the Executive Mansion. After their release, they contacted the US Embassy, and shortly after USG representatives arrived at the Executive Mansion and informed Doe that the United States endorsed the coup and would provide the PRC with all necessary support.<sup>27</sup>

That same morning, Samuel Doe announced on national radio that a military coup had taken place and that the PRC, a military junta, now controlled Liberia under his leadership. The name PRC sought to reflect that the coup was to liberate the indigenous people from enslavement by the Americo-Liberians. In the same broadcast, it was announced that the 1847 Constitution was abolished and that the functions of the executive and legislative branches would be controlled by the PRC (Toe 2009).

The building of the True Whig Party was destroyed and the party dissolved. The Masonic Temple was looted, and the Masonic Order was banned, but only for a few years (Sayndee 2009). The coup and the establishment of the PRC mark the end of the first Liberian Republic, which had persisted for 132 years (Guannu 2000, 159).

### Notes

1. T. Debey Sayndee, director of the Kofi Annan Institute for Conflict Transformation at the University of Liberia. Interview conducted and recorded by Niels Hahn on 2 February 2009, in his office at the University of Liberia.

2. Henry Kobo Johnson, the former chief of staff of the AFL, confirmed in 1984 that some civilians had suggested an armed intervention to prevent Tolbert coming to power, but stated that he rejected the proposal because of his loyalty to constituted authority and personal aversion to coups (Dunn and Tarr 1988, 69).

3. Dr. Byron Tarr contributed to this research through a number of interviews and email correspondence. Tarr served as special assistant to finance minister Steve Tolbert in 1972 and as assistant deputy minister for revenues May 1972–74 and was responsible for state enterprises as the controller general for public enterprises in 1977. He subsequently served as minister of planning from 1981 to 1982 and Minister of Finance from 1991 to 1992.

4. Tolbert arrived in Romania on 9 September 1974 and departed on 30 September 1974 (W. Tolbert 1976, 19–24).

5. Winston A. Tubman contributed two interviews regarding this research. He served as Liberia's permanent representative to the UN in the latter part of the 1970s. Subsequently, he served as minister of justice during the Doe administration in the early 1980s; chair of the Legal and Constitutional Committee of the group of Liberian political leaders meeting in Banjul, Gambia, that established the interim government in Liberia in 1990; senior advisor to the Force Commander of the UN Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission; and head of the UN Political Office for Somalia. Tubman is nephew to late Pres. William Tubman and was a presidential candidate for the general election, in both 2005 and 2011.

6. The sports stadium was completed in the early 1980s and named after Samuel Kanyon Doe. It has a capacity for 30,000 people, including a swimming pool with a spectator capacity of 1,200 (Songa 2002).

7. James Logan, Alaric Tokpa, and H. Boima Fahnbulleh contributed to this research through several interviews. James Logan served as deputy minister of agriculture for planning and development. Interview conducted and recorded on 22 January 2009 by Niels Hahn, at the Restaurant at the JFK Hospital, Monrovia. At the time of the interviews, Alaric Tokpa served as assistant professor of political science at the University of Liberia. He was head of the Liberia National Student Union in the 1970s and an active member of the MOJA. Tokpa was sentenced to death by the military junta in 1980 for promoting leftist views but eventually released two years later. He was cofounder of the political party, the New Deal Movement. H. Boima Fahnbulleh served as national security advisor of Liberia at the time of the interviews. He was cofounder of MOJA, and served as minister of foreign affairs from December 1981 to 4 July 1984.

8. See the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, *Economic Survey of Liberia, 1970–1973*, p. 2 table 1; and *Economic Survey of Liberia, 1974–1979*, p. 2 table 1. The annual change has been calculated separately.

9. Jenkins Dunbar was interviewed twice in relation to this research. He served as Liberian Minister of Lands, Mines, and Energy from 1997 to 2003 and was in direct contact with US oil companies and government officials.

10. Carlton A. Karphe and George W. Wallace contributed to this research with several interviews that took place in Wallace's office at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They have been involved in Liberian politics for over 40 years, in various capacities. At the time of the interviews, 2009, Karphe served as senior ambassador at large and advisor to the minister of foreign affairs. Wallace served as ambassador at large and advisor to the president on foreign affairs. Prior to this position, Wallace also served as minister of foreign affairs.

11. The OMEGA antenna is a 417-meter-high steel mast and was the tallest human-made structure in Africa. GPS made the OMEGA navigation system obsolete and it was decommissioned in late 1997. The structure was given to the GoL (Karphe 2009).

12. The United States used the airport in the 1980s to transport equipment to National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) in Angola (Dunn 2009, 195).

13. Devlin interviewed by the CIA station chief in the Democratic Republic of Congo Field Officer in 1961. Interviewed in *Mobutu, King of Zaire: An African Tragedy* directed by Thierry Michel (1999; New York, NY: First Run/Icarus Films).

14. Shultz (1984, 267) notes that “congressional investigations and exposure of CIA operations in the mid-1970s intensified public sensitivity regarding covert operations.” This was an impediment to “professional interests,” but only for a short period. Stockwell (1991) notes that many covert operations were carried out in Africa, and after the Church Committee's investigation in 1975, these operations became more sophisticated and increased in number.

15. Togba Nah-Tipoteh, cofounder and head of MOJA, was interviewed for this research. He served as minister of planning for economic affairs from 1980 to 1981.

16. In 2009, Joseph Say Guannu contributed to this research through several interviews. Guannu was an associate professor of political science at Cuttington University College in Suakoko, Liberia. He has served as a government official in the GoL, including assistant minister of foreign affairs for foreign service at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1977, Liberia's ambassador to the United States, 1981–1983, and minister of state for presidential affairs in the IGNU from 1990 to 1994.

17. In 2009, Amos Sawyer contributed two interviews to support this research. He was a key member of MOJA and served as interim head of state from 1990 to 1994 and as chairperson of the Governance Reform Commission from 2003, to 2006, when it subsequently turned into the Government Commission.

18. Mayson advocated socialism in the 1970s; however, he became a successful businessman in Monrovia and ironically is considered an “ultra-capitalist” by former friends (Sawyer 2009).

19. Marcus Dahn, former general secretary of PAL, was interviewed in 2009 in support of this research.

20. In 2010, Wesley Johnson contributed to this research by speaking out for the first time about the connection between the CIA and PAL. Johnson became vice chairperson of the PPP in 1978 and subsequently chairperson in 1990. He served as vice chairperson in the INTG in 2003 and became Liberia's ambassador to the UK under the government of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.

21. Joseph W. Geebro was interviewed regarding this research because he took part in this event as a friend of Charles Taylor. Shortly after the event, Geebro became chairperson of the Grand Gedeh Association in the Americas. At the time of the interview, he served as deputy minister for social welfare at the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare.

22. The image of Tolbert was further damaged by an Amnesty International report after the Rice Riot and by the CBS program *60 Minutes* in January 1980 (Dunn 2009, 103).

23. Augustus Caesar and Michael Songa contributed to this research through their knowledge of the building environment in Liberia. Caesar is the CEO of Caesar's Architects Inc. and president of the Liberian Chamber of Architects. Songa served as engineer for the Minister of Education's Division of Educational Facility Section and chief engineer of Caesar Architects Inc.

24. Cyril Allen, chairman emeritus and chairman of the advisory board of the NPP. Interviewed on 4 July 2009 at his home in Paynesville, Monrovia, and 24 April 2009 in his car in Monrovia.

25. Samuel Doe's age is disputed. It is generally assumed that Doe was 28 years old when the coup took place, as stated in the "Brief Biographical Sketch of C-I-C Samuel Kanyon Doe" (MICAT 1982). The dispute about Doe's age relates to Article 52 in the 1986 Liberian Constitution which states that "No person shall be eligible to hold the office of President or Vice-President unless that person is: a) a natural born Liberian citizen of not less than 35 years of age" (*Constitution of the Republic of Liberia* 1986, 31). As Doe decided to run for president at the election held in 1985, his age was changed to fit the criteria (Guannu, 2009).

26. The 17 people were Samuel Kanyon Doe, Thomas Weh Seyne, J. Nicolas Podier, Thomas Quiwonkpa, Albert S. Toe, Jerry F. Jorwley, Larry Borteh, Kolonseh G. Gonyor, William S. Gould, Jacob Swen, Nelson Toe, Harrison Johnson, Robert Zuo, Jeffery Gbatu, Robert Sumo, Abraham Kollie, and Fallah G. Varney (Toe 2010, 28).

27. In 2009, Albert Toe contributed two interviews to support this research. According to Toe, this was the first time he has spoken to a researcher about the coup and how the PRC was formed. Toe was among the 17 soldiers that entered the Executive Mansion, and he became a key member of the PRC. Toe stated that according to a legal agreement he would have to retain important information that included the role of external powers. At the time of the interview, Toe served as representative of River Gee Country in the House of Representatives, co-chair of the National Defense Committee, and member of the NSC.

## Chapter 4

# Samuel K. Doe: From Friend to Foe

## The People's Redemption Council

Immediately after the US Embassy endorsed the coup d'état, American advisors moved into the Executive Mansion and assigned advisors to several ministries, including the Ministry of Defense (Toe 2009).<sup>1</sup> United States Chargé d'Affaires Julius Walker noted that "Doe was scared. He had not really expected to be where he was" and he feared that "forces were coming from all corners to attack him and he wanted America to send him strong support" (Walker 1992, 62–63).<sup>2</sup> The head of the US military mission in Liberia, Col Robert Gosney, deployed US Soldiers into the streets of Monrovia to help the PRC restore law and order (Toe 2009). The US Soldiers "got looters and shooters off the street" by disarming them and imprisoning them in the Barclay military compound. There was "so much respect for the American presence there that the soldiers followed the American's orders without question" (Walker 1992, 64). A dusk-to-dawn curfew was imposed, airports and seaports were closed, telephones and telex machines were locked for international communication, and financial transactions restricted (Cordor 1980, 80–81).

In a speech to the nation on 14 April 1980, Doe justified the coup by emphasizing that the AFL had abolished the government because of "corruption on a massive scale," where members of the government represented "big companies when they should be speaking for the people." He stated that "the People's Redemption Council was organized not only to overthrow the Government, but, more importantly, to overhaul it" (Givens 1986). One way to meet needs of the poor people would be through "friendship with foreign investors," and to ensure loyalty from the AFL, he promised to increase the minimum salary to \$250 a month (Givens 1986).

Many government officials and security personnel were arrested immediately after the coup, and 35 of these people appeared at a special military tribunal established by the PRC (Cordor 1980, 68). Thirteen key government officials from the Tolbert administration were charged with high treason, corruption, and misuse of public office and sentenced to death (Givens 1986, 20). On 22 April 1980, 13 officials—six cabinet ministers and seven other officials—were executed

by firing squad, viewed by the public; the event was covered internationally on television (Youboty 2003, 33).<sup>3</sup> US Ambassador Robert P. Smith noted that everyone was aware “that only Frank Tolbert [senator and brother to former President Tolbert], Richard Henries [deposed speaker of the House of Representatives], James Pierre [deposed chief justice of the Supreme Court] and Reginald Townsend [deposed chairman of the True Whig Party] were to be executed.” The PRC “added the nine” additional people and “then destroyed the records of the Tribunal” (Dunn 2009, 143).

Afterward, Doe announced that there would not be any further executions of Tolbert administration officials and gradually he released political prisoners (*Time Magazine* 1980), including the minister of finance, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (Sirleaf 2009).<sup>4</sup> However, in mid-June 1980, A. B. Tolbert, the son of deceased President Tolbert, was arrested by the Liberian military inside the French Embassy where he had previously been granted political asylum (Okolo 1981, 155; Youboty 2003, 38). This resulted in sharp critique from the French government—noting that this was a violation of international law (Agence France-Presse 1980; *Time Magazine* 1980; Youboty 2003, 38). A. B. Tolbert was imprisoned and promised a fair trial (*Time Magazine* 1980); however, a few months later he disappeared from prison and was killed by the PRC (Walker 1992). This resulted in a severe deterioration of the relationship between the PRC and the government of Ivory Coast, because A. B. Tolbert was married to Daisy Delafosse-Tolbert, goddaughter of President Houphouët-Boigny (Kwenu 2008).<sup>5</sup>

Libya and Guinea were among the first states to recognize the new government. In the leftist Pan-African environment of Liberia, this was seen as an attempt to get Doe into the socialist-oriented camp and to prevent Liberia from falling back into the hands of the United States government (USG) (Tokpa 2009).<sup>6</sup> Shortly after the coup, Doe accepted an invitation to Tripoli from Mu’ammar Gadhafi, Libya’s leader. However, he canceled the trip because “the Americans sent arms and ammunition and everything . . . needed” (Doe 1985, 17). According to Doe, he was confused about Libya at that time because he “did not know anything about Gadhafi’s policies but later . . . realised that he was a socialist” and therefore he “decided to keep a low profile with him.” Later, Gadhafi accused Doe of being pro-American, and the relationship between Doe and Gadhafi “became bitter” (Doe 1985, 17).

Toe (2009) recalls that he and the other PRC members were not well educated and Doe only completed high school a few years before he became head of state. This contributed to the difficulty the PRC members had in understanding the new political situation in the country. However, American advisors were very helpful and the United States wanted to help the PRC run the country. This is because “the US loved the PRC” and the PRC members “loved the US” and viewed the United States as a benevolent benefactor who founded Liberia and protected the country as an independent state.

The PRC, therefore, followed the directions dictated by American advisors, who helped them structure the new government. The PRC consisted of 27 soldiers who were involved in the coup.<sup>7</sup> The chairman was head of state of Liberia, assisted by a vice chairman (vice-head of state), followed hierarchically by the speaker, deputy speaker, secretary general, and commanding general of the AFL. Soldiers promoted to the council included four generals, 11 colonels, and eight majors (Toe 2010, 32).

American advisors helped the PRC to issue several decrees. The most important was decree number two which suspended the constitution of 1847. All political movements and activities were prohibited, and many leading members of MOJA and the PAL were included in the government. For example, Gabriel Baccus Matthews, the leader of PAL, became minister of foreign affairs; Togba Nah-Tipoteh, the head of MOJA, became minister of planning and economic affairs (Tipoteh 2009).<sup>8</sup> Other vital positions were awarded to political activists such as George S. Boley, minister of state for presidential affairs; H Boima Fahnbulleh, minister of education; Oscar J. Quiah, minister of local government, rural development, and urban reconstruction; and Chea Cheapoo, minister of justice (Toe 2009).<sup>9</sup> The new GoL was, therefore, a combination of military commanders without experience, government administrators, American advisors, nationalists, leftist Pan-Africanists, and government officials who had supported the Tolbert administration (Tarr 2009).<sup>10</sup> The PRC could not be selective because they needed people to run state institutions, and there were not many qualified people in Liberia for these positions (Bowler 2009; Fahnbulleh 2009).<sup>11</sup>

The US Embassy profiled government officials, and this is reflected in a declassified cable message that comments on the disposition of several key people in the Liberian government. Foreign Minister Gabriel Baccus Matthews was viewed as “shaping up as a cooperative,

down-to-earth” person and the minister of presidential affairs, George Boley was referred to as “competent, humane, and thoughtful” with a positive attitude toward the United States. In contrast, H. Boima Fahnbulleh, minister of education, was considered as “potentially troublesome” regarding his role as a “strong force in the left wing of MOJA active in the Marxist-Leninist indoctrination of students.” The minister of planning and economic affairs, Togba Nah-Tipoteh, was placed in service where it is believed he would have incurred the “least amount of damage,” whereas Chea Cheapoo, justice minister, was considered as “unstable” and should be “replaced shortly” (Dunn 2009, 142). Doe is described as being “about the optimum for a head of state. He has a leadership role in the military that is unquestioned. Although limited in education, he is quick on the uptake and defers to his advisors in areas beyond his competence . . . He is warm in his regard for America in general and in his relations to the American military” (Dunn 2009, 143).

US Ambassador Smith stated that Doe “knew little and cared less about communism and the Soviet Union.” For Doe, this “was a genuine tribal upheaval to get rid of the hated upper classes and to bring more privileges to the underprivileged” (Smith 1989, 30). He was “exceedingly pro-American . . . because of the training he received earlier [from] the US Army and the people he had known such as Col Gosney and his officers” (Walker 1992, 68). Doe “adored Colonel Gosney, and . . . referred to him always in the third person as ‘the Chief’” (Smith 1989, 30).

Smith further noted that what saved the United States’ role in Liberia was the presence of the “US military mission that had been there for decades.” Smith further explained that “he can’t emphasize strongly enough how helpful it was to have this small group of American Army officers, consisting of a group of lieutenant colonels and majors” who were closely synched with their counterparts in the AFL. Doe could quickly pass the word that “whatever the chief [Gosney] says, goes” (Smith 1989, 30). Doe knew that the US Soldiers would do “everything they could for Liberia and if there were problems it was not the fault of Americans” (Walker 1992, 68).

The USG sent three Army mobile training teams to Liberia to train the newly formed First Infantry Battalion, the Army staff, and the Ranger Company (McCoy 1994, 13). During the first anniversary of the PRC, 100 Green Berets from the US military, in conjunction with the AFL, presented a joint military exercise to the Liberian people.

This included a highly visible parachute show in Monrovia which signaled US military support for the Doe regime (Youboty 2003, 62). Walker (1992, 74) notes that the United States also sent a “brand new Navy ship—an electronic affair. It was called a destroyer but was the size of a cruiser” and “it made quite an impression” on the Liberian people (Walker 1992, 74).

United States aid to Liberia increased significantly—from under \$20 million in 1979 to over \$120 million in 1982—and by the end of 1985 the PRC had received around \$500 million in foreign aid (Sweet and Ondiak 2008, 10). This far exceeded the aid given to any other sub-Saharan country (McCoy 1994, 12). Herman Cohen (2002), who served as US assistant secretary of state for African affairs from 1989 to 1993 and became a key player in the Liberia conflict, noted that this aid was not aimed to benefit the general population in Liberia. Instead it was meant to protect the interests of the United States because “the Cold War tilted us [the US] in favour of supporting [Doe] because we got reciprocal treatment. We were supporting certain governments that were clearly not going to use their assistance for development but use it for other reasons, and we supported people like Mobutu in Zaire and a few others” (Cohen 2002).<sup>12</sup>

The plan was that the PRC should rule the country until 1985, which would provide the time to restore law and order, shift many of the policies implemented by the Tolbert administration, prepare a new constitution for the second republic, and plan for elections in 1985. After the election, the military junta would then transfer power to a civilian government and “return to their barracks” (Toe 2009).

## **Internal Conflicts and External Relations**

The diverse representation within the GoL created several internal conflicts. Toe (2010, 16) states that within a short time, key government officials began “to divide the PRC’s rank-and-file using socialist and communist ideas to the detriment of the People’s Redemption Council” (Toe 2010, 16). Gen Thomas Weh Syen, the vice-head of state who belonged to the Kru ethnic group, was influenced by Pan-African ideology, opposed the PRC’s close relations with the USG, and accused Doe of enriching himself to the detriment of the people (Toe 2009). Doe accused Syen of having close contact with socialist groups in Liberia and Libya (Doe 1985, 8). In 1981, Syen and four

other PRC members were accused of plotting a coup against Doe, and a trial was scheduled composed of local chiefs and elders who endorsed the execution of Syen (Sawyer 1988, 13). Doe (1985) states that Syen had received money and arms from Libya and during the trial, Syen confessed to organizing the coup. The members of the council agreed that they should “set an example or else that kind of thing would continue, so Weh Syen and others were executed” (Doe 1985, 8).<sup>13</sup>

Internal tensions increased after the execution of Syen, and Doe became more devoted to his own Krahn ethnic group, which fostered nepotism and ethnic rivalry (Toe 2009). Joseph Geebro (2009), the chairperson of the Grand Gedeh Association in the Americas, recalls that many Krahns were concerned about Doe’s tribalistic approach because they feared that other ethnic groups would unite and turn against the Krahns.<sup>14</sup> In August 1982, when Doe was invited to Washington by President Reagan, the Grand Gedeh Association met with Doe and expressed their concerns about tribalism in Liberia. However, Doe did not take these warnings seriously.

During Doe’s visit to the United States, he declared his commitment to Reagan’s neoliberal policy. After a private meeting with President Reagan, Doe stated that the GoL would “promote private sector investment” and that Reagan had assured him that the PRC could “continue to count on America’s understanding and support for the fulfillment of the objectives of . . . [the] revolution.” (Givens 1986, 404). At a speech delivered by Doe at Georgetown University’s Center for Strategic and International Studies—attended by USG officials, scientists, industrialists, bankers, academics, and prominent public figures—Doe described the economic policies of the Tolbert administration. He described them as “poor domestic economic policies” (Givens 1986, 201) that weakened Liberia’s economic position and increased foreign debt. Therefore, he explained, the GoL had in the past two years “been working closely with the International Monetary Fund [IMF] on stabilization programs that would restore a balance in the economy” (Givens 1986, 202). The role of the GoL was to “follow sound fiscal and labor policies and to supply the necessary services and infrastructural facilities needed to attract potential investors . . . provide continuity and stability in the policy environment, and to avoid unnecessary and undue interference in the affairs of the business community and harassment of its members” (Givens 1986, 203).

Doe further stated that the GoL was working closely with the World Bank to secure a “structural adjustment loan . . . [to] help put

the economy on a pragmatic path toward a stable, sustained and more equitable growth.” Moreover, he stated that the public sector in Liberia “over extended itself” which resulted in a slower economic growth than would have been attained otherwise,” and that “the extent to which Liberia is successful in expanding aggregate output and increasing employment . . . will depend mostly on what happens in the private sector” (Givens 1986, 204).

To attract foreign investors, the USG supported—in collaboration with the German Technical Cooperation Agency (GTZ) and several national and international agencies—a comprehensive geological survey of Liberia’s natural resources. In 1983, this materialized into the *Planning and Development Atlas* (Liberian Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs 1983), which identified oil resources, gold, diamonds, timber, and minerals, such as uranium and rutile.<sup>15</sup> Most of the policies implemented by the Tolbert administration were reversed and most of the state-owned enterprises were shut down based on the argument that they were not financially sustainable (Tarr 2009). The structural adjustment program stalled the economy and Liberia entered a decade of negative gross domestic product growth (Tarr 2009) which in the first two years of the PRC administration was around -5 percent (Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs 1982).

As the economy contracted, ethnic tensions increased. In 1983, Doe received intelligence reports about another coup plot by Gen Thomas Quiwonkpa, PRC member and commanding general of the AFL (Toe 2009). Quiwonkpa was from Nimba County and belonged to the Gio ethnic group, and similar to Syen, he was inspired by the Pan-African ideology and opposed the US neocolonial system in Liberia (Fahnbulleh 2009). Doe gathered the rural chiefs again for a trial, but this time they did not endorse execution of Quiwonkpa. This was partly because the corruption and repression of Doe’s regime had become well known (Sawyer 1988, 13). In October 1983, General Quiwonkpa’s service in the government was terminated. In November 1983, after Doe received intelligence information about Quiwonkpa mobilizing a military force in Nimba County to remove him from power, Doe launched a military campaign against civilians in Nimba County known as the “Nimba Raid” (Sayndee 2009; Youboty 2003, 52).<sup>16</sup> Quiwonkpa fled Liberia, but civilians, predominantly from the Gio ethnic group, were randomly killed. This deepened divisions between the members within the PRC and exacerbated tensions between Gio and Krahn tribes in Liberia (Toe 2009).<sup>17</sup>

With an increasing number of enemies, Doe and his closest allies became more dependent on external protection and intelligence. In August 1983, immediately after reestablishing relations with Israel, Doe was invited to make a state visit to Pres. Chaim Herzog (Givens 1986, 417–18). As a result of this visit, Doe promoted Israel's interests internationally, and Israel sent advisors to “work with the ministries and agencies of [the Liberian] government” (Givens 1986, 428). Israel also sent security forces to Liberia and provided a special protection unit for Doe. Israeli security forces joined the United States in training the AFL and supported the Liberian security sector (Sayndee 2009).<sup>18</sup>

H. Boima Fahnbulleh, minister of foreign affairs, opposed Doe's decision to establish relations with Israel, which led to his dismissal (Doe 1985, 19; Fahnbulleh 2009). Fahnbulleh (2009) stated that since he was unable to influence the GoL from within, he increased involvement with the Pan-African movement in Liberia. This movement had become paralyzed because the GoL had launched a form of McCarthyism where Pan-Africanism was juxtaposed with socialism. Fahnbulleh went into exile and spent much of his time in Sierra Leone and Ghana (Fahnbulleh 2009). Since Liberian scholars and students continued to receive socialist material from the Soviet Embassy in Monrovia, Doe expelled Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Ulianov in 1983. This was based on allegations that the USSR was interfering in Liberia's internal affairs (Tokpa 2010). In return, the USSR instructed the Liberian Ambassador to the USSR, Christopher Ricks to leave the country (“Soviet Tells . . .” *New York Times* 1983).

Preparations for the general election took place after the new constitution of Liberia was approved via the adoption of a national referendum on 3 July 1984 (Sawyer 1988, 20–24). Next, the PRC was dissolved and replaced by the Interim National Assembly on 21 July 1984 and included all former PRC members and 35 civilians representing Liberia's 13 counties (Givens 1986, 85–94). The Special Elections Commission (SECOM) should have then facilitated a free and fair general election; however, SECOM set up barriers to exclude specific political parties from participating in the election. They demanded high-cost registration fees (Youboty 2003, 60) or excluded particular parties, such as the United People's Party (UPP) headed by Gabriel Baccus Matthews and Liberian People's Party (LPP) headed by Amos Sawyer. Doe accused Sawyer of plotting a coup to establish a “socialist Republic in Liberia with the aid of foreign countries including three African states” (Givens 1986, 95). To avoid any interference

from the USSR Doe ordered the closure of the Soviet Embassy (Dunn and Tarr 1988, 193; Youboty 2003, 62). James Keough Bishop, who became US ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Liberia, noted that the USG had “persuaded the Doe government . . . they [the USSR] were working with some of his [Doe’s] opponents” (Bishop 1995, 55).<sup>19</sup> Similarly, the USG had also “persuaded Doe to expel the Libyans” by convincing him that “they were involved in a conspiracy against him” (Bishop 1995, 39).

With four political parties and around 900,000 registered voters the general election took place on 15 October 1985 (Givens 1986 102–13).<sup>20</sup> SECOM reported serious fraud and irregularities during the election, and a 50-member committee was established to investigate complaints. On 29 October, SECOM declared Samuel K. Doe of the National Democratic Party of Liberia (NDPL) the winner of the election with around 51 percent of the votes, which was enough to avoid a run-off.<sup>21</sup> Doe’s NDPL won 53 of the 64 seats in the House of Representatives and 22 of the 26 seats in the Senate (Osaghae 1996, 73).

Two weeks after the election results were made public, Thomas Quiwonkpa and H. Boima Fahnbulleh led a military coup to remove Doe from power. They established the National Patriotic Forces of Liberia in Sierra Leone, from where they launched an armed insurgency into Liberia on 12 November 1985. Fahnbulleh remained in Sierra Leone while Quiwonkpa led nine Liberian and 20 Sierra Leonean militants to Monrovia with the intention of removing Doe from power (Fahnbulleh 2009). Early that morning, one faction of the insurgents captured ELWA radio station and from a prerecorded tape Quiwonkpa’s voice broadcasted nationwide that the patriotic forces under his command had taken power and Doe was in hiding (Youboty 2003, 69). Many people in Monrovia believed this to be true and celebrated in the streets and there were instances of retributions taken against Doe’s supporters throughout the country (Crocker 1985, 2; Youboty 2003, 69). However, within a few hours, the First Infantry Battalion retook the radio station and announced that Doe remained in power. All insurgents were captured and executed, including Quiwonkpa (Crocker 1985, 2).

Several influential Liberian political activists—such as Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who was critical of Doe’s administration—were accused of being involved in the coup attempt and arrested. Some were executed; however, Sirleaf was released and relocated to the United States where she became involved in the formation of the Association for Consti-

tutional Democracy in Liberia (ACDL) (Sirleaf 2009, 4). Prince Johnson, the chief of defense intelligence for operation at the defenses headquarters in Monrovia was also accused of being a part of the coup.<sup>22</sup> After an attempt to arrest him, Prince Johnson fled to Ivory Coast where he became president of the National Patriotic Forces of Liberia, later renamed the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) which became the most significant rebel army in the 1990s (P. Johnson 2003, 39).

As with previous coup attempts, there were rumors about CIA involvement in this plot.<sup>23</sup> Fahnbulleh (2009) argues that this is illogical because most of the people behind the coup attempt were Pan-Africanists with leftist or nationalist orientations. Doe was anti-communist and that was the most important aspect for the USG in the mid-1980s. Shortly after the coup attempt, Fahnbulleh was informed by the Sierra Leonean intelligence service that the CIA had intercepted the coup plot and passed the information to the GoL. On 10 December 1985, Chester A. Crocker, US assistant secretary for African affairs, confirmed in a statement to the US Subcommittee on African Affairs of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the USG supported Doe. He further noted that the USG has been “active in each step along the way, encouraging the Liberian authorities to live up to their promise to issue . . . a second Republic of Liberia” (Crocker 1985). The LPP and the UPP were banned from the election because they “proposed socialist programs which had no place in Liberia.” Although the “vote was counted behind closed doors without the presence of opposition party representatives,” the election would be seen as a “democratic experience that Liberia and its friends can use as a benchmark for future elections” (Crocker 1985).

Although the Liberian diaspora was lobbying the US Congress in the mid-1980s by exposing corruption and severe human rights violations committed by the Doe administration, the Reagan administration was “determined to keep Liberia as a close ally” (Cohen 2000, 128). Under the leadership of Doe, Liberia played a central role for US military activities in Africa because the USG had access to the seaport and airport that allowed the USG to “send cargo to other parts of Africa with no questions asked” (Bishop 1995, 48). For example, in 1986 the United States was “sending military equipment to the anticommunist [National Union for the Total Independence of Angola] [UNITA] rebels in Angola, using Robertsfield [Roberts International Airport] in Liberia and Kinshasa Airport in Zaire . . . This project alone

justified good relations with both the Doe and Mobutu regimes” (Cohen 2000, 128).

However, the relationship between Doe and the USG gradually deteriorated midway through 1986. Emmanuel Bowier, former minister of information in the Doe administration (2009), recalls that the United States supported Doe during the election but afterward Doe gradually changed from being a “country boy” and “puppet of the US” to eventually resisting US dominance. During his tenure as the head of state, Doe studied under a special program at the University of Liberia and was awarded a bachelor of arts in political science (Dunn 2009, 140, 234). During his studies, Doe became politically influenced by leftist Pan-African ideology, which was reflected in his dissertation focused on United States–Liberia relations (Bowier 2009).

The tensions between Doe and the USG became evident early in 1987. Herman Cohen travelled to Liberia in January 1987 with US secretary of state, George Shultz; assistant secretary of state, Chester Crocker; USAID administrator, Peter McPherson; and deputy assistant secretary of defense, James L. Woods.<sup>24</sup> During this trip, Cohen was informed that relations between the GoL and USG became complicated. The USG had significant concerns about the GoL’s ability to repay Liberia’s debt, and McPherson had proposed “assigning a team of retired financial experts to work with the Liberians for two years to get their books and procedures in order” (Cohen 2000, 128). During a reception, which Cohen describes as “an 1820 antebellum southern plantation festival” (2000, 242), Schultz “delivered his message about the need for improved economic management” (2000, 128). According to Cohen, Doe “did not have a clue about Washington realities” (2000, 129). He “became hysterical with Secretary Shultz,” stating that “I’m your best friend. I kicked out the Libyan Embassy that was here, and I support you all over in the UN, even in the non-aligned movement. I’m always one of three or four African countries that’s [*sic*] on your side, and all the rest are against you. And what are you doing? You’re cutting off our military assistance, and you’re lowering our economic assistance. It’s all one-sided now. I’m your friend, but you’re not my friend anymore” (Cohen 2002).<sup>25</sup>

Shipler (1987) reported in *The New York Times* that Shultz had made it clear to Doe that Liberia “must make changes in its economic policy.” Until then, the United States would withhold \$10 million in economic aid and \$5 million in military aid. About three months later, James Keought Bishop, the new US ambassador to Liberia, arrived

in Monrovia. His mission was to continue the original strategy to “civilize” Doe by “providing him financial assistance which would enable his government to organize and manage itself, while instructing Doe in political governance—essentially through ambassadorial tutorial” (Bishop 1995, 47). However, his goal was not to make the USG “anathema to a successor government by being perceived as too closely attached to the Doe regime” (Bishop 1995, 48).

Toward the end of the 1980s, Liberia was still critical for US interests in Africa. The US Embassy employed around 250 Americans, many of them assigned to the CIA communication center. The Military Assistance Advisory Group consisted of six officers and three political officers. Also, there were around 200 Peace Corps volunteers and 5,000 American civilians in the country. Bishop was obliged to pay particular attention to the management of the relationship with the GoL so the USG “could continue to have access to . . . strategic facilities,” such as the seaport, the airport, the VOA, military bases, the OMEGA system, and the CIA telecommunications installation. Besides this, he was also dedicated to protecting US commercial interests, such as Firestone, American-owned banks, and the Liberian Maritime Registry (Bishop 1995, 48).

Shultz and McPherson persuaded Doe to accept a team of 17 American financial experts who were deployed at the control points of the GoL’s financial system—for example, at the Ministry of Finance and the Customs and the Budget Office. Among other responsibilities “they would be required to co-sign all government documents relating to fiscal expenditures” (Bishop 1995, 53). However, the deployment of these advisors was seen by many in the Doe administration as blatant neocolonialism (Bowier 2009). Some of the experts were threatened, and the US Embassy was concerned about their safety (Bishop 1995, 53). As the tensions between advisors and the Liberian government increased, Cohen returned to Monrovia in September 1987—at the request of Ambassador Bishop—to inform Doe about the importance of cooperating with the financial management team (Cohen 2000, 129).

After Cohen’s visit, the Liberian government launched a nationwide campaign of raising awareness that foreign aid and economic dependency was being used as an instrument of neocolonialism. The campaign collected money across Liberia with the message of repayment to the United States with the goal of becoming politically and economically independent. Emmanuel Bowier, minister of information

who led the campaign, stated that the US Embassy reacted intensely to the campaign, which it considered as damaging US interests in Liberia. As the tensions increased further, Doe made the US financial experts persona non grata in Liberia (Bowier 2009). According to Bishop, in 1988 the financial experts withdrew “for public consumption” and stated that the program was “terminated by mutual agreement” (Bishop 1995, 53).

As the relations with the USG deteriorated, Doe cautiously approached socialist countries (Bowier 2009). In 1987, the GoL reestablished relations with the USSR (Bishop 1995, 55) and Libya (Bowier 2009); however, relations were not robust. About this time, a representative from the RoC contacted Doe and offered him financial assistance in return for recognition of the RoC. Several Liberian government officials and academics at the University of Liberia saw the move of Taiwan as a US-coordinated effort to isolate Liberia in the UN Security Council (UNSC), where the People’s Republic of China (PRC) held veto power (Brandy 2009; Wallace 2009; Karpeh 2009).<sup>26</sup> Several government officials warned Doe about recognizing the RoC in return for a few million dollars in financial aid because it could have severe implications for Liberia if they needed to support the PRC in the UNSC (W. A. Tubman 2009).<sup>27</sup> However, Doe accepted the offer of the RoC and the PRC closed its representation in Monrovia and broke diplomatic relations with the GoL (Bowier 2009).

Next, in the late 1980s, several coup attempts took place. Most notable was a plot in 1988 involving both local Liberians and American citizens. This plot failed and the Liberians that participated were immediately executed. Ramsey Clark, former US attorney general in the Carter administration, traveled to Monrovia to help solve the crisis. On the promise that everybody “would keep quiet about their activities” the Americans were returned to the US Embassy (Bishop 1995, 52).

In January 1989, when the George H. W. Bush administration came into office, Liberia was a cause for concern. It was the main topic of the first interagency Africa Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC) on 19 May 1989 with Herman Cohen as the new assistant secretary of state for African affairs (Cohen 2000, 129). The PCC meeting was concerned with Doe’s threat to undermine US access to its strategic facilities in Liberia, in particular Roberts International Airport, which the United States “used for twelve flights per month in support of activities throughout Africa.” The meeting concluded that “all the facilities were important and virtually irreplaceable.” Therefore,

the United States greeted the “arrival of anti-Doe insurgents in Nimba County on 24 December 1989 almost as a relief” (Cohen 2000, 129–30). This group of insurgents was the NPFL led by Charles Taylor (A. Taylor 2010).<sup>28</sup>

### **The NPFL and the Internal Splits**

Charles Taylor previously served as the director of the GoL's General Service Agency under the People's Redemption Council until 1983, when he was accused of having embezzled \$900,000. He fled to the United States where he was arrested at the request of the GoL (Toe 2009). In November 1985, Taylor escaped from Plymouth County Correctional Facility in Massachusetts. There are many rumors about how he escaped, but according to Taylor he was escorted to a minimum security area by a correctional officer during the night where he could escape through a window. Two cars were waiting outside, one with his wife and the other with two men who took him to New York. Taylor assumes that it must have been a USG car because the two men would not let him drive with his wife because they feared that he could be “picked up” by the police (C. Taylor 2009).

Taylor arrived in Ghana, where, according to Arnold Kwenu (2008), former general in the armed forces of Ghana, he was arrested by the Ghanaian authorities who suspected him of being a CIA spy. After diplomatic talks with the government of Burkina Faso headed by Thomas Sankara, the Ghanaian government was assured that Taylor did not have business in Ghana as a spy. Taylor was released and traveled to Ivory Coast (Kwenu 2008).<sup>29</sup>

In Ivory Coast, Taylor joined the NPFL, where according to Prince Johnson (2009) he was well received. Because of his background he was gradually able to overtake the leadership of the NPFL.<sup>30</sup> Taylor introduced himself as “brother-in-law of the Gios and Manos ethnic groups” which was supported by the fact that he was married to Toweh, who was from the Gio ethnic group and daughter of the late paramount Chief Gblozuo Toweh (P. Johnson 2003, 41). As Taylor entered the “revolutionary environment” in West Africa he ascended rapidly through the hierarchy of the NPFL and was introduced to Blaise Compaoré, the deputy head of state of Burkina Faso. Through Compaoré, he met Pres. Thomas Sankara. Compaoré then introduced

Taylor to Colonel Gadhafi of Libya, who entered into an agreement to train the NPFL (P. Johnson 2009; A. Taylor 2010).

The details of how connections were established between different key actors are widely contested and contradictory. According to Prince Johnson, Taylor went to Sierra Leone to negotiate “passage for the NPFL to invade Liberia,” and he met with a Liberian called Prince Barclay, “a follower of Dr. H. Boima Fahnbulleh” who introduced him to President Joseph Momoh (P. Johnson 2003, 45). In return for Momoh’s support, he requested that the NPFL compensate the surviving family members of the Sierra Leoneans who were executed in 1985 by Doe after the failed coup led by Quiwonkpa. Momoh also requested that the NPFL arrange accommodations for the “one hundred and fifty men from Libya [and] where they would stay before their invasion of Liberia” (P. Johnson 2003, 46). Taylor then went to France to meet with “financiers and other businessmen” to finance the insurgency. Upon his return to Sierra Leone, President Momoh was out of the country and Taylor was arrested and “detained in the same cell with Corporal Foday Sankoh who was completing his prison term for attempting to overthrow [former] President Siaka Stevens” (P. Johnson 2003, 46).<sup>31</sup> Taylor was released two days later and asked Sankoh to join him in Burkina Faso after his release. Two months later, Sankoh came to Burkina Faso where Taylor “introduced him to Pres. Blaise Compaoré and all arrangements were put in place for a meeting with Colonel Gadhafi” (P. Johnson 2003, 47). In Libya “a pact between Sankoh and Taylor was signed,” where “the Sierra Leone contingent would assist Taylor in removing President Doe and make him President of Liberia.” In return “the Liberian Government under Taylor would order the Army to join Sankoh’s group to invade Sierra Leone” and install Sankoh as president (P. Johnson 2003, 47).

In contrast, Taylor states that there was “no pact with [Revolutionary United Front] [RUF] leader Foday Sankoh for mutual assistance.” Taylor did “not know about the creation of the RUF in 1989” and he “did not know Foday Sankoh.” He “only knew Alie Kabbah and the Sierra Leone Pan African Movement” (C. Taylor 2009). However, he did acknowledge support from Gadhafi, who for Taylor is “an African hero” because he assisted in the struggle to get “rid of the colonial and neo-colonial rule” in Africa (C. Taylor 2009).

There are many rumors on who have met who and where, and what they have talked about, and the networks of personal connections between key actors in the political and economic environment

in West Africa are complex. They consist of the intersection between both kinship and business interests in combination with nationalism, segments of left-wing and right-wing Pan-Africanism and identity politics—particularly concerning ethnicity and religion.

These networks had a significant impact on the conflict dynamics in Liberia and the West African region (Kwenu 2008). Daisy Delafosse, goddaughter of Pres. Houphouët-Boigny and widow of A. B. Tolbert, married Blaise Compaoré, who then became the son-in-law of Houphouët-Boigny (Obi 2009, 213). Doe, therefore, had two powerful enemies in Compaoré and Houphouët-Boigny, and they both supported the Taylor-led NPFL (Kwenu 2008).<sup>32</sup> Regarding Houphouët-Boigny and Compaoré, Cohen claims that “there would not have been a war in Liberia if these two outside powers had not sponsored it” (Cohen 2008).

The interests of Compaoré and Houphouët-Boigny converged with Gadhafi’s ideas of a Pan-African revolution, and Libya became the center of training and coordination for the NPFL (Allen 2009; Kwenu 2008). NPFL rebels were sent to Libya where they were trained at the former US military base, “Wheelus Base [Wheelus Air Base]” (P. Johnson 2003, 52–53). However, the NPFL was in contact with all parties who wished to remove Doe from office in particular the USG. The NPFL did not intend to be a proxy force of any government, so they sought support from multiple external sources, such as private businesses and the governments of France and the UK (Allen 2009; Chea 2009).<sup>33</sup>

The leadership in the NPFL and the RUF considered themselves as Pan-Africanists but few had a socialist orientation. Pan-Africanism for them meant minimizing the influence of non-African actors in Africa; however, some leaders in both organizations added socialist rhetoric to mobilize local support for the insurgency and to recruit soldiers (Allen 2009; Chea 2009; P. Johnson 2006). The NPFL did not have a written program, but the socialist rhetoric is well reflected in the RUF’s 1989 *Basic Document of the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF/SL), The Second Liberation of Africa*. This document echoes Nkrumah’s anti-neocolonial struggle through a peculiar mixture of socialist and anarchist ideas. It begins by stating that the objective of the RUF is “to liberate the economy from all forms of domination, both local and foreign” where “the wealth of the land” should belong “to the people.” The mission is an “anti-neo-colonial struggle for genuine independence” and a contribution to “the task of

total political and economic liberation and unification of Africa.” In a new Sierra Leone, the RUF “will decide on an economic policy that is consistent with our national and Pan-Africanist interests . . . [which will] seek not to be polarised to either state capitalism or private capitalism.” Instead, they will enable “a turn-key partnership with investors in the exploitation of the natural resources,” which “leaves no opening for anybody to claim economic hegemony over others” (Basic Document of the RUF 1989).<sup>34</sup>

Tokpa (2010) notes that the program was confusing and reflected internal disagreements where the text could be interpreted in any way possible by any member of the RUF. The original draft program was written in the mid-1980s by Cleo Hanciles at the University of Ghana. Hanciles was a socialist Pan-Africanist inspired by Nkrumah, and the initial draft was a socialist program which was later rewritten by RUF leadership. Thomas Sankara supported the socialist groupings, but he was skeptical of the NPFL.<sup>35</sup> In 1987, Prince Johnson, planning and training officer for the NPFL, noted that a problem occurred when President Sankara took a position of “non-conformity of the entire plan” of the NPFL. Sankara “insisted that his country would not be used to destabilize Liberia” and was “determined to deport” the NPFL from Burkina Faso. This created disagreement between Sankara and his deputy, Compaoré, who “came under intense pressure from his Father in Law,” Houphouët-Boigny, who wanted the “removal of President Doe from office at all cost” (P. Johnson 2003, 52). According to Prince Johnson, (2003, 52), this led to “a conspiracy” between Compaoré and Taylor, “which resulted in the overthrow and death of Head of State Sankara with the use of the Liberian connection.” As Compaoré became the new head of state of Burkina Faso, all arrangements for preparing the NPFL for the incursion into Liberia were put in place (P. Johnson 2003, 40).<sup>36</sup> Both Prince Johnson and Allen (2009) acknowledge that the NPFL leadership was involved in the assassination of Sankara. However, the CIA infiltrated the NPFL and convinced the NPFL leadership and Compaoré that Sankara had to be assassinated. The United States wanted to get rid of Sankara because of his socialist Pan-African policies, which began to materialize in Burkina Faso.

With support from Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, and Libya, and the NPFL in close communication with USG advisors (Richardson 2006; Ankomah 2006, 8), the insurgency took place in December 1989.<sup>37</sup> As the first confrontations between the NPFL and the AFL occurred

in Nimba County, the US Embassy sent “two US Army officers from the embassy’s military assistance group to Nimba on 2 January 1990” (Cohen 2000, 131). According to Cohen (2000, 131), this caused the US “Americo-Liberian lobby” to accuse the USG of “providing counter-insurgency advice to the AFL” and thereby supporting the AFL against the NPFL, whom the anti-Doe Liberians viewed as “freedom fighters” with a “legitimate objective.”

However, the US assessment of the situation in Nimba was that the NPFL “were killing members of Doe’s Krahn tribe, but otherwise behaved well towards other ethnic groups.” In contrast, the USG stated that the AFL committed “human rights violations against civilians,” and it was “arranged for President Bush to write to Doe expressing concern about AFL abuses.” When Doe requested the USG invoke the mutual defense agreement between the GoL and the USG—the only one the United States had in Africa, ambassador to Liberia Bishop “provided some communication equipment” but informed Washington that they should “wait to see how substantial the incursion was” and how the AFL “would react to the incursion” (1995, 57). Bishop informed Washington that the AFL “over-reacted in their response” which justified the USG not supporting the GoL against the incursion (Bishop 1995, 57). The conflict escalated and by the end of March 1990, the United States “faced a full-fledged civil war in Liberia” (Cohen 2000, 132).

The NPFL received support from multiple sources. Besides receiving assistance from Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, and Libya, the NPFL received financial funding from the US-based ACDL. This organization planned for a political shift in Liberia (Sirleaf 2009). Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, representative of the ACDL, had a good relationship with Tom Woewiyu, the defense minister of the NPFL. He “introduced the Taylor’s rebellion” to the ACDL, which “agreed that a rebellion was necessary” (Sirleaf 2009, 5). Sirleaf visited Taylor on several occasions and transferred financial support from the ACDL to the NPFL. She contacted “some people in the State Department of the US [USDOS],” and exchanged information. However, after a meeting with Taylor in mid-1990, she lost faith in the Taylor-led rebellion. Other than removing Doe from power she felt there was a lack of political vision.<sup>38</sup>

Chea (2009) and Richardson (2009) note that the NPFL did not have a clear vision for running the country after the removal of Doe, which made the NPFL vulnerable to internal power struggles, splits, and manipulation by foreign powers. The most significant internal

split occurred at the beginning of the insurgency, which led to the formation of the Independent NPFL (INPFL) under the leadership of Prince Johnson. Prince Johnson (2003, 55–56) states that this split took place because Taylor did not have confidence in many of the NPFL members and began covertly to make divisions within the NPFL. The first 50 men that Taylor sent into Liberia were not on good terms with Taylor, and Prince Johnson claims that Taylor deliberately ensured that they would be trapped inside Liberia by government forces. All 50 men were captured and executed, with coverage on Liberian television. Taylor appointed 19 men, including Prince Johnson, to cross the border into Liberia from Ivory Coast to pick up arms for the NPFL. However, when they arrived, no weapons were found. The commander ordered the men to return to Ivory Coast. However, Prince Johnson argued that it was a betrayal set up by Taylor, who wished to trap the 19 men inside Liberia so they could be executed. Nine of the men refused to return to Ivory Coast and decided to continue under the command of Prince Johnson.<sup>39</sup>

This new, small faction, the INPFL, continued to move from town to town where they captured arms from AFL military stocks and recruited soldiers. The INPFL rapidly grew to more than 500 soldiers (P. Johnson 2003, 55–56, 59). On their way to Monrovia, they captured strategic locations, such as Kpatuo in Nimba County, Sanniquellie, Ganta, Gbarnga in Bong County (a key position of the AFL), the VOA transmitter complex, Fendell, and the hydroelectric power plant, Hydro Plant, producing electricity for Monrovia. When reaching the outskirts of Monrovia, the INPFL established its main base in Caldwell (P. Johnson 2003, 61–63). By June 1990, Prince Johnson's INPFL controlled Freeport and most of Bushrod Island, the parts of central Monrovia that included the US Embassy area, the US military training camp, and Greystone. Several leaders in the NPFL leadership believed that Prince Johnson was so well equipped militarily and was able to advance due to support from the USG (Richardson 2009).<sup>40</sup>

Herman Cohen (2000, 144) states that “Doë’s departure and Taylor’s coming to power were the heart of . . . [the US] policy,” and Taylor (2006, 8) recalls that there “was full cooperation between me [the NPFL] and Washington and every move we took, we consulted Washington first.”

The USDOS had proposed a

constitutionally viable scheme to both sides. In effect, Doe would resign in favour of Vice-President Harry Moniba, who would appoint Charles Taylor as the new Vice-President and then himself resign. Taylor would become president of Liberia but would have to organize an election in October 1991, pursuant to the constitution. Government and civil society groups, such as the Liberian Council of Churches, expressed interest in the scheme as a constitutional way out. The NPFL was less enthusiastic about the October 1991 election deadline, but we [USDOS] were slowly persuading Taylor of the importance of constitutional respectability. (Cohen 2000, 144).

The approach was that the NPFL would take control of Roberts International Airport about 40 kilometers outside Monrovia and then the US Embassy would put pressure on Doe to leave the country (C. Taylor 1992, 11). Cohen arranged that Doe would receive asylum in Togo with President Gnassingbé Eyadéma's support. Eyadéma called Taylor on a satellite phone and requested that troops loyal to President Doe be allowed to escape through the Liberian-Sierra Leonean frontiers. Cohen also traveled to Liberia via Ivory Coast to meet with Taylor and instructed that he not take Monrovia by military force. He also specified that Taylor should leave the road to Sierra Leone open so that Monrovia could flee to avoid bloodshed. However, this plan was "messed up" because Prince Johnson's INPFL seized control of Bushrod Island and blocked the corridor (Cohen 2008).

As Doe's forces tried to impede the NPFL, they attacked ethnic groups, in particular, the Mano and Gio villages. These villagers, as a result, lined up to join the NPFL (Bishop 1995, 59), which had amassed around 20,000 soldiers (Richardson 2009). The NPFL had taken control of most of Liberia and, as planned, captured the airport and a large part of Monrovia, including the Sinkor area and the University of Liberia. Across the street, opposite to the university, Samuel Doe controlled a tiny area which was mainly confined to the Capitol Hill, which included the Executive Mansion, the legislature, the Judiciary, and Barclay's military barracks in central Monrovia. The three opposing forces were only separated by a few streets in central Monrovia (Richardson 2009).

According to Taylor (Richardson 2009) the NPFL "could have taken the Mansion any moment but we [the NPFL] had a promise to keep" with the Americans (C. Taylor 1992, 12). Cohen (2000, 147) acknowledges that "victory was in his [Taylor's] grasp" but had suggested that "it would be better for everyone if a battle for Monrovia

could be avoided.” Taylor consented to Cohen and waited for two months while the Americans negotiated with Doe (C. Taylor 2006, 8). Retrospectively, Taylor notes that following Cohen’s advice was a “terrible mistake” (C. Taylor 1992, 12). Cohen and US Ambassador Bishop did not keep their promises and turned against the NPFL. This left the NPFL with the only choice of using military force, which resulted in a long destructive war (A. Taylor 2010).

However, much indicates that Cohen and Bishop did continue to favor the NPFL, but there was an internal disagreement in the USG between the USDOS and the Department of Defense (DOD), which resulted in a US policy shift.

The USDOS had arranged everything for Doe’s departure and “had an aircraft available in Freetown ready to pick him up” (Cohen 2002, 15). The biggest impediment “was Doe’s refusal to leave,” which made it necessary for the United States to send a high-level envoy to Liberia. Cohen was supposed to go to Monrovia and say to Doe: “Okay, now is the time. Get your family and everyone, and get on the plane; let’s go,” but then the plan was suddenly vetoed (Cohen 2002, 15). The DOD overruled the USDOS on 24 May 1990, when the Deputies Committee held the first policy meeting on Liberia after the NPFL invasion (Cohen 2000, 142). Robert Gates, deputy national security advisor, chaired the meeting (Cohen 2002, 142). The PCC headed by Cohen informed the Deputies Committee that their solution for Liberia “did not include a continuation of Doe in power [which] naturally struck a friendly chord with Taylor.”<sup>41</sup> The “NPFL was treating American citizens and property correctly,” and a solution could be reached through diplomatic negotiations (Cohen 2000, 142–3).

The PCC proposed the deployment of the Marine Amphibious Readiness Group (ARG) to Liberia and the deployment of “naval assets that could undertake a noncombatant evacuation operation” if fighting broke out in Monrovia (Cohen 2000, 142–3). However, Gates shot down elements of the PCC plans for Liberia and moved the responsibility for Liberia to the Deputies Committee, who ordered the deployment of the US Navy in Liberian waters and evacuation of US citizens, including a reduction of the embassy staff in Monrovia (Cohen 2002, 143). As the ARG arrived in Liberian waters on 3–4 June 1990 and was prepared for deployment in a war zone, the Deputies Committee frequently met on the issue of Liberia (Cohen 2002, 144). There were several disputes between the USDOS and Robert Gates in the NSC. Gates accused Cohen of going beyond his mandate in Liberia

(Cohen 2002, 155). However, on 5 June 1990, it finally became clear to Cohen how serious the disagreements were when he was prohibited from returning to Liberia to escort Doe into exile (Cohen 2000, 144).

Bishop (2002), states that the “the Bush administration pulled us back and told us that they didn’t want us to [interfere] . . . because they didn’t want to accept any degree of moral responsibility of Charles Taylor becoming the next head of state of Liberia” which Bishop thought was a mistake. Bishop’s mission in Liberia was terminated, and he was transferred to a post as the US ambassador to Somalia (Bishop 1995, 59). Peter Jon de Vos was appointed as the new US ambassador to Liberia and was appointed ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary on 22 June (Hyman 2003, 244).<sup>42</sup>

## **ECOMOG and the Interim Government**

Doe’s administration had taken several initiatives to solve the crisis. A letter had been written to the UNSC asking for a UN intervention in Liberia. However, the GoL did not have allies in the Security Council, and the Council referred to the conflict as an internal matter (Bowier 2009). Consequently, a letter was sent to President Babangida of Nigeria, asking his government to assist militarily; however, there was not an official response from the Nigerian government. Doe then sent a delegation led by Winston Tubman to Washington on 2 May 1990 requesting the United States intervene in the conflict. This delegation was composed of government officials, such as Doe’s cousin and representative of Grand Gedeh, William Glay; minister of information, Emmanuel Bowier; and representatives from political parties, such as Gabriel Baccus Matthews from the UPP, and Carlos Smith from the Unity Party (UP) (Bowier 2009; W. A. Tubman 2009).

Bowier (2009) stated that it was during this visit that he realized that the USG was the main actor behind the insurgents, which he reported back to Doe. The Liberian delegation informed the USG on 8 May that the GoL was willing to form a government of national unity that could ensure free and fair elections in October 1991 and requested the USG to put pressure on the NPFL to accept a ceasefire, disarm, and participate in this process. The USG was requested to urge neighboring countries to stop supporting the NPFL and resume military assistance to the GoL (Bowier 2009; Cohen 2000, 139; W. A. Tubman 2009). Cohen informed the delegation that it was impossible

for the United States to resume military aid to the GoL and instead proposed a complete withdrawal of the AFL from Nimba County. He also suggested that the scheduled elections should be moved up to October 1990 but insisted that “negotiations had to be with the rebels and not with the USG” (Cohen 2000, 140).

According to Cohen (2000, 139) the Liberian delegation initially refused to speak with “armed rebels,” but Bishop made them change their mindset. The USG sent a message to the NPFL “via a special channel” through the US Embassy in Abidjan, asking a representative of the NPFL come to Washington, at the expense of the USG. The NPFL responded promptly and sent Tom Woewiyu, minister of defense, to the US Embassy in Abidjan. Woewiyu informed the USG that he considered Doe to be “dead meat” and that the United States should “convince Doe to depart and allow Taylor to take over while the economy and infrastructure were still intact” (Cohen 2002, 140). However, Woewiyu never met with the Liberian delegation in Washington, because he received “last-minute orders from Taylor not to sit with Doe’s representatives” (Cohen 2002, 140). Cohen suggested proximity talks, but the Liberian delegation rejected such measures (Cohen 2002, 141). According to Bowier (2009), the delegation rejected Cohen’s suggestion because it appeared that the USG represented the interests of the NPFL and did not want the two parties to meet. By having proximity talks, the USG would be able to manipulate the negotiations.

Some members of the delegation met with David Charles Miller, deputy security advisor to President Bush (Bowier 2009) and a close friend of Brent Scowcroft (Miller 2003), who informed them that war in Liberia was inevitable (Bowier 2009; W. A. Tubman 2009).<sup>43</sup> Bowier (2008, 103) stated that Miller informed the delegation that he estimated that that one-fourth of the Liberian population would “be wiped out,” and that he could “call Taylor now and stop him” but would not do so because then Doe would stay in power (Bowier 2008, 103).<sup>44</sup> A similar message came from the US deputy secretary of state, Lawrence Eagleburger, in a subsequent meeting with the Liberian delegation. He further informed them that reconstruction plans for Liberia were already on the drawing board in Washington. The delegation returned to Monrovia and passed the message to Doe (Bowier 2009).

The GoL initiated another peace negotiation initiative in January 1990, by procuring the Liberian Council of Churches and the National

Muslim Council of Liberia to establish a five-member Inter-faith Mediation Committee (IFMC), which established three working groups. The first group went to talk with Liberians in the United States to get them to stop financing the NPFL. The second group went to Europe to lobby for humanitarian assistance. The third group went to talk with people in the Liberian countryside to discourage them from taking up arms (Konneh 2009).<sup>45</sup> The IFMC organized a meeting in Freetown with the participation of key actors in the conflict, which was funded by the USG and held at the US Embassy. On the first day of the meeting, the Liberian stakeholders reached an agreement on a ceasefire. Additionally, the formation of an interim government representing key Liberian actors who should lead the country to the national election was scheduled for October 1991. However, shortly before signing the agreement, the NPFL pulled out, which, according to the head of the Muslim Council, Sheikh Kafumba Konneh (2009), was a result of US influence. Bowier (2009) recalls that the US political officer, Charles Gurney, informed the pro-Doe delegation that logically the NPFL would not sign the agreement since the NPFL had the military power to eradicate the GoL.

After this meeting, the IFMC effort was assumed by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) member states, and the IFMC members became representatives of the religious societies in Liberia at the following negotiations. On 30 May 1990, ECOWAS held a meeting in Banjul with the support of the US ambassador to Gambia (Konneh 2009). The resolution adopted at this meeting stated that the regional initiative was motivated by the awareness of the “disruptive effect that recurrent situations of conflict and dispute among Member States have on the ultimate ECOWAS goal of the harmonious and united West African society.” It also established the Standing Mediation Committee (SMC) chaired by Gambia and included Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone (“Decision A/Dec. 9/5/90,” ECOWAS 1990). The SMC began to negotiate peace talks between the conflicting parties in Liberia and the possibilities of creating a peacekeeping force. The discussion of a West African intervention force was based on the view that “European and other external interventions engender neocolonialist tendencies among African countries and states.” Therefore, the idea of a West African peacekeeping force was promoted as an “African solution to an African problem” (Aboagye 1999, 58).

As the NPFL became suspicious of the USG agenda and the ECOWAS initiative, they attempted to take control of Monrovia on 2 July 1990 (Richardson 2009). This resulted in major armed clashes between the disputing forces where “each army was fighting against two” (P. Johnson 2003, 80). As the conflict intensified, the SMC met in Banjul on 6 and 7 August, where the ECOWAS Peace Plan was formulated and the Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) was established. ECOMOG would be “composed of military contingents drawn from the Member States of the Economic Community of West African States [ECOWAS] Standing Mediation Committee [SMC], as well as from Guinea and Sierra Leone” and “under the command of a Force Commander appointed by the Committee” with entrusted power to “conduct military operations for the purpose of Monitoring the ceasefire, and restoring law and order to create the necessary conditions for free and fair elections to be held in Liberia” (“On the Ceasefire and Establishment...,” ECOWAS SMC 1990). On the same day, the SMC agreed to “facilitate the convening of a conference of all political parties and other interest groups for the purpose of establishing a broad-based Interim Government in Liberia” but without the participation of any of the warring parties. The mandate of the government was aimed at administering Liberia and to “take all necessary action for the preparation and organization of free and fair elections leading to the establishment in Liberia of a democratically elected government” within 12 months (“Decision A/DEC.2/8/90,” ECOWAS SMC, 1990).

For funding, the SMC established a special emergency fund with an initial amount of \$50 million. The funding was to come from “contributions of Member States of the Community and donor governments and institutions outside the sub-region” voluntarily (“Decision A/DEC.3/R/90,” ECOWAS SMC, 1990). At a separate closed meeting with selected participants held on the same day, the United States ensured full support of ECOMOG but emphasized that ECOMOG had to appear as an African initiative, and the United States would, therefore, prefer to fund ECOMOG indirectly (Kwenu 2008). According to Cohen (2000, 150), the US PCC for Africa was concerned that major US contribution to a West African military force could lead to “follow-on requests for direct military support.” Therefore, the United States initially contributed a “symbolic \$3.3 million” in order to show “solidarity with an important African initiative.” The USDOS “happily greeted the ECOWAS initiative” but the United States took

the “back seat” while keeping a “[ARG] contingent . . . stationed offshore, just in case” (Cohen 2002, 151).

Cohen notes that the USDOS saw ECOMOG as the “only hope for ending Liberia’s downward slide into anarchy.” The plan of ECOMOG was “well-conceived and had the extra merit of involving Africans working to solve an African problem” (Cohen 2000, 150). One main problem, however, was that Ivory Coast “registered a vigorous dissent” to the ECOMOG intervention into Liberia and argued that there was not a basis for jurisdiction to send soldiers into a member country. This objection was disregarded by Nigeria, Ghana, and Guinea, who were instrumental in establishing the ECOMOG, which made the government of Ivory Coast “determined to continue transferring arms to the NPFL” (Cohen 2002, 150). The government of Ivory Coast acted on behalf of French interests in the region where the oil prospect was one central factor (Richardson 2009; Allen 2009). France was also “jealous of US-Senegalese collaboration,” which would “place Senegal in direct opposition to the pro-Taylor policy of Côte d’Ivoire, France’s other important regional client” (Cohen 2000, 159).

The US strategy was to work “behind the scenes” through frequent high-powered visits to the region by US top officials and by frequently providing economic and military support to the countries that supported ECOMOG (McCoy 1994, 15).<sup>46</sup> The indirect support of ECOMOG became very popular among many West African leaders because ECOMOG appeared as an African initiative rather than neocolonial interference. This had a major impact on the soldiers deployed in Liberia who considered their mission as an example of Africans who were able to take care of problems without external interference. This made it “socially prestigious” to serve under ECOMOG and “fight for mother Africa” (Kwenu 2008).

Konneh (2009) and Alhaji Kromah (2009) recall that most actors in favor of ECOMOG did not officially talk about the role of the USG.<sup>47</sup> They rejected any critique of ECOMOG as an illegal intervention force that did not have approval of the UNSC. This was based on two main arguments: (1) The international agreement of noninterference is a western invention that cannot be applied to Africa and (2) African borders had been drawn by the colonial powers and have less significance than in the West. These arguments appear unclear and most scholars and commentators such as Aboagye (1999), Alao (1998), Arthur (2010), Bekoe (2008), Conteh-Morgan (1998), Enoany (1991), Magyar (1998), G. Williams (2002), and Tuck (2000) have

marginalized or ignored that the military intervention was not approved by the UNSC and the fact that the USG was the prime engine behind ECOMOG.

The USG support for ECOMOG can be seen in what Nkrumah wrote regarding mechanisms of neocolonialism and war by proxy, where the foreign powers “supply the money, aircraft, military equipment of all kinds, and the strategic and tactical command from a General Staff down to officer ‘advisers,’ while the troops of the puppet government bear the brunt of the fighting” (Nkrumah 1965, 252). In this context, Nkrumah draws on former US secretary of state, John Foster Dulles’s concept of “let Asians fight Asians.”

### **Intervention and the Killing of Doe**

ECOMOG landed in the Freeport of Monrovia on 24 August 1990, under the command of Gen Arnold Kwenu from Ghana. Before the deployment, an agreement was made between ECOMOG and Prince Johnson that the INPFL would secure the Freeport area to ensure a bridgehead for ECOMOG (Kwenu 2008; P. Johnson 2009). Prince Johnson describes the arrival of ECOMOG as the fulfillment of what great “Africans and Pan-Africanists like Kwame Nkrumah and others wanted for Africa, the African High Command” (P. Johnson 2003, 56). However, the GoL saw the ECOMOG intervention force as a US proxy force that would ensure the installation and protection of the interim government (Bowier 2009; Doe 2009).<sup>48</sup> The NPFL saw the role of the ECOMOG in the same way, and because the USG backed ECOMOG, they knew that ECOMOG would become the main enemy and therefore tried to stop the deployment of force (Chea 2009; Richardson 2009).

The INPFL had prepared the grounds for the arrival of ECOMOG; however, the morning ECOMOG was to land, the NPFL attacked the positions of the INPFL in an attempt to take control of the port and prevent ECOMOG intervention (Kwenu 2008; P. Johnson 2006; Richardson 2009). That afternoon, under heavy fire, ECOMOG succeeded in deploying its first troops into the port, who joined the INPFL in keeping the NPFL at bay. Two days later, the INPFL left the Freeport area, and it came under full control of ECOMOG. They then prepared for the landing of more troops and equipment (Kwenu 2008; P. Johnson 2006).

The NPFL did not trust any of the countries contributing to the ECOMOG intervention except Ghana, which was mainly because of President J. J. Rawlings' revolutionary Pan-African rhetoric (Richardson 2009). Kwenu (2009) recalls that this was the reason the United States had established him as the force commander of ECOMOG—because they anticipated that the NPFL would be more cooperative with ECOMOG under Ghanaian command. A Nigerian force commander would have been a more logical choice since Nigeria was the main African contributor to the ECOMOG force, but the USG knew that most revolutionary movements in West Africa considered Nigerian Pres. Ibrahim Babangida a neocolonial puppet of the US and the UK. Kwenu (2009), further notes that US military advisors appeared to trust him because of his extensive US military training as a ranger.

Prince Johnson (2003) noted that some conspiracies took place between the arrival of ECOMOG and the death of President Doe. The chairman of the OAU, Pres. Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, and chairman of ECOWAS, Dauda Jawara from Gambia, were “frantically finding unconstitutional methods to set up an interim administration to replace their colleague, Samuel K. Doe” (P. Johnson 2003, 75). As ECOMOG deployed in Monrovia, the All Liberian Conference was set up in Banjul from 27 to 29 August with representatives from ECOWAS, the OAU, the UN, and many Liberian organizations and political parties.<sup>49</sup> Prince Johnson describes this meeting as “an international conspiracy against the GoL which operated in favor of the INPFL” where the representation of the members of Doe’s party, without approval from Doe, “represented treachery to its highest” (P. Johnson 2003, 77). At this meeting, Amos Sawyer was appointed as head of the IGNU, and for the legislature, six seats were allocated to Taylor’s NPFL, four seats to Prince Johnson’s INPFL, two seats to each of the six political parties, and one seat each for the 13 counties (P. Johnson 2003, 78). After that meeting, the interim government was waiting in Freetown for the “INPFL to get rid of him [Samuel Doe]” (P. Johnson 2003, 81).

Prince Johnson (2009) noted that it was too dangerous for the INPFL to directly attack the Executive Mansion where Doe was staying because the AFL was heavily armed and Taylor’s NPFL was on the other side of the mansion. Therefore, Prince Johnson set up a trap to get Doe out of the mansion by making a truce with Doe. With the support of an unnamed foreign diplomatic mission in Liberia, Doe had already proposed allying with Prince Johnson to fight the NPFL and

ECOMOG. This opened up an agreement between Doe and Prince Johnson, signed on 27 August, which included a ceasefire between the AFL and the INPFL, access to territories controlled by both parties upon notice, and dropping all previous charges of treason against Prince Johnson in relation to the coup attempt led by Quiwonkpa in 1985 (P. Johnson 2003, 81). However, the chairman of ECOWAS and the interim government based in Freetown were concerned with this agreement because it appeared that “there was a sudden betrayal of confidence and breach of the joint Banjul communique by the INPFL” (P. Johnson 2003, 82). It would not be possible for the new government to take power while the “legitimate constitutional president was alive and in the country. In order for Sawyer to begin his administration, Doe had to be removed” (P. Johnson 2003, 81). The interim government, therefore, sent Levi Zanga, minister of state without portfolio, and Nathaniel Beh, chief of protocol, to Prince Johnson’s base in Monrovia where it was confirmed that the INPFL was still committed to removing Doe and “pav[ing] the way for the Sawyer-led interim government” (P. Johnson 2003, 82).

On 6 September, Prince Johnson, accompanied by 2,000 combatants, met with President Doe at the Barclay Training Center in the AFL-controlled area of Monrovia to review the agreement signed on 27 August (P. Johnson 2003, 83). At this meeting Doe informed Prince Johnson that Liberian intelligence service had received evidence of the CIA being behind ECOMOG. For Prince Johnson, this was obvious because although the United States had tried to disguise the relation to ECOMOG, it was “written all over that ECOMOG was made in America” (P. Johnson 2009). The expanded agreement included joint operations against Taylor’s NPFL and ECOMOG to counter the interim government and the supply of arms and ammunition from the GoL to the INPFL in return for rice delivered from the warehouses under the control of the INPFL (P. Johnson 2003, 83).<sup>50</sup> The next meeting was set for 12 September at the Executive Mansion. Meanwhile, Prince Johnson (2009) stated that he was informed by a foreign power, which he could not reveal, that Doe planned to break the agreement and ambush Prince Johnson and his soldiers at the meeting on 12 September.

On 9 September, Doe arrived at the ECOMOG-controlled part of Freeport with a convoy of soldiers and baggage. There are many versions of what occurred next in Freeport, but according to General Kwenu (2008), Doe’s visit was unexpected. Doe complained to Kwenu

that he had not officially visited the president after the deployment of ECOMOG, which would be a way in which to show respect to the president of the country. Doe further explained that what was happening in Liberia was in many ways similar to what had happened in Ghana in 1966 when the CIA overthrew Kwame Nkrumah. Doe engaged in a more extended conversation with Kwenu and explained that the United States would not allow any African country to develop but would keep the countries indebted and dependent on aid and impose Open Door policies everywhere to exploit the continent. Because the GoL had realized this and was trying to change the neo-colonial relationship, the USG now sought to remove the GoL by using ECOMOG as a proxy force, Doe asserted (Kwenu 2008). During this conversation, Prince Johnson entered Freeport (Kwenu 2008) with approximately 1,500 soldiers (P. Johnson 2006). From intelligence information and through communication with a “Commanding Officer” from ECOMOG (P. Johnson 2008, 16) Prince Johnson had been informed about Doe’s visit to the Freeport and that Doe planned to ambush Prince Johnson on 12 September (P. Johnson 2009). With the “pressure from the Interim Government wanting to come in,” and ECOMOG’s “deep concern” over the interaction between the GoL and INPFL, Prince Johnson went to Freeport to do “what needed to be done there and then” (P. Johnson 2003, 85). When Prince Johnson entered Freeport, Doe’s 70 bodyguards were chatting in groups instead of being “in position” ready to fight (Kwenu 2008).<sup>51</sup> After a short conversation between Prince Johnson and Doe’s escort commander, Capt Sam Bliah, Prince Johnson shot the commander (P. Johnson 2003, 85) and the INPFL soldiers disarmed and stripped weapons from a number of Doe’s soldiers who were based in the courtyard (P. Johnson 2006).

Prince Johnson entered the commander’s building of ECOMOG and accused Doe of breaking the truce because he had not informed Prince Johnson about his visit to “his territory” (P. Johnson 2006; Kwenu 2008). Kwenu tried to calm the situation by separating Doe and Prince Johnson and locking Johnson in a room next to his office. A few minutes afterward, Prince Johnson kicked open the door and killed a group of Doe’s bodyguards—who were grouped in a third room—with a hand grenade. Fighting broke out between the INPFL and Doe’s bodyguards who had not been disarmed. During the fighting, Prince Johnson shot Doe in the leg to make sure he would remain in the office. Kwenu and the few ECOMOG soldiers who were with him

fled to the trenches. ECOMOG was passive during the fighting that took place over the next 30 to 60 minutes. After the shooting stopped, Kwenu and his soldiers waited for 30 minutes in the trenches. When they returned to the courtyard, they found all Doe's bodyguards dead. Prince Johnson and his soldiers left the port area (Kwenu 2008).

Prince Johnson then took Doe to the INPFL base where he was questioned and tortured.<sup>52</sup> The US Embassy supplied all the warring parties with communication equipment, and Prince Johnson called the US Embassy over the VHF radio to ask Mr. Porter or the ambassador what to do with President Doe. They did not answer; which Prince Johnson notes was an indication that "they had written him off." He continued to question Doe about where he had hidden his money. He did not get an answer and decided to continue the interrogation on the following day. Doe was then chained to the pipes in a bathroom close to Prince Johnson's office while Johnson consumed a large number of beers. Some hours later, Prince Johnson's men informed him that Doe had died. Because Doe had not informed Prince Johnson about the "hidden money," Johnson took the body to Island Hospital in the hope that Doe was still alive, but he was dead (P. Johnson 2006)

Prince Johnson states that although Doe died in his custody, the removal of Doe was a decision which "was reached in Banjul with major international players involved" (P. Johnson 2006). He further notes that "ECOMOG had the weaponries, men and sophistication to protect the President against the attacks of the INPFL. If these were not utilized, then the world should hold ECOMOG responsible for not protecting the President" (P. Johnson 2003, 87). The chairman of ECOWAS, President Jawara of Gambia, openly expressed his satisfaction with the murder of Doe, which paved the way for the installment of Amos Sawyer's interim government (P. Johnson 2009).

Kwenu (2008) stated that, retrospectively, the circumstances under which Doe was removed from power appear to be a combination of several interlinked conspiracies at the local, regional, and international levels. Kwenu argues that the individual actors involved were not aware of the specific sequence of events because many foreign intelligence agencies were involved. In the days before the Freeport incident, ECOMOG soldiers reported on the extraordinary movement of US military advisors moving between Prince Johnson's camp and the US Embassy. Kwenu thought it strange that BBC journalist Elizabeth Blunt arrived in Freeport just a few hours before Doe arrived, which

then led him to suspect that she had been informed by United States or British intelligence services that Doe would arrive in Freeport. About two years after the killing of Doe, Kwenu received a delegation of French military officers in his office in Accra who questioned him about the Freeport incident. They wanted to confirm whether a boat had arrived from Conakry to Freeport that morning and indicated that the plan was that Doe should have left Liberia in that boat. Kwenu (2008) confirmed that the boat did arrive but left again after the fighting.

### Notes

1. Albert Toe contributed two interviews to support this research. According to Toe, this was the first time he had spoken to a researcher about the coup and how the PRC was formed. Toe was among the 17 soldiers that entered the Executive Mansion, and he became a key member of the PRC. Toe stated that according to a legal agreement he would have to retain important information that included the role of external powers. At the time of the interview, Toe served as a representative of River Gee Country in the House of Representatives; a co-chair of the National Defense Committee; and a member of the NSC.

2. Julius W. Walker was the US charge d'affaires of the US diplomatic mission in Liberia in 1980 and served in the absence of Ambassador Smith. Charles Stuart Kennedy interviewed him on 2 April 1992 in Washington, DC, at the Library of Congress. American Memory, The Foreign Affairs Oral History Collection of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, <https://www.loc.gov/>.

3. The people executed were Frank E. Tolbert, president pro tempore of the Liberian Senate and elder brother of President Tolbert; Richard A. Henriens, speaker of the House of Representatives; James A. A. Pierre, chief justice of the Supreme Court; Joseph F. Chesson, minister of justice; C. Cecil Dennis Jr., minister of foreign affairs; James T. Phillips, former minister of agriculture and minister of finance; D. Franklin Neal, minister of planning and economic affairs; Cyril Bright, minister of agriculture; John Sherman, minister of commerce, industry, and transportation; Frank Stewart, director of the Bureau of Budget; Charles D. King, member of the House of Representatives from Nimba County; E. Reginald Townsend, chairman of the True Whig Party and former minister of state for Presidential Affairs; and P. Clarence Parker, treasurer of the True Whig Party and chairman of the Liberian Investment Commission (Cordor 1980, 73–74).

4. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was interviewed as part of this research. She served as minister of finance in the Tolbert Administration from 1979 until 1980. She became a political opponent to Doe in the 1980s and was elected president of Liberia in 2006 (Sirleaf 2009).

5. Arnold Kwenu contributed to this research through several interviews in 2008. He held the position of force commander of ECOMOG during their intervention in 1990.

6. Alaric Tokpa contributed to this research through several interviews. At the time of the interviews, Tokpa served as assistant professor of political science at the University of Liberia. He was head of the Liberia National Student Union in the 1970s and an active member of the MOJA. Tokpa was sentenced to death by the

military junta in 1980 for promoting leftist views but released within two years. He is co-founder of the political party the New Deal Movement.

7. According to Toe (2010) the PRC consisted of the 17 soldiers who entered the mansion on 12 April, who were senior members, and 11 other soldiers who had been involved in the planning of the coup. This equals a total number of 28 members and not 27. The 11 other people who were involved in the coup were Joseph Sampson, Harrison Penneu, Jerry Gban, Alfres Ziah, Robert Knowoku, Henry Zow, Joseph V. Tubman, Swen Dickson, Stanley Tarwo, Yellah Kebbah, and John Nyumah.

8. Togba Nah-Tipoteh was interviewed in relation to this research as the co-founder and head of MOJA. He served as minister of planning for economic affairs 1980–81. Amos Sawyer contributed to this research through two interviews. He was a key member of MOJA and served as interim head of state from 1990 to 1994 and as chairperson of the Government Commission from 2006.

9. George S. Boley later formed the rebel faction Liberian Peace Council (LPC) in the early 1990s (Kromah 2009).

10. Byron Tarr contributed to this research through a number of interviews and email correspondence. Tarr served as special assistant to the finance minister, Steve Tolbert in 1972; assistant/deputy minister for revenues May 1972–74; and was responsible for state enterprises as controller general for public enterprises in 1977. He subsequently served as minister of planning in 1981–82 and minister of finance 1991–92. Former minister of justice of the PRC Chea Cheapoo stated that the CIA “were all around after the coup” (Kromah 2008, 84). The map that was used by the soldiers to enter the mansion and kill Tolbert was provided by the CIA and Doe did not hide from his closest allies that he was a “CIA representative” (Kromah 2008, 56) who among other members of the PRC had been trained by the US Army, either in Liberia or in the United States (Kromah 2008, 63).

11. Emmanuel Bowier and H. Boima Fahnbulleh contributed to this research through several formal and informal interviews. Bowier served as minister of information, tourism, and cultural affairs in the late 1980s. Bowier refers to Earnest Eastman as an outstanding person who worked in key government positions for almost all government leaders—from Tubman to Charles Taylor. H. Boima Fahnbulleh served as national security advisor of Liberia at the time of the interviews. He is co-founder of MOJA and served as minister of foreign affairs from December 1981 to 4 July 1984.

12. Cohen was interviewed in the documentary, “Liberia: America’s Stepchild.” Directed by Nancee Oku Bright, Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), 2002.

13. According to Sawyer (1988, 13), five people were identified as key actors in relation to the coup attempt. They were all executed.

14. Grand Gedeh country is the home county of Samuel Doe, and the Gedeh Association in the United States was a defacto Krahn society. Joseph Geebro was the chair of that society in the 1980s and also a friend of Taylor who had participated in the anti-Tolbert event at the Liberian Permanent Mission to the UN in New York in 1979 (Geebro 2009).

15. The map indicates the oil concession blocks that have been granted to a number of foreign oil companies (Kromah 2006), such as Union Carbide, Chevron Oil Company, Frontier Oil Company, Crystal Oil, and Araca Petroleum (GTZ 1983, map number 8). The annual report of 1985 from the Ministry of Lands, Mines, and Energy (MoLME) further states that the Liberia Exploration Company (AMOCO) drilled several exploratory offshore wells in Liberia, which all indicated “good hydrocarbon potentials” favoring “a continuation of exploration activities” MoLMe 1986, 48–49). The exploration program was based on previous positive results and was

expanded in 1982 with support from the World Bank (MoLME, 51). The positive indication for oil exploitation in Liberia resulted in a “promotional seminar” held in Lisbon, Portugal, in November 1985 with the participation of 10 oil companies. By the end of 1985, “Liberia was able to conclude offshore petroleum exploration agreements on six of the total of nine blocks” (MoLME, 51).

16. T. Debey Sayndee, director of the Kofi Annan Institute for Conflict Transformation at the University of Liberia. Interview conducted and recorded by Niels Hahn on 2 February 2009, in Sayndee’s office at the University of Liberia.

17. This division was further utilized by the NPFL in the latter half of the 1980s.

18. A number of Israeli companies came to Liberia, such as Yona International, that engaged in construction and the diamond sector (Sayndee 2009). In early 1985, Yona International began the construction of a new Ministry of Defense—valued at \$20 million and financed by the Israeli government (Ministry of National Defense 1986, 20).

19. J. K. Bishop was the US ambassador to Liberia from May 1987 to March 1990. Charles Stuart Kennedy interviewed him on 2 April 1995 in Washington, DC, at the Library of Congress. American Memory. The Foreign Affairs Oral History Collection of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, <https://cdn.loc.gov/>.

20. The competing political parties were the: NDPL headed by Samuel K. Doe; Liberia Action Party headed by Jackson F. Doe; Liberia Unification Party headed by William G. Kpohleh, and UP headed by Edward B. Kesselly (Givens 1986, 102–3).

21. According to the new constitution, the presidential candidate must have an absolute majority: “If no candidate obtains an absolute majority in the first ballot, a second ballot shall be conducted on the second Tuesday following. The two candidates who received the greatest number of votes on the first ballot shall be designated to participate in the run-off election” (*Constitution of the Republic of Liberia* 1986, article 83, b).

22. Prince Johnson was the former leader of the INPFL. Also, he served as senior senator for Nimba County, Republic of Liberia, and chairman of the National Security and Intelligence. Interviews were conducted from 2006 to 2009 by Niels Hahn. Also cited is Prince Johnson’s book, *The Rise and Fall of President Samuel K. Doe: A Time to Heal and Rebuild Liberia*.

23. For example, Dunn (2009, 259) noted that an assassination attempt on Doe 1 April 1983 was engineered by the CIA, which resulted in tensions between Doe and the US Embassy. This led to the expulsion of US security advisor Richard Smith, who was made persona non grata. Dunn refers to *Washington Post* correspondent Bob Woodward (2005, 302), who states that the Liberian-born Col Moses Flanzamaton “became a CIA agent and eventually attempted to seize power by leading a machine gun ambush on Doe’s jeep. Flanzamaton was arrested and confessed to his CIA ties [and] was executed a week after the coup attempt.” However, Woodward’s claim stands without evidence or references.

24. This occurred about two years before he became US assistant secretary of state for African affairs.

25. Cohen, “Liberia: America’s Stepchild,” 2002.

26. Othello Brandy, Carlton A. Karpeh, and George W. Wallace contributed to this research through several interviews. At the time of the interviews Brandy held the position as lead consultant in land commission at the Liberian Governance Commission. He served as minister of Agriculture from 2002 to 2005 and as ambassador to EU and the Benelux from 1997 to 2002. Most of his documentation comes from oral narratives from Firestone employees and local chiefs. Karpeh and Wallace have been involved in Liberia politics for more than 40 years, in various capacities.

At the time of the interviews Karpah served as senior ambassador at large and advisor to the minister of foreign affairs. Wallace served as ambassador at large and advisor to the president on foreign affairs. Prior to this position, Wallace served as minister of foreign affairs.

27. Winston A. Tubman contributed to this research through two interviews. He served as Liberia's permanent representative to the UN in the latter part of the 1970s. Subsequently, he served as: minister of justice during the Doe administration in the early 1980s; chair of the legal and constitutional committee of the group of Liberian political leaders meeting in Banjul, Gambia, that established the Interim Government in Liberia in 1990; senior advisor to the force commander of the UN Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM); and head of the UN Political Office for Somalia (UNPSO). Tubman is nephew to late Pres. William Tubman and was a presidential candidate for the general elections in 2005 and 2011.

28. Former wife to Pres. Charles Taylor and humanitarian coordinator of the NPFL during the military incursion into Liberia in December 1989. Interview conducted and recorded by Niels Hahn on 12 May and 23 November 2010 at her home in Ealing Broadway, London.

29. Thomas Sankara was a strong proponent of socialist Pan-Africanism. When he came to power after a coup, he stated in one of his first speeches on 2 October 1983 that the National Council of the Revolution (CNR) would fight against "subjugation by the world imperialist capitalist system," which transmuted Burkina Faso "from colony into a neocolony" (Sankara 1983, 90). Prairie (2007, 20) argues that Sankara's revolutionary ideas were inspired by Marx and Lenin.

30. Taylor was born in Liberia in 1948 and grew up there. His mother, Louise Zoe, was from the Gola ethnic group and his father Nielson Philip Taylor was Americo-Liberian. After entering the University of Liberia in 1969, he moved to the US in 1971 where he achieved a degree in accounting at Chamberlain Junior College, Boston, and then in 1971 received a bachelor of science in economics from Bentley College in Waltham, Massachusetts (C. Taylor 1997, 1). Due to his former presidency of the Liberia Student Association of Massachusetts and his position as chairman of the board of directors of the Union of Liberian Associations in the Americas, Taylor built up an extensive network before joining the NPFL (P. Johnson 2003, 41). His family background was an advantage for the NPFL because it appealed to a broad variety of social groups in Liberia and to Liberians residing in the United States. In the view of the indigenous people, Taylor was a native, and in the view of the Americo-Liberians, he was a part of the old ruling class (P. Johnson 2006).

31. Siaka Stevens was president of Sierra Leone from 1968 to 1985 and succeeded by Joseph Saidu Momoh (1985–92). Foday Sankoh became the leader of the RUF.

32. Arnold Kwenu's wife is a close friend of Daisy Delafosse. When Kwenu served as force commander of the ECOMOG intervention force in Liberia, from August 1990 to the end of September 1990, he was personally influenced by both President Houphouët-Boigny and President Compaoré (Kwenu 2008).

33. Cyril Allen and Daniel Chea contributed to this research through several interviews. Allen was the chairman emeritus and chairman of the advisory board of NPP. Chea held several key positions in the NPFL and served as minister of national defense in Taylor's administration from 1997 to 2003.

34. The RUF later expanded their basic program in 1995, under the name *Footpaths to Democracy—Toward a New Sierra Leone*, which opens with a citation from Frantz Fanon stating that "Each generation must out of relative obscurity, discover its mission, fulfill it or betray it" (RUF 1995).

35. Alaric Tokpa worked with Cleo Hanciles at the University of Ghana in the late 1980s.

36. Houphouët-Boigny was also closely connected to the NPFL through high-ranking NPFL member Tonia King, who was the son-in-law to the late President Tolbert and who had served as immigration commissioner of Liberia under Tolbert's administration (P. Johnson 2003, 40).

37. John Richardson contributed to this research through several interviews in 2006 and 2009. He was a key person in the NPFL and considered the right hand of Charles Taylor. He served as national security advisor in Taylor's administration from 1997 to 2003.

38. In contrast, Woewiyu (2009; 2010) states that Sirleaf's engagement with the NPFL was much stronger than what she acknowledges.

39. The nine men who formed the INPFL were Prince Johnson, Samuel Varney, Edward Zammah, Warman Kerpor, Targeh Wantee, Nuah Leaghay, Augustus Zammah, Prince Leah, and Robert Wonseleah (P. Johnson 2003, 57).

40. Until 2006, Prince Johnson rejected that the INPFL was supported by the United States (P. Johnson 2006), but in private conversations with significant members of the dissolved NPFL, Johnson has gradually admitted that he did receive substantive support from the USG (Richardson, 2009). In 2009, Prince Johnson made a public statement where he revealed that the INPFL had received around \$10 million from a number of powerful states—including the United States—to finance the war. Some of this money was channeled through the ACDL based in the United States where influential people such as Amos Sawyer and James [Jerome] Verdier were members (*The Informer* 2009).

41. The Deputies Committee is a part of the national security decision-making system of the NSC and a level above the PCC. Cohen was the chair of the PCC (Cohen 2000, 143).

42. De Vos arrived in Monrovia on 28 June 1990 and remained until 27 July 1992 (Hyman 2003, 244).

43. Brent Snowcroft, a former USAF officer who was a two-time US National Security advisor—first under Pres. Gerald Ford and then under Pres. George H. W. Bush. He also served as military assistant to Pres. Richard Nixon, deputy assistant to the President for National Security Affairs in the Nixon and Ford administrations, and as Chairman of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board under Pres. George W. Bush from 2001 to 2005.

44. Hearing at the TRC on Institutional and Thematic Hearings on 14 August 2008 in Monrovia. Monrovia, TRC. Unedited transcript of hearing. 120 pages.

45. Sheikh Kafumba Konneh contributed to this research through two interviews in 2009 and also provided documents from the IFMC. As the national chairman of the National Muslim Council of Liberia, Konneh served as the co-chair of the IFMC from 1990 to 2006. From 2006, he served as president of the Interreligious Council of Liberia and was appointed as one of six commissioners of the TRC of Liberia.

46. Within two years, the United States provided \$26 million to ECOMOG and \$230 million in humanitarian aid. Other forms of indirect support came in the form of the deployment of mobile training teams to regional countries in order to “encourage their involvement in maintaining peace in the region” and in the form of debt forgiveness for a number of contributing countries (McCoy 1994, 16). When Senegal deployed troops to Liberia in November 1991, they received military equipment from the US Defense Department stocks “with cash outlays coming from Economic Support Funds and 50 military trucks that the Doe regime had ordered from

South Korea that were sitting idle in a Senegalese warehouse” (Cohen 2000, 158). In similar ways, the United States supported other African countries that supported ECOMOG, such as Ghana, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone (Kwenu 2008).

47. Alhaji Kromah was interviewed twice in support of this research and contributed with information via email correspondence. Kromah was the leader of the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (ULIMO–K). At the time of the interview, Kromah served as professor at the University of Liberia. He previously served as special assistant to the vice president of Tolbert’s administration; assistant minister of information; and director general of the Liberian Broadcasting System (LBS) during the early Doe administration.

48. Jackson E. Doe, brother of the deceased Samuel Doe, was interviewed for this research. Bowier (2009) notes that Jackson Doe was among the few people Samuel Doe trusted and Jackson Doe would often be involved in key decision-making processes.

49. The Liberian organizations and parties that participated were: The Liberian Professional Business Association, Concerned Women of Liberia, the Press Union of Liberia, the Union of Liberian Artists, the Liberia Action Party, the Liberian Unification Party (LUP), LPP, the ND PL (not approved by President Doe), and the INPFL (P. Johnson 2003, 76).

50. According to Prince Johnson’s (2007, 15) TRC testimony, Doe gave him ammunition to fight ECOMOG and Johnson gave Doe about 500 bags of rice.

51. According to Kwenu (2008), the ECOMOG soldiers were in position at the periphery of the port area to keep the NPFL forces at bay. There were very few ECOMOG soldiers around the general’s office. Contrary to many reports, Kwenu claims that ECOMOG did not disarm Doe’s soldiers. To him, it was not logical to believe that the president would allow his bodyguards to be disarmed by a foreign intervention force that he did not trust. Prince Johnson (2006) states that the INPFL disarmed some of Doe’s bodyguards, but that all of the INPLF were killed during an exchange of fire with bodyguards.

52. The interrogation was filmed because Johnson wanted to demonstrate what happened to Doe—as when the media covered the Tolbert administration execution in 1980.



## Chapter 5

# Intensification of the Armed Conflicts

## Antagonistic Forces

After the death of President Doe, there was a short struggle for the presidency between Vice Pres. Harry Moniba, Gen David Nimley, and Prince Johnson. According to the constitution, the vice president should become president (*Constitution of the Republic of Liberia* 1986, article 63, b). However, Gen Nimley claimed to be acting president (Ofuatey-Kodjoe 1994, 275) through the National Defense Council, which he had established (Huband 2002), while at the same time, Prince Johnson declared himself president of Liberia (P. Johnson 2006).<sup>1</sup>

There were tensions between the INPFL and the ECOMOG. ECOMOG had refused to launch an attack on the NPFL ordered by Prince Johnson, who therefore arrested more than 60 ECOMOG soldiers (Kwenu 2008; Aboagye 1999, 89; P. Johnson 2009).<sup>2</sup> Gadhafi of Libya and President Rawlings of Ghana had a relatively good relationship, and the USG was concerned about political links between the NPFL and the government of Ghana. Therefore, by the end of September, General Kwenu was replaced by Nigerian Maj Gen Joshua Nimyel Dogonyaro, who was a close friend of Nigerian President Babangida (Kwenu 2008).

Gen Dogonyaro succeeded in uniting the INPFL and the AFL with ECOMOG and launched “Operation Liberty” in October 1990 (Aboagye 1999, 9–91). Taylor received new military supplies which improved his military capacity (Cohen 2000, 152). Several “Francophone states in [Economic Community of West African States] ECOWAS, notably Burkina Faso and Côte d’Ivoire, supported . . . Taylor” (Howe 1997, 153). Libya had increased support for the NPFL because Gadhafi saw ECOMOG as a dangerous development in Africa (A. Taylor 2010).<sup>3</sup> Operation Liberty resulted in weeks of fighting, which destroyed much of the infrastructure in Monrovia and the suburbs, including sewer systems, water supply, and the electricity network. Hundreds of thousands of people fled the country or were housed in internally displaced people (IDP) camps (Richardson 2009).<sup>4</sup> By the end of the battle, the NPFL was pushed about 20 kilometers outside of Monrovia (Aboagye 1999, 89–91).

The IGNU headed by Amos Sawyer was flown in by the ECOMOG and announced itself as the official GoL on 22 November. Sawyer did not trust the AFL and moved his government into the Ducor Hotel, situated close to the US Embassy. His auxiliary force of 1,000 soldiers, named the Black Berets, was trained in Guinea as a special protection force for the IGNU. All the armed factions except for the NPFL accepted the IGNU and Sawyer as the interim head of state (Sawyer 2009).<sup>5</sup> The NPFL established another Liberian government, named the National Patriotic Reconstruction Assembly Government (NPRAG), with its seat in Gbarnga, about three hours' drive from Monrovia. Charles Taylor was the elected president of the NPRAG, and the NPFL was referred to as the army of the NPRAG. The NPFL did not see Sawyer as a puppet of the USG because of his leftist orientation. He was seen as an "appropriate man" for the USG because Sawyer was a respected academic and politician in West Africa, however, without widespread support from the Liberian population. The USG could quickly get rid of Sawyer after he fulfilled the job (Richardson 2009; A. Taylor 2010).

In contrast to the IGNU, which only controlled the Monrovia area, NPRAG controlled about 95 percent of Liberia, which became known as "Greater Liberia." Business was established with companies from all over the world, which financed the NPRAG, and the port in Buchanan became strategic for import and export (Allen 2009; Richardson 2009).<sup>6</sup> The economic system of the war economy inspired some scholars to use Liberia as a case study of "shadow economies," "clandestine economies," and "patrimonial states," controlled by "warlords" and "strongmen," most significantly promoted by Reno (1994; 1995; 1997). NPRAG favored liberal capitalism and was prepared to do business with companies from all over the world (Allen 2009; I. Taylor 2010). In particular, French companies became involved in doing business with the NPRAG (Bekoe 2008, 98). According to Hyman (2003, 40), the United States was concerned about the "support that Taylor garnered from Ivorian and French business people" because they "feared that if he [Taylor] won the presidency, he would 'tilt' toward the French rather than toward Americans."

Cohen (2000, 155) states that toward the end of the 1990s, the war in Liberia had become "a surrogate fight between Côte d'Ivoire/Burkina [sic] and Nigeria/Ghana." However, it may be more accurate to see Liberia as a de facto divided country, governed by two antagonistic administrations, where the IGNU was backed by the USG

through the SMC countries, and NPRAG was backed by France through the Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso, with additional support from Libya.

The USDOS sent Ambassador Donald Petterson to West Africa with a letter for President Houphouët-Boigny to help him understand that “his protégé Charles Taylor could not gain power without ECOMOG cooperation,” and Taylor was informed that it was “unrealistic to expect ECOMOG to fade away and he should, therefore, accept negotiations” (Cohen 2000, 155).<sup>7</sup> NPRAG denounced the IGNU as an “imported government,” which became a widespread popular perception in Liberia (Allen 2009). The IGNU faced serious problems of legitimacy and was therefore open for negotiations (P. Johnson 2003, 135). The peace talks started in Bamako on 28 November 1990, where all the dominant factions were represented (“Decision A/DEC. 1/11/90,” ECOWAS SMC 1990). This was followed by a meeting in Banjul on 20 December, where all factions agreed to form a new “future interim government” (“Joint Statement of the Warring Parties in Liberia,” ECOWAS 1990). In a meeting in Lomé on 13 February 1991, the IGNU, INPFL, and NPRAG signed the Lomé Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities and Peaceful Settlement of Conflict. This would allow ECOMOG to have significant influence on the peace plan, including the disarmament program (Lomé Agreement 1991). Taylor claimed that he had been pressured by Blaise Compaoré to sign the plan, and NPRAG refused to implement it (Chea 2009).<sup>8</sup>

The USG encouraged US-based law firms H.P. Goldfield, and Lester Hyman, including former US Pres. Jimmy Carter to get involved in mediating between the IGNU and NPRAG. Hyman was hired by Taylor to represent NPRAG, and Carter’s International Negotiation Network (INN) became instrumental in setting up several conferences for peace negotiations, starting with the All-Liberian Conference in April 1991 (Hyman 2003, xiii). Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso did not participate in this conference (Mutwol 2009, 66), and Taylor opted out after receiving information from a foreign intelligence service that the USG had planned to assassinate him during this conference (Chea 2009; A. Taylor 2010). NPRAG did not believe that ECOMOG, which at that time had increased to 8,000 soldiers, would be able to provide the necessary security, and the meeting took place without Taylor (Chea 2009, A. Taylor 2010).

Before the conference, NPRAG had proposed a three-person Council of National Unity consisting of the NPFL, INPFL, and a

“credible” Liberian agreed upon by all factions (Allen 2009). However, the result of the All-Liberian Conference was that the IGNU was dissolved and re-established, Sawyer was re-elected as head of the IGNU, and Sawyer then appointed several well-known prominent politicians for office (P. Johnson 2003, 136–37).<sup>9</sup> From the perspective of NPRAG, the All-Liberian Conference did not change anything, and Liberia remained with two de facto governments (A. Taylor 2010).

Shortly before the All-Liberian Conference took place in March 1990, the RUF invaded Sierra Leone from Liberia. RUF invaded under the leadership of Foday Sankoh and with support from NPRAG, which supplied the RUF with soldiers, food, medicine, arms, and ammunition (Ngebeh 2010; A. Taylor 2010).<sup>10</sup> Many Krahn who feared retribution from Doe’s assault on other ethnic groups in Liberia fled to Sierra Leone and feared that they would be attacked by the joint forces of the RUF and the NPFL (Massalay 2009).<sup>11</sup> This fear converged with the interests of the government of Sierra Leone that had problems fighting the RUF. With support from the UK and the United States, several militia groups were established in Sierra Leone using Liberian refugees as soldiers to fight the RUF (A. Kromah 2009; Massalay 2009).<sup>12</sup> The government of Sierra Leone promised that services for the Liberian refugees living in the camps in Sierra Leone would improve if the young men would join a militia group. This put immense pressure on the families who depended on humanitarian aid to encourage their young family members to join a militia force (Massalay 2009).

Liberians United Defense Force (LUDF) and the Movement for Redemption of Muslims (MRM) were the two most significant movements that were established. The LUDF was dominated by the Krahn and former AFL soldiers and was headed by Albert Karpeh, who had previously received extensive military training in the United States, which qualified him as a “ranger.” Karpeh had served as minister of defense in the Doe administration, but as tensions between Doe and the United States increased, Karpeh was appointed as Liberia’s ambassador to Sierra Leone, to separate him from the military (Massalay 2009; Kromah 2009). The MRM was predominantly made up of Muslims from the Mandingo ethnic group, who for centuries had been discriminated against in West Africa. The MRM was headed by Alhaji Kromah, who had an academic background from the UK and the United States. Under Doe’s administration, Kromah had held important positions, such as commissioned major in the AFL; minister

of information, culture and tourism; and director general of the Liberian Institute for Strategic Studies (Kromah 2009). The MRM started as an advocacy group (Kromah 2008, 36) and appealed to the Muslims and Mandingos from the West African subregion. Joining the militia was seen as an opportunity to participate in the emancipation of the Mandingos (Dolleh 2008, 6).

On 29 May 1991 in Conakry, LUDF and MRM merged into the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (ULIMO), under the chairmanship of Raleigh Seekie, with the primary objective of fighting the RUF and the NPFL (Kromah 2009). Internal disputes in the Sierra Leonean government led to a shift in the leadership of ULIMO. Albert Karpah was supposed to take over the leadership, but he was killed, and ULIMO came under the leadership of Kromah (Kromah 2008, 102).<sup>13</sup>

ECOMOG's modern military equipment and air force were not equipped for bush fighting. They needed a force like ULIMO to fight in the bush, and there was close cooperation between ECOMOG and ULIMO throughout most of the conflict (Kromah 2009). ECOMOG "distributed arms to the IGNU, ULIMO, and AFL" (Cohen 2000, 159). On 11 June 1991, ULIMO gave an ultimatum for Charles Taylor to surrender to ECOMOG or risk being attacked. This marks the beginning of a long military engagement of ULIMO in Liberia. With around 15,000 soldiers, ULIMO became the second largest army in Liberia next to the NPFL (Kromah, 2009).

The leadership of all military forces had difficulties controlling their soldiers "on the ground." "Many soldiers committed atrocities against the civilian population. For example, ECOMOG commanders and soldiers were underpaid; this motivated them to loot and export booty to their own countries. ECOMOG earned the nickname, "Every Car or Moving Object Gone." ECOMOG commanders would also sell arms and ammunition to all factions, including the RUF and the NPFL (Kromah 2009; Richardson 2009; A. Taylor 2010; Gballah 2009).<sup>14</sup>

The RUF and the NPRAG had a relatively strong support base in West Africa because many people saw them as revolutionary liberation movements against neocolonialism. Many politicians and military officers, who were supposed to fight the RUF and the NPRAG, sympathized with the insurgents and provided covert support (A. Taylor 2010). Sierra Leonean government soldiers frequently joined the rebels, which created the term "sobel," meaning "so"ldier by day

and re“bel” by night (D. Davis 2010).<sup>15</sup> This has confused some Western academics, such as Keen (2005, 107) who describes it as a “sell-game” and “a strangely co-operative conflict.” Prince Johnson (2003, 142) notes that although the INPFL cooperated with the IGNU and ECOMOG, many INPFL officers were ready to join the NPFL (P. Johnson 2006).

As the conflicts in Sierra Leone and Liberia grew more complicated, US congressman and chairman of the House of Representatives’ Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, Mervyn Dymally, set up a series of meetings. These meetings were known as the Yamoussoukro Talks I, II, III, and IV, and Jimmy Carter participated (Aboagye 1999, 100). There were so many peace conferences in different African cities under the ECOWAS umbrella that they “started numbering them (Yamoussoukro I, II, III, Banjul I and II, and so on)” (Cohen 2000, 156). The common feature of the conferences was that there was “always to be a ceasefire agreement, followed by the formation of an all-party interim government and an election under international supervision. Beforehand, the armies were to encamp their troops and disarm to ECOMOG” (Cohen 2000, 156). The result of the conferences was more or less the same. Taylor would attend and sign the final documents and then act opposite of the agreement. His fundamental demand was that he “must be the interim president” and insisted that ECOMOG should leave Liberia so negotiations could take place without “outside interference” (Cohen 2000, 156).

The first meeting was held in Yamoussoukro, the capital city of Ivory Coast, on 29 and 30 June, with the participation of Pres. Houphouët-Boigny, Pres. Blaise Compaoré, Charles Taylor, Pres. Jawara, and Pres. Babangida. Besides the usual agreements on a ceasefire, disarmament, new interim government, and scheduled elections, it was agreed that Carter’s INN should participate in monitoring the ceasefire (Conciliation Resources, Yamoussoukro Accord I 1991). This meeting was followed by a second meeting on 29 and 30 July with the participation of new heads of state, such as João Bernardo Vieira of Guinea-Bissau and Pres. Abdou Diouf of Senegal. At this meeting, Carter’s INN pledged to assist in the organization of an agreed electoral process in Liberia (Conciliation Resources, Yamoussoukro Accord II 1991).

The Yamoussoukro III and IV, held on 17 September and 30 October 1991, established an election commission and a supreme court, and plans were made for disarmament, repatriation, and rehabilitation

under the supervision of ECOMOG. The agreement called for “the necessity that all hostile foreign forces be withdrawn immediately from the territory of Sierra Leone and that a buffer zone be created with similar dispatch on the Liberian side of the border, to be monitored by ECOMOG” (Conciliation Resources, Yamoussoukro Accord III, 1991; Conciliation Resources, Yamoussoukro Accord IV, 1991).

ULIMO was excluded from the Yamoussoukro Talks and perceived Carter to be pro-Taylor (Kromah 2003, 4). They feared the talks paved the way for Taylor’s presidency and therefore launched “Operation Jungle Fire” from Sierra Leone in October 1991, in an attempt to eliminate Taylor’s NPFL (Kromah 2003).<sup>16</sup> ECOMOG backed ULIMO, and during the fighting between NPFL and ULIMO, the election commission and supreme court were sworn in, in January and March 1992, respectively. Amos Sawyer went to Tripoli to make a deal with Gadhafi to ask for Libya to cease support for NPRAG, but without success. NPRAG would not disarm before the ULIMO forces moved back to Sierra Leone. The Yamoussoukro Accords failed soon after the last agreement was signed (Sawyer 2009).

With the additional deployment of Senegalese troops, the ECOMOG force numbered more than 10,000 soldiers by April 1992. For the first time, ECOMOG moved outside Monrovia and deployed soldiers throughout the country; buffer zones were established between NPFL and ULIMO (Aboagye 1999, 103). For the NPRAG it was clear that the well-equipped Senegalese contingent was closely connected to the USG, which under the ECOMOG umbrella joined ULIMO in major armed clashes with the NPFL (Richardson 2009). It became an “open secret that ECOMOG either looked the other way or actually facilitated the war-making efforts of ULIMO” (Dunn 1998, 91). The Senegalese contingent was withdrawn, but more fighting broke out between ECOMOG and NPFL, and by September 1992 ECOMOG was forced to withdraw from Greater Liberia (Richardson 2009).

During a meeting 27–29 July 1992, ECOMOG threatened NPRAG with economic sanctions backed by the UN if the NPFL did not disarm. Taylor argued that since the NPFL was in combat with ULIMO in the Western part of Liberia, the NPFL could not disarm. Taylor questioned the reasoning: why did the ECOMOG not set conditions for ULIMO? Many politicians in opposition to Taylor began to criticize ECOMOG’s partiality as an obstacle to peace (Tipoteh 2009), and the Ghanaian government announced that, if ECOMOG deviated

further from its mandate, Ghana would withdraw its soldiers (Ankomah 1992, 14).<sup>17</sup>

Dunn (1998, 91) indicates that it was the partial position of ECOMOG that made Taylor launch the significant attack on Monrovia in mid-October 1992 since negotiations would not lead anywhere. This attack is known as “Operation Octopus” and described in most of the literature as a well-planned operation (see for example Conteh-Morgan 1998, 40; Aboagye 1999 105; Ellis 2001, 98–99; Gershoni 1997, 58). However, according to Richardson (2009), this attack was not planned, and there was not an “Operation Octopus.” According to Richardson, Octopus was his call name on the radio because he had multiple functions in the NPFL. It was difficult to coordinate any attack because 95 percent of the soldiers were poorly educated and illiterate. Their primary motivation for taking up arms was related to poverty, and they were driven to places where they could loot, rather than being directed and monitored by orders from a structured military organization. This was the essence of the internal conflict dynamic. The leadership of the NPFL had limited control over the armed groups, and the art of the warfare was to find ways in which to converge NPRAG’s political agenda with the interests of the soldiers. The prospect of looting and raping was the main reason soldiers moved toward Monrovia. The NPRAG used this drive to attempt to take control of the capital and made alliances with key people in the INPFL, who had become concerned about the role of the USG in the war.

Prince Johnson (2003, 145) notes that a number of his officers changed sides during this attack and joined forces with the NPFL in the battle against the IGNU, ECOMOG, and ULIMO. However, the NPFL did not succeed in taking Monrovia. The INPFL was dissolved, and Prince Johnson made a deal with ECOMOG allowing him to go into exile in Nigeria (P. Johnson 2009). According to Richardson (2009), many of the soldiers from the INPFL moved to the NPFL, which militarily stood stronger by the end of 1992. On the diplomatic side, the NPRAG had gained more legitimacy among many West African leaders because of the increasing awareness that the USG used ECOMOG as a proxy army.

## **Toward the General Elections 1997**

By the end of 1992, the UN became gradually more involved in the Liberian conflict, which reflected President Bush’s (1991) post-Cold

War announcement that the United States would take the opportunity to forge a “new world order” in which “a credible United Nations can use its peacekeeping role to fulfil the promise and vision of the U.N’s founders” (Kessler 1997, 6, 9).

ECOWAS took the Liberia issue to the UNSC where it obtained “endorsement for its mission and an arms embargo on Taylor” (Cohen 2000, 160). The UNSC further agreed to sponsor the deployment of non-ECOWAS military forces from Uganda, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe (Cohen 2000, 160). Furthermore, UNSC security council resolution (SCR) 788 requested to “dispatch urgently a Special Representative to Liberia to evaluate the situation” (SCR 778, UN 1992, article 7) and decided to “implement a general and complete embargo on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Liberia” (SCR 778, UN 1992, article 8), with the exception for military equipment used for the peacekeeping forces of ECOWAS in Liberia (SCR 778, UN 1992, article 8).

Shortly after, President Clinton signed a directive calling for a Liberia policy review on 24 February 1993, which transmuted into the Inter-agency Working Group (IAWG) in 1997.<sup>18</sup> At the last meeting over which Cohen presided, he documented that the USG had paid \$232 million directly for the operation in Liberia out of the total cost of more than \$500 million (Cohen 2000, 160). Cohen (2000, 160) notes that Nigeria was the most significant contributor, but he does not account for the indirect funding through debt relief and foreign aid. It was estimated that “the forces of ECOMOG and the armed factions of AFL and ULIMO were together stronger than the NPFL, but not strong enough to defeat it” (Cohen 2000, 160). Taylor was hoping for a regime change in Nigeria, which could result in a withdrawal of the Nigerian troops from Liberia and thereby give him a victory. It was concluded that the United States did not have any alternatives but “to continue supporting ECOWAS” (Cohen 2000, 160).

By the end of 1992, the Interim Legislative Assembly empowered Sawyer’s administration to intensify the military pressure on the NPFL, who lost control of strategic areas such as Roberts International Airport, Buchanan, and Voinjama. In April 1993, the NPRAG lost their main base in Gbarnga and relocated to Saclepea in Nimba County close to the border of Ivory Coast, until Gbarnga was retaken by the NPFL (Richardson 2009; Sawyer 2009; Kromah 2009). The fighting had devastating consequences for the civilian population, and each armed faction accused the others of committing crimes

against humanity and genocide, which also became part of the war propaganda (Richardson 2009).

As the fighting and atrocities intensified, the UNSC adopted SCR 813, on 26 March 1993, reaffirming the belief in the Yamoussoukro accords. These agreements expressed great concern for the humanitarian situation and violation of international humanitarian law and requested a meeting to be convened with the disputing parties (SCR 813, UN, articles 14–17). Next, on 17 July 1993, the Geneva Ceasefire Agreement was accepted, followed by the Cotonou Accord on 25 July 1993, signed by the IGNU, NPRAG, and ULIMO. This agreement established the UN Observer Mission in Liberia and a Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee, consisting of an equal number of representatives from the parties to the agreement, with the “authority to monitor, investigate and report all ceasefire violations” (Aboagye 1999, 358–362). Furthermore, the agreement aimed at establishing buffer zones at the borders of Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Ivory Coast to “prevent cross-border attacks, infiltration or importation of arms” (Aboagye 1999, 358–362). Also, the agreement specified merging the warring parties into a single “Liberia National Transitional Government” (LNTG), with the mandate to facilitate disarmament and lead the country to general elections within seven months (Aboagye 1999, 358–362).

A Liberian Trust Fund was established by the UN, which estimated the cost was around \$134 million. However, the Trust Fund faced a problem of underfunding. The United States was the chief donor and paid the first contribution of \$19.83 million in October 1993, followed by a contribution from the UK of \$1 million, and Germany, which delivered logistical materials such as Mercedes vehicles (Aboagye 1999, 304). The Trust Fund was largely paying the US-based company Pacific Architects and Engineers (PAE) to support ECOMOG’s mission logistically in the field of transportation, maintenance, water, and power generation (Aboagye 1999, 290). The engagement of PAE reflects the trend of neoliberal economic expansion into the military sector and privatization of security, which Singer (2006, 2–3) notes, started in the early 1990s.<sup>19</sup> Whereas US military operations in Liberia were previously executed by the DOD, the engagement of the PAE in Liberia marked a new era where military assignments were increasingly outsourced to private corporations.<sup>20</sup>

The new LNTG, known as the Council of State, was installed on 7 March 1994 and headed by David D. Kpormakpor, a civilian considered to be relatively neutral by the disputing parties. The IGNU

was allocated eight seats, represented by Philip Banks; the NPFL was allocated six seats, represented by Isaac Musa; and ULIMO was also allocated six seats, represented by El-Mohammed Sheriff. The appointment of Sheriff created internal conflicts within ULIMO based on ethnic and religious divisions. A key member of ULIMO, Thomas Ziah from the Krahn ethnic group, opposed the appointment of Sheriff in the Council of State. This led Alhaji Kromah to reduce Ziah's influence, leading Gen Roosevelt Johnson, also belonging to the Krahn ethnic group, to announce on 6 March, that he had replaced Kromah as the head of ULIMO. This resulted in a split, which established ULIMO-J and ULIMO-K. ULIMO-J was established under the leadership of Roosevelt Johnson, who predominantly represented the Krahns. ULIMO-K was created under the leadership of Alhaji Kromah, who predominantly represented the Mandingos and Muslims (Sheriff 2006).<sup>21</sup>

The new LNTG excluded influential politicians, which resulted in the establishment of four new armed factions:

1. The Central Revolutionary Council of the NPFL (CRC-NPFL) under the leadership of Tom Woewiyu and Sam Dokie, who had split from the NPFL;
2. The Liberian Peace Council (LPC) under the leadership of George Boley;
3. Lofa Defense Force (LDF) led by Francois Massaquoi; and
4. Liberia National Conference led by Bayogar Junius.  
(Sheriff 2009)

On 8 September 1994, a coalition of AFL, CRC-NPFL, LDF, LPC, and ULIMO-J launched a significant attack on the NPFL stronghold in Gbarnga. According to the NPFL, the attack was supported by the USG (Paasewe 2006, 48–49).<sup>22</sup>

While the fighting was ongoing, new negotiations took place in Ghana on 12 September hosted by President Rawlings. This resulted in the Akosombo Agreement, which confirmed the Cotonou Agreement, but with a new schedule for implementation (“Akosombo Agreement,” UN Peacemaker 1994). The agreement did not include the new armed factions, and after the NPFL lost Gbarnga and other strategic areas in Liberia (Richardson 2009), new peace negotiations took place in Accra in December 1994. These negotiations included the LDF, LPC, CRC-NPFL, ULIMO-J, and the Liberian National

Conference (LNC), referred to as the Non-Signatories to the Akosombo Agreement. The new negotiations resulted in the Accra Acceptance and Accession Agreement and the Accra Agreement on the Clarification of the Akosombo Agreement. The Non-Signatories accepted the Akosombo Agreement and Cotonou Agreement and received a one-member representation on a five-member Council of State; they were represented as the “Coalition” (“Agreement on the Clarification of the Akosombo Agreement [Accra Clarification] UN Peacemaker 1994).

Despite the agreement, fighting resumed and intensified. After Sani Abacha took power in a military coup in November 1993, the NPFL had established better relations with Nigeria. This was due to Taylor and Abacha’s “common problems with the international community” (Paasewe 2006, 70). This changed the conflict dynamic in Liberia because ECOMOG became less hostile to the NPFL while the USG became more reliant on the new armed factions (Richardson 2009). With Abacha in power, the USG agreed with Carter’s INN that ECOMOG should “include more non-Nigerian troops” (Carter 1997), and in January 1995, a USDOS human rights report openly condemned ECOMOG for human rights violations and systematic and large-scale looting. They recommended cuts in funding ECOMOG (USAID 1998, 11). By February 1995, ECOMOG’s total number of soldiers had dropped from about 13,500 to less than 8,000, partly because Tanzania pulled out its troops. After this, the troop contribution to ECOMOG were as follows: Nigeria 4,908; Ghana 1,028; Guinea 609; Uganda 760; Sierra Leone 359; Gambia 10; and Mali 10 (Aboagye 1999, 119).

On 19 August 1995, the Abuja Accord was signed. This agreement ensured a ceasefire on 26 August 1995 and established a six-member council of state. It represented all factions except ULIMO-J—which had been squeezed out by the NPFL—ULIMO-K, and Nigeria (Aboagye 1999, 123). Wilton Sankawulu was appointed chairman of the council, and all other members were vice chairmen of equal status. The NPFL was represented by Charles Taylor, ULIMO by Alhaji Kromah, the Coalition by George Boley, the LNC by Oscar Quiah, and traditional chiefs by Tamba.<sup>23</sup> The transitional government was given a life span of approximately 12 months, with the mandate of implementing the Akosombo Agreement according to a new schedule (“Abuja Agreement to Supplement the Cotonou and Akosombo

Agreements as Subsequently Clarified by the Accra Agreement,” UN Peace maker1995).

On 31 August 1995, Taylor arrived in Monrovia dressed as a civilian for the first time since he had fled the country under Doe in 1983 (Hyman 2003, 43). The peace agreement remained fragile and minor clashes between the different factions continued to take place across the country. The USG was not happy with the Abuja agreement because Taylor was by far the most popular political figure in Liberia, and most people in the transitional government expected Taylor to win the general election (Richardson 2009; Sheriff 2009; Tokpa 2010).<sup>24</sup> Therefore, there were several unsuccessful assassination attempts on Taylor. On 6 April 1996, heavy fighting broke out in Monrovia between ULIMO-J and the transitional government after the Liberian National Police—backed by the NPFL, ULIMO-K, and ECOMOG—attempted to arrest Roosevelt Johnson for suspected murder (A. Kromah 2009; Sheriff 2009; Richardson 2009).

President Clinton launched Operation Assured Response; he activated US military helicopters from Freetown, initiated aircraft from Senegal, and deployed a US Navy amphibious force off the coast of Monrovia (Clinton 1996). Clinton emphasized that although the US military forces were “equipped for combat,” the objective of Operation Assured Response was not to “alter or preserve the existing political status quo in Liberia” but to evacuate US citizens (Clinton 1996). However, the deployment lasted from April to August 1996 and evacuated only 49 US citizens (US Navy 1997). The NPFL saw the US military as a support mission for ULIMO-J, which was enhanced by the actions of PAE, who openly delivered arms to ULIMO-J by helicopter (Richardson 2009). Most of the literature ignores or marginalizes this US intervention. Sesay (1996, 404) notes that the United States deployed approximately 2,000 Marines to protect the US Embassy and to evacuate US citizens. Ellis (2001, 108) only mentions once that the USG “began using the PAE security company to helicopter weapons to the beleaguered fighters of ULIMO-J in an attempt to level the balance of forces,” because the US was “appalled by ECOMOG’s partiality.”

The military pressure on ULIMO-J led Roosevelt Johnson to seek shelter at the US Embassy for one week before being airlifted to Accra (Paasewe 2006, 51). On 21 April, the USG intervened diplomatically by sending a high-level US delegation headed by US Deputy Assistant Secretary William Twaddell to Monrovia with \$30 million as

incentives for negotiations (Cohen 2000, 160). A conference was held in Accra, 7–8 May. The most significant outcome was that the chairman of the council of state, Wilton G. S. Sankawulo, was replaced by Ruth Perry on 3 September 1996. On 22 November 1996, Taylor agreed to ECOMOG taking over security, which marks the beginning of the disarmament process. This occurred months before the general election, which was scheduled for 19 July 1997 (Richardson 2009). As the elections approached, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf returned to Liberia from the United States as head of the UP, which was the main opposing party to Taylor's newly established political party, the National Patriotic Party (NPP).<sup>25</sup> Sirleaf had been working for the World Bank and other UN agencies in the previous decade but had frequently visited Liberia (Sirleaf 2009). The USDOS was confident that Ellen Johnson Sirleaf would win "because she could demonstrate international support," without being aware of how strong a support base Taylor had in Liberia (Hyman 2003, 51).

The USG made significant efforts to undermine and delegitimize Taylor's NPP before the elections. Charles Snetter, who in 1993 had opened a small private radio station called Radio Monrovia, was in 1996 encouraged by USAID to meet with the Hironnelle Foundation in Switzerland. The aim was to establish an influential radio station in Liberia to counter Taylor's Kiss-FM Radio.<sup>26</sup> Later, the Hironnelle Foundation came to Liberia and established Star Radio, under the direction of the former head of the BBC Africa Service, George Bennett.<sup>27</sup> The transitional government would not give radio frequencies to foreigners, so the license was given to Snetter who transferred it to Star Radio. Most of the funding came from USAID through the Hironnelle Foundation and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems. Snetter also worked with the Washington-based nongovernmental organization (NGO) Search for Common Grounds, which arrived in Liberia shortly before the election.

Paasewe (2006), who later became Taylor's press secretary, states that the USG and associated organizations tried to erode Taylor's credibility with propaganda spread through popular networks and by releasing reports "accusing Taylor of supporting the RUF rebels in Sierra Leone" and trading arms for "blood diamonds" (Paasewe 2006, 53). However, this backfired because Taylor used the accusations as proof that he was "disliked by the United States because of his vision of a developed and prosperous Liberia" (Paasewe 2006, 53). He could now present himself as a presidential candidate that could

stand up against the United States in contrast to the candidates who presented themselves as “American-backed” (Paasewe 2006, 54).

Taylor’s NPP won the election on 19 July 1997, with 75.3 percent of the votes. The NPP was allocated 49 of the 64 seats in the House of Representatives and 21 of the 26 seats in the Senate. Out of the 13 political parties that competed, Sirleaf’s UP was second with 9.6 percent of the votes, followed by the All Liberia Coalition Party with four percent (GoL 1999, 20). The election was overseen by over 500 members of an international observer team led by Jimmy Carter, which declared the election as free and fair (Hyman 2003, 51).

Concerning the NPP’s victory, Cohen notes that

the winner was none other than Charles Taylor, the man we wanted to install as President in 1990 . . . If we had been allowed to pursue the plan adopted in the interagency process to persuade Doe to go into exile, thus opening the door for Taylor to take power, years of devastating civil war might have been prevented. And without the collateral need for ECOWAS peacekeeping, a francophone-anglophone surrogate war could also have been prevented . . . Had Taylor been allowed to take power in 1990 . . . the destruction of Liberia would have been avoided, and Taylor might have been more open to constructive external influence (Hyman 2003, 45).

However, the USG was not happy with the election results. Taylor’s opponents argued that people voted for him out of fear that he would resume the war if he lost the election. This is reflected in a USG report stating that the elections “were administratively free and transparent, but were conducted in an atmosphere of intimidation, as most voters believed that Taylor’s forces would resume fighting if Taylor were to lose” (USDOS 1998). This view has been reproduced in much of the literature, as captured in Ellis (2001, 109), Hoffman (2006, 314), Outram (1999, 169), and Stedman and Lyons (2004, 154).

Ellis (2001, 109) further argues that many voters also believed that Taylor “was destined by God to be president of Liberia” and voted for him because of religious conviction. Other votes were irrational as is reflected in a song sung by young NPFL supporters: “He killed my Pa; He killed my Ma; I’ll vote for him.” Richardson (2006) argues that the people singing this song were not referring to their birth parents, as many academics and commentators state. The song was created by the younger members of the NPP to indicate that Taylor had “killed” the “evil spirits” of the past, which the expression “my Pa” and “my Ma” refers to, and therefore he would be the right person as the president of Liberia.

The election did not resolve the war but instead marked the beginning of a new round of armed conflicts. In early 2000, Charles Taylor's former lawyer, Lester Hayman, received a letter that was purported to be a CIA field intelligence report from Liberia.<sup>28</sup> The letter was written on CIA stationery with the CIA shield and dated 7 September 1996. The CIA general counsel states that the document is fake. However, even if it is fake, Hayman, who has connections to key USG officials such as Jimmy Carter, considers the document to accurately summarize the USG position toward Liberia in 1996. The document, discovered in 2000, is interesting because it predicts the future development in Liberia more or less as it happened. The letter includes the continuation of the war, the removal of Charles Taylor, and the US-led, comprehensive direct foreign intervention in all sectors of the Liberian state.

The alleged report confirms that US strategic interest in Liberia is "vital, if not crucial "regarding military and intelligence facilities."<sup>29</sup> Regarding the elections, the alleged report states that "all transmissions from Capitol Hill and 1600 Penn seem to not favor any of the current candidates in Monrovia."<sup>30</sup> Taylor "is out of the question due to his double-dealings with international shady figures, including his ties to Libya's Mu'ammar Gadhafi." Former US ally, Gabriel Backus Matthews, is considered as "very inconsistent and unreliable" and "too close to many of the problems in the country today."<sup>31</sup> Tipoteh is classified as a "card-carrying socialist" and the type "who will turn away from the U.S. and align with Socialist nations." Finally, H. Boima Fahnbulleh is considered as having a "narrow support base" and being a "sectionalist" with "close ties to China, Cuba, and other socialist nations."<sup>32</sup>

The alleged report suggests that the CIA should "infiltrate larger Liberian organizations and groups in the U.S. such as the Union of Liberian Association in the Americas" in order to "identify and/or support a candidate."<sup>33</sup> Referring to classified documents, the alleged report notes that the "U.S. opposes almost all of the standing politicians in the country" and if "any one of them become elected, immediate actions will be taken, including threats of a war crimes tribunal, to bring down the government."<sup>34</sup> As the Tubman delegation was informed in the early 1990s, the alleged report states that funds have been allocated for Liberia's reconstruction with conditions established by the House and Senate Select Committees on Intelligence and Foreign Affairs and the White House: "No portion of this money

should be released unless the Head of the new government is acceptable to Langley.”<sup>35</sup> If the station chief at Mamba Point in Monrovia by the end of February 1997 “has not embraced a candidate . . . and should the political and military climate remain unpredictable, Phase II of Operation Green Sand” will begin.<sup>36</sup> This Class-3 destabilization campaign will “render Liberia primed for complete external control within five years.”<sup>37</sup>

### **The NPP and Liberia’s Oil Resources**

In the new GoL, power was centralized around 15 to 20 key people loyal to Charles Taylor. Most trusted, for example, were Cyril Allen, chairman of the NPP; Moses Blah, vice president; Daniel Chea, minister of defense; and John Richardson, national security advisor. There were often strong disagreements among people in the center of power; however, Taylor made the final decisions. The overall policy direction was liberal capitalism with a reconciliatory policy toward the USG (Allen 2009).

In contradiction to this policy, Taylor also expressed a radical form of liberal Pan-Africanism in his inaugural speech on 2 August 1997, which was attended by more than 10 heads of states from the West African region and international politicians, such as Jimmy Carter. Having announced the birth of the Third Republic, Taylor addressed the business community and stated that Liberia under his administration would be committed to ensuring “a stable, secure and enabling environment” for economic activities under the “Free Enterprise System” and emphasized the full support and “subscription to the principles of the sacred and inviolate right of private investment and property.” He further emphasized that the objective of the government was to “form the basis for private sector development of a middle class” and production of “items with the inscription Made in Liberia” (C. Taylor 1997, 14).

Taylor extended his Pan-African vision by stating that “the Liberian Peace Process has evolved a new measure of fraternity within the West African context” from where it is “anticipated that a definitive African Agenda will emerge out of this new prevailing spirit of Pan-Africanism” (C. Taylor 1997, 15). He further noted that “the time has come for Africa—indeed, all of Africa—to speak with one united

voice” and not “be commandeered by others” as had previously occurred. According to Taylor:

the baton has been bequeathed to a new breed of West African leaders, a new breed of South African leaders, a new breed of East and North African leaders that Africa is no longer willing or prepared to accept being dictated to by outside forces. Africa will no longer remain a purely consumer continent; indeed, Africa will no longer be the breeding ground for sowing seeds of discord, nor the market place where arms for human destruction are sold. Africa must assume her own leadership; Africa must determine for herself, on behalf of its people, what its priorities are, based on the wishes and desires of the African people (C. Taylor 1997, 16).

Taylor considered Sam Nujoma of Namibia, Jerry Rawlings of Ghana, Omar al-Bashir of Sudan, Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso, and former Chadian Pres. Goukouni Oueddei as “revolutionary colleagues.” He also expressed his admiration for Nelson Mandela, Robert Mugabe, and Joseph Kabila for their efforts in opposing the West (Paasewe 2006, 72).

At the twentieth ECOWAS summit in Abuja on 28 August 1997, hosted by Abacha, Taylor called for a “renewed, if not new, conceptualization of man; a consent of our humanity reminiscent of the vision” which drove Kwame Nkrumah, William Tubman, and Sékou Touré “to develop the concept of the OAU” (C. Taylor 1997, 36). Quoting Franz Fanon, Taylor stated that “for ourselves and for humanity, comrades, we must turn over a new leaf; we must work out new concepts, and try to set afoot a new man” (C. Taylor 1997, 36). Yet, despite drawing on the names of Fanon, Nkrumah, and Touré, Taylor’s notion of Pan-Africanism was actually more similar to Senghor’s notion of African socialism with a focus on color and race, rather than class, as is further captured in the speech, in which he continues, “We Africans are blessed with a tradition of cooperation in resolving problems, from the smallest village to the largest city. We share a genuine brotherly concern that has led us to take our brother’s problems as our problems. We eat, we sleep, we dance, we mourn together, we have always lived within the community, we have not known egocentrism. All the ingredients for modern cooperation and integration are imbued in our African tradition” (C. Taylor 1997, 36).

For Taylor, what was needed was to “rediscover” African culture, history, and humanity to solve the problems of underdevelopment and armed conflicts in the West African region (C. Taylor 1997, 36).

Paasewe notes that Taylor's rhetoric made many commentators erroneously consider him a socialist, but "from the cradle Taylor has always been a pro-American" (Paasewe 2006, 60). Taylor himself emphasized that he was "pro-Liberian and not anti-American," without socialist tendencies. He requested that the United States train the AFL and requested the reestablishment of the defunct American military mission at the Ministry of Defense (Paasewe 2006, 60). His first cabinet was deliberately composed of ministers without affiliation to socialism in order to ensure good relations and cooperation with international financial institutions and the USG (Paasewe 2006, 61–62).

The first significant political decision made by Taylor was the recognition of the RoC. The IGNU under Sawyer had reestablished relations with the People's Republic of China (PRC) in August 1993, which resulted in the opening of the PRC's embassy in Monrovia a few months later (GoL 1999, 80). According to Sawyer (2009), the official argument for his administration to reestablish relations with the PRC was that Liberia needed to recognize the PRC as a permanent member of the UNSC to enhance the prospects for peace. However, unofficially, the long-term reason was that Liberia would be able to use the power of the PRC to counterbalance the power of the United States, which was similar to Tolbert's policy in the 1970s.

In 1993, the NPRAG "vehemently opposed and rejected the recognition of the PRC and argued that the IGNU "had no authority to make such a policy on China and declared that as far as it was concerned, Liberia's relations with China was with the [Republic of China (Taiwan)] RoC" (GoL 1999, 81). The NPRAG "dismissed the 'Quest for Peace' . . . as the reason for IGNU's action as hypocritical and shallow pretence" (GoL 1999, 81). After the Sawyer-led IGNU was replaced by the Kpromakpor-led Council of State in March 1994, the decision was near reversal again, with the hope of "receiving substantial reconstruction assistance from Taipei" (GoL 1999, 81). However, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs succeeded in convincing the Council of State that breaking relations with the PRC could have serious consequences for future peace and reconstruction of the country and that there was not any evidence that the RoC could supersede the PRC in their development assistance to Liberia. Moreover, the Ministry noted that Liberia could "ill-afford constant changes in its Foreign Policy orientations on the basis of promised economic assistance" and concluded after a series of arguments that such a crucial decision should be taken by an elected government (GoL 1999, 82).

Nevertheless, in November 1997, the elected GoL established relations with the RoC, and in the same month, Pres. Lee Teng-hui invited Taylor for a one-week, official state visit to Taipei (GoL 1999, 82). The two leaders signed a Joint Communiqué where the RoC committed to assisting Liberia in the reconstruction process, while Liberia agreed to provide political support to the RoC in the international arena (GoL 1999, 83). According to Richardson (2006) and Brandy (2009), this was a personal decision made by Taylor, which other people could not influence. Taylor argued that “Liberia should not just abandon an old friend” (Richardson 2006). During the early 1990s, the USG had introduced Taiwanese representatives to Taylor, who had visited NPRAG in Greater Liberia. Taylor had also visited Taipei, where oral agreements of cooperation were made between NPRAG and Taipei (A. Taylor 2010). Charles Taylor (2010) recalls that the USG was very concerned about the GoL’s China policy from the very beginning of the incursion and encouraged the relationship with Taiwan.

Besides receiving aid from the RoC, a donor conference was held in Paris on 7 April 1998, with a follow-up, in October 1997, at the Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the Special Conference on Liberia held at the UN headquarters in New York. Before this conference, an assessment mission had been carried by the World Bank, which resulted in a two-year national plan for reconstruction which was estimated to cost \$438 million (Integrated Regional Information Network [IRIN] for West Africa 1998). The donor conference was co-chaired by the World Bank, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the Netherlands’ Ministry for Development Cooperation. The donors pledged a total of \$239 million for the reconstruction plan (Eziakonwa 1998); however, the USG ensured that the funds were withheld in order to “to starve the Liberian government” (Paasewe 2006, 68).

There are many different viewpoints regarding the failure of the administration to establish a good relationship with the USG. According to Chea (2009), in addition to the GoL’s relationship with Libya, the USG could not accept that many key members of Taylor’s administration were radical nationalists, and the GoL was seen as the “eye of the revolutionary storm” in West Africa. This corresponds with Chomsky (2008) who notes that “radical nationalism” anywhere in the world is considered as a threat to US national interests. In this context, the word “radical” does not mean radical as in policies of

extreme change, rather it means that a group of people that fall into the same category such as “Communists,” in terms of not being under the control of the United States (Chomsky 2008).

The US strategic facilities were “no longer a factor in the US-Liberian relationship” after the USG “had made alternative arrangements in other places in Africa” (Petterson 2002, 118). The infrastructure in Liberia had been destroyed, and the VOA transmitter, CIA communication center, and the OMEGA system were deactivated (Petterson 2002, 118). However, the old rivalry with France, which predated the installation of those facilities, continued its interest in access to natural resources. Allen (2009), Dunbar (2006), and Richardson (2009) argue that although USG officials and private corporations showed an interest in iron ore, diamonds, uranium, and gold, the crucial focus was oil. The US-based oil corporations did not want to compete with other foreign companies and preferred bilateral negotiations behind closed doors. The United States was therefore unhappy when the GoL enhanced business relationships with other countries, such as France (Allen 2009; Dunbar 2006; Richardson 2009).

The relationship with France is well captured in correspondence between Taylor and the Christian Dutheil de la Rochère, French ambassador to Liberia. The GoL welcomed the prospect of a “strong and Trusting Relationship” between Liberia and France and encouraged the promotion of “French private enterprises in the revitalization of the . . . economy” (GoL 1999, 101). Pres. Jacques Chirac invited Taylor and a government delegation to Paris in September 1998, where business negotiations were conducted behind closed doors. During a follow-up visit to Paris in November 1998, the negotiations continued. The main issues discussed at these meetings included oil concessions and the introduction of French oil companies into Liberia, in particular, the French oil company Total (Brandy 2009; Dunbar 2009). Brandy (2009) recalls that after the Paris donor conference, when the United States tried to block all aid to the GoL and ensured that most funding would be channeled through NGOs, France worked out bilateral agreements with the GoL, many of them under the guise of humanitarian aid.

Soon after the meetings, Taylor’s former wife, Agnes Reeves-Taylor, who was appointed chairperson of Liberia Petroleum Refining Company at the end of 1997, was contacted by French government diplomats. They showed her a seismic survey that indicated significant prospects for extraction of light crude oil. They further explained that

concessions given to French companies would result in a significant increase of French bilateral foreign aid to Liberia (A. Taylor 2010). The GoL published the results and stated that the survey indicates “possible existence of both on-shore and off-shore oil with lucrative prospects” (GoL 1999, 45). According to A. Taylor (2010) the GoL was aware of the prospect of oil in Liberia. This was because the CIA had leaked a document to Charles Taylor in the mid-1990s through Grace Minor, a close friend of his in the United States. The report stated that “Liberia’s oil reserves were of strategic interests of the US” (A. Taylor 2010, 00:07 min.).<sup>38</sup>

Charles Taylor had been candid regarding US interests in Liberian oil resources (A. Taylor 2010). Therefore, on 6 April 2000, the Liberian legislature approved an Act to Amend the Executive Law of 1972 to Provide for the Establishment of the National Oil Company of Liberia (NOCAL), to facilitate “the development of the oil and gas industry in the Republic of Liberia” (GoL 2000, section 4). As the GoL negotiated with France in April 2001, a USG official set up a lunch meeting with Agnes Taylor in London. The meeting included representatives from two major US-based oil companies. They asked Agnes Taylor to persuade Charles Taylor to cease negotiations with other foreign oil companies and grant the oil concessions to US oil companies in return for US support of the GoL in the international arena. This would include a large bribe held in a secret Swiss bank account (A. Taylor 2010).

In 2001, US-based Halliburton made a proposal to the GoL on offshore oil exploration, which the lawyer of the NOCAL, Frank Musa Dean, sent to a Canadian law firm. The law firm returned the proposal with a statement that the agreement was not in favor of Liberia (Davis 2010; Dunbar 2006). Taylor rejected the US offer, which according to Allen (2009), Brandy (2009), Dunbar (2006), and A. Taylor (2010) was an unreasonable deal with a proposed production sharing agreement of 20 percent Liberia and 80 percent in favor of the foreign exploration companies. Consequently, Taylor made a public statement that “Liberia is not for sale,” which according to Dunbar (2006) made the USG upset.

In the same year, the US National Energy Policy Development Group (USG 2001, 8–11) confirmed that “West Africa is expected to be one of the fastest-growing sources of oil and gas for the American market” and that USAID already provides “technical assistance in support of a West Africa Power Pool and associated pipeline projects

involving a number of U.S. oil companies” (USG 2001, 8–11). The group also stated that by 2015, West Africa was expected to become the “world’s No. 1 oil source outside the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries” (Ball 2005), which led the pursuit of African oil to take on the “character of gold rush, with major companies from all over the world competing fiercely with one another for access to promising reserves” (Agriculture Sector Rehabilitation Project 2009).

Operational director of Ghana’s National Petroleum Corporation in 2008, Thomas Manu, noted that the donor countries used official foreign aid to persuade government officials, politicians, and key individuals to manipulate the public tender (bidding and proposal) procedures and award oil concessions to companies based within their respective countries. This pressure often came from an embassy and was accompanied with unofficial bribery from a private oil company based within the country represented by the embassy. According to Manu (2008), many oil companies were unofficially aggressive concerning bribery, and some companies calculated around \$2 per expected barrel of oil to bribe government officials and decision makers. This constitutes a large sum of money for bribery, but it is a small percentage in comparison to what the West Africa states lost in revenues due to the unique contract formulations in favor of private oil companies. Manu (2008) further notes that many politicians and government officials engage in this form of bribery partly because they are aware that they may lose their job after next election, so they are looking for short term opportunities to get money to finance future expenses.

### **Formation of LURD and UN Sanctions**

After Taylor’s administration assumed leadership, the tensions continued between the GoL on one side and ECOMOG, the USG, and the governments of Sierra Leone and Guinea on the other side.

ECOMOG had deployed troops in Sierra Leone to support the government of Sierra Leone in the conflict against RUF, and at the ECOWAS summit in Abuja, 28 August 1997, Taylor announced that the national legislature had approved ECOMOG to continue in Liberia until 2 February 1998 (C. Taylor 1997, 196). A major point of dispute was that the GoL would not let the ECOMOG restructure the AFL according to the Abuja peace accord (Inamete 2001, 258; Jaye 2009, 8).

In a radio broadcast, ECOMOG's field commander, General Malu, stated that it was unacceptable for ECOMOG to take orders from Taylor. This led Taylor to announce on 20 November 1997 that "there will be no parallel authority in this Republic. No officer from any mission or force will share power with the President of this Republic or challenge the authority of this Republic and stay here" (C. Taylor 1997, 219). Anyone "who does not want to work with this Government, will leave or be expelled by this Republic" (C. Taylor 1997, 220).

Another point of dispute was that ECOMOG patrolled the border between Sierra Leone and Liberia but ignored that the GoL reported that it had "massive documentation" of clandestine activities in that border area, which threatened the national security of Liberia. Then, on 20 November 1997, the GoL arrested several Kamojors in Liberian territory who were fighting for the Sierra Leonean government against the RUF (GoL 1999, 221). The tensions between the GoL and ECOMOG increased on 13 February 1998, when ECOMOG fighter planes forced two helicopters carrying 26 members of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) to land in James Spriggs Payne Airport in Monrovia.<sup>39</sup> The GoL ordered ECOMOG to leave the case for investigation by the government, but ECOMOG refused and arrested the passengers (C. Taylor 1998, 239). The Liberian government demanded the extradition of the AFRC members and threatened to shoot down unauthorized planes flying over Liberian airspace (Paasewe 2006, 74). In response, two Nigerian Alpha Jets flew several passes at low altitude over Monrovia close to the Executive Mansion, on 14 February 1998. Simultaneously, ECOMOG tanks deployed in Careybury and other strategic places close to Monrovia, including Roberts International Airport (C. Taylor 1998, 240).

After Abacha died on 8 June 1998, ECOMOG was reduced to one garrison made up of a few battalions from Nigeria and Ghana in August 1998. In July, the ECOMOG headquarters in Monrovia closed. In January 1999, Ghana redeployed more soldiers from Liberia to Sierra Leone followed by a complete withdrawal from Liberia in July 1999, and the remaining half company of the Nigerian Battalion prepared for full withdrawal (C. Taylor 1998, 240).

In the latter half of 1998, the GoL clashed directly with the USG, when the GoL stated that it had received intelligence information about Roosevelt Johnson of ULIMO-J. Roosevelt Johnson, who had been appointed as minister of rural development, was "in the process of executing . . . [a] plan to overthrow the Government of Liberia"

(GoL 1999, 63). Accordingly, the US Embassy should have made a “rescue plan for him and his men to be coordinated between ECOMOG and the United States Embassy, in the event they were over-run by Government forces” (GoL 1999, 62). When fighting broke out between government forces and ULIMO-J, Roosevelt Johnson and a number of his closest allies fled to the US Embassy. The shooting continued outside the US Embassy between the Liberian authorities, Roosevelt Johnson loyalists, and embassy security guards. The US security guards killed two Liberian police officers, and two US personnel were also wounded (US Army Special Operations Command 2002, 64).

The day after Roosevelt Johnson and his men had retreated into the US Embassy, the Liberian government demanded the extradition of Roosevelt Johnson (US Army Special Operations Command 2002, 65). The USG accused the Liberian government of “attacking the U.S. Embassy” and announced the closing of the embassy (Hyman 2003, 83). Next, the United States launched “Operation Shadow Express,” which included the deployment of a special operations force that arrived on 21 September. This was followed by the deployment of additional air, land, and sea power in Sierra Leone, from where the warship USS *Chinook* was dispatched to Liberian waters. The ship was deployed 2,000 yards offshore from the US Embassy in Monrovia, “ready to provide an in-extremis response force.” USS *Chinook* was joined by USS *Firebolt* for a 10-day “presence operation” which “provided a calming influence on the situation” (US Army Special Operations Command 2002, 64).

The US chargé d’affaires announced through the BBC that the USG demanded an official apology from the Liberian government for the armed clash outside the US Embassy (GoL 1999, 64). In return, the Liberian government stated that the arrival of the US warships was a “violation of Liberia’s territorial integrity and sovereignty” and called upon the United States to respect the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (GoL 1999, 64).

As in the case of the incident on 6 April 1996, Roosevelt Johnson and some of his closest allies, including George Duweh, A. B. Lincoln, and 22 ULIMO-J and LPC fighters, were given asylum by the US Embassy (Wylie 2008, 31) and later “flown out by U.S. military helicopter” (Pettersen 2002, 114) to Sierra Leone. From there, Roosevelt Johnson went to Lagos in Nigeria, joined by Joe Wylie on 1 January 1999, where they began to plan a new rebel insurgency (Wylie 2008, 36).<sup>40</sup> The names of the former armed factions were associated with

atrocities committed during the war, so ULIMO-J was renamed Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD). Next, Wylie went to Freetown when the RUF and the AFRC launched a major offensive on the capital and invaded the city. In Freetown, Wylie met with the former Nigerian ECOMOG Commander, Gen Maxwell Khobe, who had been promoted to chief of defense staff of the Sierra Leonean Army.<sup>41</sup> Khobe and Wylie organized two to three thousand Liberians in Sierra Leone to help fight the rebel incursion in Freetown (Wylie 2008, 37).

Khobe began to organize LURD, and Wylie considered him the founder of LURD (Wylie 2008, 37). However, because of the political situation in Sierra Leone, LURD was structured in Guinea where the constitution was written (Wylie 2008, 38). The organization was divided into a political section called the National Executive Commission (NEC) consisting of 15 members and a military organization that took orders from the NEC (Gballah 2009).<sup>42</sup> The first chairperson was Mohammed Jumandy. However, even more significant, from the end of 2001, LURD was headed by Sékou Demate Conneh and his wife, Aisha Conneh (Conneh 2008, 27), who was an adopted daughter of Pres. Lansana Conteh of Guinea (Conneh 2008, 47). The Secretariat was headed by the secretary-general, Joe Gballah who was also a member of the NEC and responsible for executing decisions made by the NEC (Gballah 2009).<sup>43</sup>

According to LURD's Political Manifesto, LURD aimed at halting Taylor's "cancerous influence on the stability of the entire sub-region" (LURD 2002, 2). Gballah states that the objective was to "get Taylor out of power . . . [and] put in place a power base that . . . [would] be in the interests of America." The United States "brought in people from the CIA . . . under cover, to study the case [of] what strategy to use to overthrow Taylor" (Gballah 2009, 00:40 min–00:42 min). They already had "military arrangements with the Government of Guinea who also had a close relationship with Ukraine" (Gballah 2009, 01:05 min.). The USG supported LURD "through Guinea," by providing training to the Guinean army, and LURD "had agreed to work with Guinea . . . as a way to combat in Liberia." The top political decisions were at the level of "the president of Guinea and the president of America" (Gballah 2009, 01:20–01:24 min.). Gballah rarely had direct contact with the Americans, and he only once met with US Army Maj Gen Thomas Turner (Gballah 2009, 01:20–01:24 min.).

After the removal of Taylor, the vision of LURD was to establish an “inclusive transitional government of national unity” with the “help from the international community, mainly ECOWAS, African Union, the United Nations, Britain, France, and US.” While maintaining the three branches of the government structure, the manifesto stated that the mandate of the transitional government would be to “conduct the affairs of the state as closely as possible with the constitution” and “carry out the restructuring of the national army and other security agencies in consultation with ECOWAS, Australia, Britain, France, USA, [and] the international community.” Also, an independent election commission was established “to conduct free, fair and democratic elections to return the country to constitutional rule.” Under the economic section, the manifesto emphasized that the “Transitional Government shall support the free enterprise system” and among other objectives “open the economy to foreign investment and participation” (LURD 2002, 4–6).

The first LURD insurgency commenced at the beginning of 1999 (Gballah 2009); however, reports from the GoL were not taken seriously by the UNSC or the international media (Chea 2009). Many “observers thought the claims were fictitious” and that President Taylor invented the attacks “in order to get a United Nations arms ban lifted” (BBC 2003).<sup>44</sup> Former US ambassador to Liberia Donald K. Petterson notes that the USG has a great influence on “international organizations that can make decisions favorable or unfavorable to a country like Liberia” (Peterson 1996, 119). “The United States channeled aid “through UN agencies, such as the WFP [World Food Program], UNICEF [United Nations Children’s Fund], and UNHCR [United Nations High Commission for Refugees]” and “aimed to give the Liberian people a greater ability to stand up to their government” (Pettersen 1996, 119). For the GoL it appeared that there was comprehensive cooperation between the USG, the UK government, and several UN agencies, academics, international NGOs, and think-tanks. Most significantly, they ignored the USG support of LURD through the government of Guinea, and as LURD advanced militarily into Liberia from their bases in Guinea, the GoL was accused of supporting the RUF in Sierra Leone, which was the key argument for tightening UN sanctions against Liberia (Chea 2009; Coleman 2009; Richardson 2009).<sup>45</sup>

A Report of the Panel of Experts Appointed Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1306 published in December 2000 stated that

there was “unequivocal and overwhelming evidence that Liberia has been actively supporting the RUF at all levels, in providing training, weapons and related materiel, logistical support, a staging ground for attacks and a safe haven for retreat and recuperation” (UN 2000, 33). It also stated the “bulk of the RUF diamonds leave Sierra Leone through Liberia,” which “cannot be conducted without the permission and the involvement of Liberian government officials at the highest level” (UN 2000, 28).

Taylor was accused of supplying the RUF with arms in exchange for “blood diamonds” or “conflict diamonds” where he acted as the middleman. However, for the GoL this accusation was invalid, because it was well known that “the RUF were no strangers to the big diamond markets in Belgium, Britain, India, Israel, and the United States” and therefore “RUF did not need a middleman in President Taylor” (Paasewe 2006, 118).<sup>46</sup> As the notion of blood diamonds spread worldwide, the GoL saw the campaign as war propaganda, instigated and funded by the United States and UK governments and promoted through NGOs such as Global Witness and the International Crisis Group (ICG) (Richardson 2009). It was promoted as propaganda to foster a negative public opinion of the GoL (Richardson 2009). President Taylor compared the campaign with the Fernando Po crisis, where Liberia was being isolated internationally in the process of overthrowing his government (Paasewe 2006, 117).

On 5 July 2000, the UNSC adopted SCR 1306, which decided that “all States shall take the necessary measures to prohibit the direct or indirect import of all rough diamonds from Sierra Leone to their territory” (“SCR 1306,” UN 2000, article 1), except from “rough diamonds controlled by Government of Sierra Leone” (“SCR 1306,” UN 2000, article 5). The resolution further encourages “the International Diamond Manufacturers Association, the World Federation of Diamond Bourses, the Diamond High Council and all other representatives of the diamond industry to work with the Government of Sierra Leone . . . to develop methods and working practices to facilitate the implementation” of the resolution (“SCR 1306,” UN 2000, article 10). Due to this resolution, Kabbah’s government in Sierra Leone could continue the diamond trade.

Consequently, the leading institutions in the diamond industry established the World Diamond Council (WDC) with the “ultimate mandate” to facilitate “the development, implementation and oversight of a tracking system for the export and import of rough dia-

monds to prevent the exploitation of diamonds for illicit purposes such as war and inhumane acts” (WDC 2010). The WDC drafted the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, which was then supported by the UNSC through SCR 1459 (“SCR 1459,” UN 2003). For the GoL, the Kimberley Process was flawed because in practice it would not have any significant effect on the diamond trade in the region. It was easy to smuggle diamonds from Sierra Leone and Liberia and sell them to buying offices in Conakry or other regional capitals (Allen 2009; Dunbar 2009; Richardson 2009).<sup>47</sup> The fact that the Kimberley Process in practice would not be able to distinguish between diamonds from Liberia and the RUF-controlled territories was known by the UNSC. This fact was reflected in a UN Report of the Panel of Experts Pursuant to SCR 1343, which acknowledged that “experiences of Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia and Côte d’Ivoire show how difficult it actually is to separate out conflict diamonds from other alluvials” (“SCR 1343,” UN 2001, 83).

Nevertheless, intending to break “the link between diamonds and armed conflict,” the UNSC unanimously adopted SCR 1343 on 7 March 2001, sponsored by Britain and the United States (Arms Control Association 2001, 1). The resolution calls upon “all States to implement fully Security Council measures targeting the link between the trade in conflict diamonds and the supply to rebel movements of weapons.” It notes that “diamonds represent a major and primary source of income” for the RUF, which is interlinked with Liberia, and demands the GoL to “immediately cease its support for the RUF in Sierra Leone and for other armed rebel groups in the region” (“SCR 1343,” UN 2001, article 1). The resolution terminated the arms embargo imposed in 1992 by article 8 of SCR 788 and replaced it with more comprehensive sanctions where “all States shall take the necessary measures to prevent the sale or supply to Liberia . . . of arms and related material of all types” (UNSC 2001a, article 5). The sanctions further included “direct or indirect import of all rough diamonds from Liberia” (“SCR 1343,” UN 2001, article 6), and a travel ban on “senior members of the Government of Liberia and its armed forces and their spouses” (“SCR 1343,” UN 2001, article 7).

As the UN sanctions weakened Liberia further, Taylor realized that the relations with Taiwan had severe consequences for voting in the UNSC. In 2002, he requested Winston Tubman, Liberia’s representative to the UN in New York, to start the process of establishing relations with the PRC. The PRC delegation in New York

expressed that they would look forward to receiving a Liberian delegation in Beijing and would be interested in working with the GoL in the UNSC after Liberia had recognized Taiwan as a province of the PRC (W. A. Tubman 2009).<sup>48</sup> Taylor then asked the Liberian ambassador to the Benelux countries, Othello Brandy, to organize a Liberian delegation to establish relations with the PRC. However, this process was suddenly stopped by Taylor (Brandy 2009), because Taiwan offered Taylor between \$5 million to \$10 million to cease establishing relations with the PRC (Brandy 2009; W. A. Tubman 2009). According to Brandy (2009) and W. A. Tubman (2009), this was the most serious mistake made by Taylor. The PRC was interested in relations with Liberia and had the ability to veto an extension of the sanctions against Liberia based on the GoL's right to self-defense against the Guinea-backed LURD.

As the basis for extending the sanctions against Liberia, the UN Panel of Experts submitted its report to the UNSC on 19 April 2002, and it is noted that Guinea had hosted LURD ("SCR 1395," UN 2002, 12); however, it does not draw further attention to this issue. In the same month, the International Crisis Group released a report that similarly notes that LURD is "backed by Guinea, with more indirect support from Sierra Leone, the U.S. and Great Britain" (ICG 2002, 4). It further states that the UN sanctions "significantly raised the price of arms and ammunition for Taylor . . . making the fight against the Guinean-backed insurgency more expensive . . . [as a] part of a U.S. strategy to drain Taylor's finances and weaken his hold on power" (ICG 2002, 5). As Guinea's support for LURD became more obvious, the GoL hoped "with French support, to secure sanctions on Guinea" (ICG 2002, 25).

The ICG welcomed the British military intervention in Sierra Leone, which ended the war, but warned that Charles Taylor continued to have a "willingness to use proxy militia fighters in neighbouring states, and refer to the RUF as Taylor's 'foreign legion'" (ICG 2002, i).<sup>49</sup> Taylor is considered as "the primary cause of the crisis" who with Libyan support seeks "to push a grand scheme of political change in West Africa" (ICG 2002, i), and the ICG warned that if Taylor won "another unfair election" in 2003, it could result in another six years of conflict in the region. However, there was a risk of "a protracted civil war or descent into chaos if Taylor is removed without a viable opposition ready to take over" (ICG 2002, ii), and the ICG set out recommendations on how the international community should en-

gage in Liberia. Besides recommending an extension of the UN sanctions (ICG 2002, ii), the ICG suggested that the sanctions should be extended to include timber and maritime registration (ICG 2002, iii).

Next, on 6 May 2002, the UNSC adopted SCR 1408, which stated that “the Government of Liberia has not complied fully” with resolution 1343 (“SCR 1408,” UN 2002, article 1) and determined that resolution 1343 should remain in force for another 12 months (“SCR 1408,” UN 2002, article 5). Since the RUF in Sierra Leone had transmuted into a political party, the GoL could no longer be accused of supporting the RUF. Therefore, the resolution stated that the continuation of the sanctions was “intended to lead to consolidation of the peace process in Sierra Leone and to further progress in the peace process in the Mano River Union” (“SCR 1408,” UN 2002, article 3). The resolution further “demands that all States in the region cease military support for armed groups in neighbouring countries” (“SCR 1408,” UN 2002, article 4) but does not mention anything about Guinea’s support for LURD.

The GoL addressed the issue of double standards, which was perhaps most notable at the fifty-seventh session of the UNGA, on 20 September 2002. Liberia’s minister of foreign affairs, Monie Captan, asked the assembly, “how is it conceivable that Liberia can . . . continue to be punished by the Security Council on allegations of supporting a non-existent RUF in a non-existent war in Sierra Leone?” (2002). Captan further stated that there was a “conspiracy of silence surrounding the prevailing war in Liberia waged by externally supported armed non-State actors” and emphasized that the “arms embargo imposed on Liberia is a flagrant violation of Liberia’s inherent right under Article 51 of the Charter to defend itself against armed attacks” (2002).

As the link between the GoL and the RUF gradually vanished, the focus was diverted to links between the GoL, blood or conflict diamonds, and al-Qaeda shortly after the attack on the World Trade Center in New York on 11 September 2001. On 15 November 2001, the US Committee on International Relations Subcommittee on Africa conducted a hearing in the House of Representatives under the title “Africa and the War on Global Terrorism.” The chairman, Edward R. Royce opened the hearing by stating that a number of African countries were believed to have hosted international terrorist cells and expressed particular concern by “recent reports that al-Qaeda has been dealing in diamonds with Sierra Leone’s Revolutionary United Front, and also with Liberia’s President Charles Taylor”

(House of Representatives, *Statements of Edward R. Royce* 2001, 7). Further, he emphasized that “it is far overdue that we got serious about Liberia and serious about Charles Taylor” (House of Representatives, *Statements of Edward R. Royce* 2001, 7).

Former assistant secretary of state, Susan E. Rice argued that the United States “must become more rather than less engaged in the difficult tasks of peacemaking, peacekeeping and national reconstruction” with particular reference to Liberia, Sierra Leone, Sudan, and Somalia. She further stated that the United States must find “effective ways to secure Africa’s vast natural resources—its diamonds, cobalt, uranium, oil, timber, coltan, its gold—so they do not provide currency for the world’s terrorists” (House of Representatives, *Testimony of Susan E. Rice* 2001, 29).<sup>50</sup> This was followed by a talk given by Stephen Morrison, the director of the Africa Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, who stated that there is “a confluence of Libya’s Gadhafi, the Sierra Leone outlawed insurgency, the RUF . . . Burkina Faso President Compaoré, and Liberian President Charles Taylor” (House of Representatives, *Testimony of Stephen Morrison* 2001, 36). He further argued that that there is “a set of relations which is being used for money laundering purposes for al-Qaeda” that “could seek to strengthen its underground linkages to West African illicit diamond trafficking, based on direct and indirect partnerships with Gadhafi, the RUF, Compaoré and Taylor” (House of Representatives, *Testimony of Stephen Morrison* 2001, 41). According to Morrison “Gadhafi’s a history of terrorist activities in Africa” and has in recent years “launched an expansive campaign to win political allegiances across Africa” and states that “credible reports have surfaced that Gadhafi’s linked to illicit diamond trafficking out of Sierra Leone that directly benefits Al Qaeda, along with Liberian President Charles Taylor” (House of Representatives, *Testimony of Stephen Morrison* 2001, 45).

Global Witness followed up on this issue in a report released in 2002, in which it stated that “timber and diamond trades in Liberia are closely associated with money laundering, state looting . . . and terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda” (Global Witness 2002, 6). On 29 December 2002, staff writer at the *Washington Post*, Douglas Farah (2002), published an extensive article, in which he states that “the Washington Post obtained a copy of the military intelligence summary, which offers the clearest picture yet of al-Qaeda’s secretive business operations in West Africa.” Accordingly, “preparations for

al-Qaeda's diamond operation began in September 1998, six weeks after the bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania." After the 9/11 attack two senior al-Qaeda operatives were "hiding in an elite military camp in Liberia" (Farah 2002).

### **The Removal of Charles Taylor**

Toward the end of 2002, the USG increased its pressure on the GoL, and President Taylor had few real policy options left. However, despite the atrocities he was responsible for he maintained a high level of popularity in Liberia.<sup>51</sup>

In July 2002, Ambassador Bismarck Myrick was replaced by John William Blaney, who stated that he would "implement an aggressive, practical and pragmatic policy" in Liberia and the "most immediate objective" would be "to curb Liberia's role as a source of regional instability" (Blaney 2002). However, many people in GoL thought that the appointment of Blaney would "open a new page to a new era of positive engagement between Monrovia and Washington" (Paasewe 2006, 158) and pushed the government to "unconditionally commit itself to mending relations with the US . . . to shelf national pride and demonstrate Liberian cherishment of the historical ties with the United States" (Paasewe 2006, 159). Taylor "was a leading proponent of this opinion" and saw the appointment of Ambassador Blaney as a sign that the United States had regretted the proxy war against his elected government and "might be seeking a way out to this impasse." Therefore, Liberia would "have to do some face saving" for the United States (Paasewe 2006, 163).

Liberia's new policy direction was established at a NSC meeting shortly after Ambassador Blaney arrived. Taylor announced to the council that the United States should be given first preference when bidding for the offshore oil concessions, and in order to guide the government's new policy, three committees were established and chaired by Vice Pres. Moses Blah. The first committee aimed at developing a strategic document on improving Liberia–United States relations. The second committee would elaborate on a strategy to shape public opinion among the Liberian people in support of the new policy direction. The third committee would focus on opening negotiations with LURD (Paasewe 2006, 164; Richardson 2009).<sup>52</sup>

As the GoL strove to improve relations with the United States, relations between France and the GoL deteriorated significantly. The new policy orientation threatened the interests of the French oil company Total that had negotiated contracts for oil exploration with the GoL, including the right to distribute fuel in Liberia (Allen 2009). At the same time, relations between France and Ivory Coast gradually deteriorated after Laurent Gbagbo from the Ivorian Popular Front was elected president of Ivory Coast with support from Pres. Blaise Compaoré (African Press International 2008).<sup>53</sup> Armed conflict broke out in Ivory Coast in September 2002, which the speaker of the Ivorian National Assembly, Mamadou Koulibaly, labeled as “an economic war orchestrated by France” (Koulibaly 2006). Gbagbo’s administration “wanted to take control of water, electricity, telecoms, marine and air transport, and other sectors from French control” and establish closer relations with business partners from other countries, in particular, China (Koulibaly 2006).<sup>54</sup>

As the conflict dynamics in the region become more complex with China’s increasing engagement with the government of Ivory Coast, the USG shifted the international negotiation venue on Liberia from the UN to the International Contact Group on Liberia (ICGL), which was more of a closed forum. The ICGL consisted of representatives from the AU, ECOWAS, France, Ghana, Germany, Morocco, Nigeria, Spain, Sweden, UK, the United States, and the World Bank (ICGL 2003). It was welcomed by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan as a “convergence of views” to promote peace and stability in the West African region (Annan 2002). After the first ICGL meeting had taken place in Dakar on 19 December 2002, US Ambassador Blaney made it clear that the United States expected “all parties to the conflict to regard the ICGL as the primary institution and focal point for achieving peace” (Blaney 2003, 2). The USG would find “unacceptable . . . attempts to shift the focus of negotiations to another venue” and any party attempting to walk away from the ICGL would be considered as an “opponent of peace, and should be condemned as anti-peace” (Blaney 2003, 2).

Despite the apparent conflict between France and the Ivorian government, the USG promoted the notion that Taylor was behind the war in Ivory Coast (Paasewe 2006, 170). Many regional key actors saw the situation differently, such as Ivorian minister of defense, Kadel Bertin, who in January 2003 stated that he had proof that “Liberian forces . . . are attacking us.” He emphasized that President Taylor may not have

ordered it but said that “those in higher echelons of power with bad intentions” had ordered the attack (Bertin 2003). Morris Matadi, former director of the Child Soldier Association in the Liberian refugee camp Buduburam in Ghana, stated that the extreme poverty and unemployment in the West African region created a large pool of young people who could be easily recruited as mercenaries to fight anywhere in the world for around \$100 per month. Refugee camps in West Africa were centers for recruitment, and in 2002–3, all the opposing parties recruited young people from the Buduburam camp in Ghana in to fight in Ivory Coast and Liberia (Matadi 2009).<sup>55</sup>

Taylor stressed that he was aware of Liberian mercenaries fighting for both the rebels and the Ivorian government, but without the blessing of the GoL (“Ivory Coast’s” *News* 24 2003). Global Witness presented France as a benevolent peacekeeping actor in Ivory Coast that had increased troop deployment to approximately 3,000 soldiers, “including elements of the prestigious Foreign Legion,” to protect French citizens and to help “the government hold its line against the three rebel groups” (*Global Witness* 2003, 40). For Global Witness, the war in Ivory Coast was “being caused by regional actors” and mainly one person, “namely President Charles Taylor [who] is a massive threat to the region in every sense” (*Global Witness* 2003, 41).

The ICG likewise linked Taylor to the support of the rebels in Ivory Coast (ICG 2003, 15). ICG further states that because of Taylor’s involvement in Ivory Coast, a breakaway faction from LURD established the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL), which, beginning in March 2003, had “been deeply involved in recruiting and fighting on behalf of the embattled President Gbagbo” (ICG 2003, 20). According to the ICG, MODEL was acting independently from the Guinea-based LURD, with the objective of fulfilling “its own and President Gbagbo’s wish to hurt Taylor, and preventing Sékou Conneh’s largely Mandingo movement in Guinea from taking power in Monrovia. “The ICG also indicated that the formation of MODEL was an internal split within LURD based on ethnicity along the Krahn-Mandingo lines, similar to the split in ULIMO-J and ULIMO-K.

In contrast to this view, Kaibeneh Janneh, former legal advisor to LURD, stated that the establishment of MODEL along ethnic lines had nothing to do with the war in Ivory Coast. Janneh (2009) stated it was organized by external powers to ensure that LURD and MODEL together would have more votes and critical positions in a future

power-sharing interim GoL, against Taylor's NPP.<sup>56</sup> It was difficult for the individual actors in LURD and MODEL to know what was occurring, which created a lot of confusion and rumors, but the USG was intimately involved in every step taken by LURD and MODEL (Janneh 2009). As MODEL was established in March 2003, Pamela Bridgewater, US deputy assistant secretary for African affairs, stated that "U.S. relations with Liberia are at a crossroad." There is a "need for a comprehensive stabilization strategy for Liberia" and "the United States will not wait much longer. Regardless of who takes the first step or two, we will move forward, we will take action" (Bridgewater 2003). In May 2003, MODEL captured the strategic city of Harper in Maryland County, bordering Ivory Coast, while LURD gradually advanced toward Monrovia. The intensification of the war resulted in new movements of IDP toward Monrovia (Kassa 2003).<sup>57</sup> Around 262,000 people were registered as living in 20 IDP camps, most of them situated around Monrovia (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and UNHRC 2004, 3). According to Kassa (2003), most of these camps were big mud puddles in the rainy season, with shelters constructed out of plastic sheeting and wooden poles. Provision of food, education, and medical aid was minimal, and many people preferred to live with families and relatives elsewhere (Kassa 2003).

As the war intensified and the humanitarian situation deteriorated, ECOWAS made several attempts to find a solution. This resulted in a peace negotiation meeting in Ghana on 4 June 2003, which was hosted by Pres. John Kufuor (Jaye 2008).<sup>58</sup> In advance of the meeting, on 6 May 2003, the UNSC expanded the sanctions on Liberia to include "all round logs and timber products" and extended the sanctions for an additional 12 months ("SCR 1478", UN 2003, article 10, 17). In the weeks leading up to peace negotiations, LURD and MODEL increased their military pressure, and the US Embassy urged foreign nationals to leave Liberia. A French representative to Liberia, Francois Prkic, informally notified the few remaining humanitarian organizations in Liberia that France expected a severe intensification of the conflict in Monrovia, and the French navy was prepared for the evacuation of approximately 500 foreigners living in Monrovia (Kassa 2003).

On 4 June, just as the peace negotiations were about to begin in Accra, David Crane, the American chief prosecutor of the UN-backed Special Court in Sierra Leone, unsealed an indictment for President Taylor, which the court had judicially approved but had

sealed on 7 March 2003.<sup>59</sup> The indictment accused Taylor of 17 counts, including being at the heart of a “joint criminal enterprise” to commit war crimes, crimes against humanity, and serious violations of international humanitarian law within the territory of Sierra Leone (Special Court for Sierra Leone 2003).

The indictment came through Interpol, which asked Ghanaian authorities to arrest President Taylor (Office of the Prosecutor, Special Court for Sierra Leone 2003, 9); however, the African heads of state decided to first discuss the indictment behind closed doors before proceeding. Present at this meeting was Conteh of Guinea, Gbagbo of Ivory Coast, Kabbah of Sierra Leone, Kufuor of Ghana, Mbeki of South Africa, Obasanjo of Nigeria, Taylor of Liberia, Toumani Touré of Mali, and former President Abubakar of Nigeria (Paasewe 2006, 185). Most of the African leaders noted that it was an “unprecedented indictment of a sitting African head-of-state” and “debunked the Court as a neocolonial design” to restore the old imperial jurisdiction in Africa (Paasewe 2006, 188). They felt that indicting a key player during peace negotiations would affect future peace processes across the continent and obstruct solutions to peace if key players feared being arrested during peace negotiations. It was, therefore, decided to ignore the indictment and commence the peace negotiations (Paasewe 2006, 188–89).

After the meeting, Taylor announced at the conference that “if I am the problem and seem to stand in the way of peace, I will remove myself from the process, and I will step down to allow peace to come to our country” (C. Taylor 2003). Afterward, Taylor left the conference for Monrovia, where rumors started that he had been arrested in Ghana. These rumors created tensions in Liberia, and foreign West African nationals feared that supporters of Taylor in Monrovia would perceive an arrest of Taylor as a betrayal of other West African nations. This could have resulted in retributions in the form of random killings of foreign West African nationals living in Monrovia (Kamara 2009; Kassa 2003).<sup>60</sup>

In Ghana, other rumors stated that the United States and British intelligence services had planned to hijack Taylor’s plane in Accra. Therefore, upon arriving at Kotoka International Airport in Accra, Taylor boarded the Ghanaian presidential aircraft, which took him back to Monrovia (Paasewe 2006, 191). Taylor had been informed that at the same time David Crane announced the indictment, the US Embassy had encouraged Vice Pres. Moses Blah to take power. According to Taylor, the coup was avoided because of loyal, vital

members in the army and Blah was arrested the same day (Paasewe 2006, 193–194). Because of Blah's ethnic background as a Gio from Nimba country, this arrest caused disturbances among the Gios within the AFL (Richardson 2009), and Blah was released and reinstalled as vice president after 11 days (Sesay 2008, 38).

Two days after the indictment of Taylor, LURD launched the first of three major military offensives on Monrovia (Human Rights Watch [HRW] 2003, 5), while MODEL advanced toward the strategic port city, Buchanan (Chea 2009). The attack forced approximately 100,000 IDPs to move toward Monrovia, to seek shelter in schools, churches, football stadiums, the Masonic Temple, and other possible places, where they received minimal assistance from the few humanitarian agencies still left in the country (Kassa 2003). As the fighting intensified, a French navy ship appeared and evacuated most of the remaining foreign nationals by helicopter from the European Commission's compound (Kassa 2009). At the same time, the US deployed approximately 1,800 Sailors in offshore Monrovia (Whelan 2003). The GoL succeeded in cutting off LURD's supply lines from Guinea, and the attack on Monrovia was repelled (HRW 2003, 5; Chea 2009).

After the deployment of the US Navy, US Ambassador Blaney met with Taylor and most of his ministers in the Executive Mansion, where Blaney presented a draft agreement for a ceasefire (Paasewe 2006, 199–200). On 17 June, an Agreement on Ceasefire and Cessation of Hostilities was signed between the GoL, LURD, and MODEL. The agreement was in many respects similar to the previous peace agreements. The parties agreed to the deployment of a joint verification team led by ECOWAS to monitor the ceasefire; the deployment of an international stabilization force; commencement of a disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration process; security sector reforms (SSR); and the formation of a National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL). This agreement would not include President Taylor as voiced in his declaration in Accra on 4 June. The NTGL assigned a chairman and vice chairman of the NTGL and allocated 12 seats in the Legislative Assembly to the GoL, 12 seats to LURD, 12 seats to MODEL, 18 seats to established political parties, seven seats to civil society and special interest groups, and 15 seats to counties (Agreement on Ceasefire and Cessation of Hostilities 2003).

Shortly after the agreement was signed, on 22 June, the Liberian Ministry of Defense reported that it had received intelligence reports that LURD was mobilizing 2,000 soldiers in Sierra Leone, with the

consent of the Sierra Leonean government, in preparation for a new military attack on Monrovia (Chea 2009; *Sierra Leone News* 2003). The government of Sierra Leone rejected this, but on 24 June LURD launched its second major attack on Monrovia (Chea 2009).

Simultaneously with LURD's military pressure, Pres. George W. Bush stated on 26 June at the Corporate Council on Africa's United States-Africa Business Summit in Washington, DC, that the United States "strongly supports the cease-fire" and that "President Taylor needs to step down so that his country can be spared further bloodshed" (The White House 2003). This was reported by Semple and Sengupta (2003) the same day in the *New York Times* under the headline "Pushing Peace in Africa, Bush Tells Liberian President to Quit." Later, during a press conference at the White House on 3 July, Bush emphasized that "Mr. Taylor must go. A condition for any progress in Liberia is his removal." He further stated that USG was working with Nigeria and "trained five battalions of Nigerian troops, preparing them for issues such as Liberia," and that US military advisors were cooperating with ECOWAS "to look at different options" (The White House 2003). Bush repeated his message that Taylor must step down the next day to CNN (CNN 2003) and again on 5 July on the VOA. Bush added that he had not decided on a direct US military intervention if Taylor would not step down but noted that Secretary of State Colin Powell "is working with Kofi Annan, who is also working with others on the continent to facilitate that type of move" (The White House 2003).

On 8 July, the US Congress adopted a resolution that supported the ceasefire agreement signed on 17 June and called upon the USG "to assume a leadership role in the international community . . . to help guide the Ceasefire Agreement and subsequent peace agreement, political transition and establishment of a sustainable democracy with good governance, and economic reconstruction processes" (H. Con. Res. 240 2003, article 8).

The ceasefire agreement included, among several other commitments, the provision of "military experts, personnel, logistical support, equipment and funds as necessary" and to "play a lead role in creating and deploying an international stabilization force to Liberia" (H. Con. Res. 240 2003, article 10). On 14 July, after a meeting in the Oval Office with Kofi Annan, Bush confirmed that the United States wanted "to enable ECOWAS to get in and help create the conditions necessary for the cease-fire to hold, that Mr. Taylor must leave, that

we'll participate with the troops" (The White House 2003). Bush further stated that he had "told the Secretary-General that . . . there must be U.N. presence, quickly into Liberia," in the form of military intervention (The White House 2003).

The UN Secretary-General called Taylor and informed him that the USG wanted Taylor to leave within 72 hours, in order to avoid military action. Taylor responded that he would not leave Liberia before there were external peacekeepers on the ground (Paasewe 2006, 204) and stated on 16 July that "if I were to leave this country before the peacekeeping troops arrive in this city, I see disaster . . . I see trouble. I see murder, mayhem. I see rape. I see total destruction" (C. Taylor 2003). Less than three days later, LURD forces launched their third, biggest, and final attack on Monrovia, where they captured the area around the Freeport. Only two bridges in the center of Monrovia kept the government forces and LURD separate, and the fighting lasted for about two weeks (HRW 2003, 8). Roberts International Airport was kept open (Kassa 2003), and the United States deployed "an 18-person humanitarian assistance survey team, from Stuttgart, Germany, to assess the humanitarian situation in Monrovia and to look at the condition of the airport, seaport, and road and bridge systems" (House of Representatives, *Statement of Ms. Theresa M. Whelan* 2003, 14). US military advisors moved between the LURD-controlled area and the US Embassy, making what they called "humanitarian assessments" (Massalay 2009).

US Ambassador Blaney repeated President Bush's message that Taylor had to step down and stated that "the United States has a lot more involvement in Liberia than just what it does directly with its own military" (Blaney 2003).<sup>61</sup> Indeed, the United States was behind one of the largest mobilizations of a UN multinational force to intervene in Liberia. On 8 July, the American diplomat Jacques Klein was appointed by the UN general secretary as his special representative for Liberia before the deployment of the multinational force (Annan 2003).<sup>62</sup>

On 29 July Annan (2003) informed the UNSC that ECOWAS was ready "to deploy 1,500 troops to Liberia by mid-August" in a three-phase deployment of an international force. The first deployment "would be a 'vanguard force' comprised by two battalions from Nigeria" and a third battalion "made up of troops contributed by Ghana (250 troops), Mali (250 troops) and Senegal (250 troops)" (Annan 2003, 1). The priority task of the vanguard force was to "stabilize the situation in Monrovia as President Taylor departs." Immediately after, phase

two deployment would take place” in order to facilitate the installation of a successor Government.” Phase three would be a UN “peace-keeping operation within the shortest possible time” (Annan 2003, 2). Concerning the deployment of the soldiers, Annan stated that the United States “will position appropriate military capabilities off the coast of Liberia to support the deployment of the ECOWAS forces” (Annan 2003, 1).

In contrast to the ECOMOG intervention in 1990, the UNSC authorized the multinational force on 1 August by adopting resolution 1497. This resolution authorized, under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, the establishment of a “Multinational Force in Liberia to support the implementation of the 17 June 2003 ceasefire agreement” and to support the “departure of the current President and the installation of a successor authority” (“SRC 1497,” UN 2003, article 1).

Taylor had been offered asylum in Nigeria, and on 7 August, he presented his letter of resignation to the Liberian legislature. On 11 August, he abdicated his authority to Vice Pres. Moses Blah. To the legislature he stated that “persistent double standards” had been “applied against Liberia by the international community” and an “international conspiracy against the Government has been orchestrated through the support of two major rebel incursions from Guinea and La Côte d’Ivoire with the support of armed insurgents from Sierra Leone” (C. Taylor 2003).

On 3 August, the first group of 30 Nigerian peacekeepers arrived in Monrovia from the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNASMIL) (Nigeria First. (Nigeria First 2003), which marked the beginning of the implementation of phase one. On the day of Taylor’s departure, 11 August 2003, President Mbeki arrived in Roberts International Airport outside Monrovia with a team of South African troops. Among other significant politicians to participate in the departure ceremony were Pres. John Kufuor of Ghana; chairman of the AU and president of Mozambique, Joaquim Chissano; Nigeria’s minister of foreign affairs, Oluyemi Adeniji; and US Ambassador John W. Blaney accompanied by 30 US Marines (Paasewe 2006, 213).

In his farewell speech, Taylor portrayed himself as a victim, by stating that the USG has “been the architect of this ‘anybody-but-Taylor-policy’” that in cooperation with Britain prevented the GoL from defending itself by imposing sanctions, and noted that “this is an American war. LURD is a surrogate force . . . [the US] caused this war . . . They can call off their dogs now” (C. Taylor 2003).

## Notes

1. Prince Johnson was the former leader of leader of the INPFL. Also, he served as senior senator for Nimba County, Republic of Liberia, and chairman of National Security and Intelligence. Interviews were conducted from 2006 to 2009 by the author. Also cited is his book, *The Rise and Fall of President Samuel K. Doe: A Time to Heal and Rebuild Liberia*. Lagos: Paz Cornwell Publishers, 2003.
2. Arnold Kwenu contributed to this research through several interviews in 2008. He held the position of force Commander of ECOMOG during its intervention in 1990.
3. Agnes Taylor was the former wife to Pres. Charles Taylor and humanitarian coordinator of the NPFL during the military incursion into Liberia in December 1989. Interview conducted and recorded by the author on 12 May and 23 November 2010, at her home in Ealing Broadway, London.
4. John Richardson contributed to this research through several interviews in 2006 and 2009. He was a key person in the NPFL and considered as the right hand of Charles Taylor. He served as national security advisor in Taylor's administration from 1997 to 2003.
5. Amos Sawyer contributed to this research through two interviews. He was a key member of MOJA, served as interim head of state from 1990 to 1994, and was chairperson of the Government Commission in 2006.
6. Cyril Allen contributed to this research through several interviews. Allen was the chairman emeritus and chairman of the advisory board of the NPP.
7. Donald K. Petterson was the US ambassador to Liberia from October 1998 to October 1999 (Petterson 2002, 113). Petterson was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on 2 April 2002 in Washington, DC. The Library of Congress. American Memory. The Foreign Affairs Oral History Collection of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, 2002, <https://www.loc.gov/>.
8. Daniel Chea contributed to this research through several interviews. Chea held several key positions in the NPFL and served as minister of national defense in Taylor's administration from 1997 to 2003.
9. Among the appointed ministers were Edward Kesseley, minister of defense; Theophilus Sonpon, minister of education; Togba Naganna, minister of public works; Byron Tarr, minister of finance; Commany Wisseh, minister of youths and sports; Serina Ford, minister of labor; Gabriel Baccus Matthews, minister of foreign affairs; Lamine Waritay, minister of information; and Amelia Ward, minister of planning and economic affairs.
10. According to A. Taylor (2010), the support for the RUF stopped in 1991 after a disagreement between the NPRAG and the RUF.
11. S. Losene Massalay served as deputy chief of staff of operations in ULIMO 1995–97, as a lieutenant general (three stars) in LURD, as military advisor to the chairman of LURD (Sekou Conneh), and as the military high command of LURD forces. He was also deputy minister for internal affairs in the NTGL 2004–6. Interview conducted and recorded by Niels Hahn, 10 January 2009, in the Hataye coffee shop in Voinjama.
12. Alhaji Kromah was interviewed twice in support of this research and contributed with information via email correspondence. Kromah was the leader of the ULIMO-K. At the time of the interview, Kromah served as a professor at the University of Liberia. He has previously served as special assistant to the vice president of Tolbert's administration; assistant minister of information; and director general of the LBS during the early Doe administration.

13. Hearing at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Institutional and Thematic Hearings on 11 August 2008, Monrovia, from the Monrovia TRC of Liberia. Unedited transcript of hearing. 120 pages. Retrieved by the author as electronic copy in May 2009, from the TRC in Monrovia.

14. Joe Gballah has contributed to this interview by speaking out for the first time about how the USG was behind LURD and by providing documents on LURD's organization. Gballah served as secretary general of LURD and was a key member of ULIMO-J.

15. Editor of *African Prospects* and former editor of *West Africa Magazine*. Personal communication with the author on 12 October 2010, at School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London.

16. Operation Jungle Fire. Monrovia, Retrieved by the author from Alhaji Kromah via email, 2009. Kromah (2009) states that it was some years later when he realized that Carter's intentions were not to bring Taylor into power but to make a deal the Americans could accept.

17. Togba Nah-Tipoteh was interviewed in relation to this research, as the co-founder and head of MOJA. He served as minister of planning of economic affairs 1980–81. Amos Sawyer contributed to this research through two interviews. He was a key member of MOJA and served as interim head of state from 1990 to 1994 and as chairperson of the Government Commission from 2006.

18. The IAWG on US Government-Sponsored International Exchanges and Training was established in 1997 by Executive Order 13055. The overall purpose of the IAWG is to improve coordination between US agencies and to “develop strategies for expanding public and private partnerships in, and leveraging private sector support for, United States government-sponsored international exchanges and training activities” (IAWG 2011).

19. The PAE was acquired by Lockheed Martin in 2006 (Lockheed Martin 2006), which signed a confidential contract with the DOD in 2004 for the training of the AFL (Callahan 2008).

20. The use of private military corporations (PMCs) in Liberia and Sierra Leone successively expanded. In Sierra Leone, the UK government and the IMF endorsed the use of the PMCs Executive Outcome and Sandline (Hahn 2010), and beginning in 2003, PEA and DynCorp were awarded major contracts by DOD, to rebuild the security sector in Liberia.

21. El Mohamed Sheriff contributed to this research with two interviews. He served as a member of the Council of State, 1994–95. At the time of the first interview in 2006, Sheriff held the position of advisor/special envoy to the president on foreign affairs (2006–8). Sheriff has held several government positions, such as minister of technical and professional education, from 1977 to mid-1982.

22. Vaani Paasewe served as press secretary for Charles Taylor from 2001 to 2003.

23. ULIMO-J was allocated some ministerial posts, such as minister of state for presidential affairs, minister of transport, minister of rural development, minister of state without portfolio, and a number of other posts in the Liberian government (Abuja Accord 1995).

24. Alaric Tokpa contributed to this research through several interviews. At the time of the interviews, Tokpa served as assistant professor of political science at the University of Liberia. He was head of the Liberia National Student Union in the 1970s and an active member in the MOJA. Tokpa was sentenced to death by the military junta in 1980 for promoting leftist views but released within two years. He is cofounder of the political party the New Deal Movement.

25. The NPFL transformed into a political party, the NPP.

26. Charles Snetter contributed to this research with an interview and a tour around the facilities of the LBS in Monrovia. In 2006, he became general director of LBS, which is predominantly funded by the PRC (Snetter 2009).

27. The Hironnelle Foundation, established in 1996, is an organization of journalists which operates media services in crisis areas, such as the Great Lakes region of Africa, Kosovo, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Sierra Leone, and Nepal. The Hironnelle Foundation emphasizes the importance of independent media but is predominantly funded by Western governments (Hironnelle Foundation 2011).

28. Document No. 1: 1996 CIA Field Report (purportedly written by CIA Senior Intelligence Officer Larry Charters).

29. Document No. 1: 1996 CIA Field Report (purportedly written by CIA Senior Intelligence Officer Larry Charters). 1600 Penn refers to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, in Washington, the address of the White House.

30. Document No. 1: 1996 CIA Field Report (purportedly written by CIA Senior Intelligence Officer Larry Charters).

31. Document No. 1: 1996 CIA Field Report (purportedly written by CIA Senior Intelligence Officer Larry Charters).

32. Document No. 1: 1996 CIA Field Report (purportedly written by CIA Senior Intelligence Officer Larry Charters).

33. Document No. 1: 1996 CIA Field Report (purportedly written by CIA Senior Intelligence Officer Larry Charters).

34. Document No. 1: 1996 CIA Field Report (purportedly written by CIA Senior Intelligence Officer Larry Charters).

35. Document No. 1: 1996 CIA Field Report (purportedly written by CIA Senior Intelligence Officer Larry Charters). CIA headquarters is based in Langley, Virginia.

36. Document No. 1: 1996 CIA Field Report (purportedly written by CIA Senior Intelligence Officer Larry Charters).

37. Document No. 1: 1996 CIA Field Report (purportedly written by CIA Senior Intelligence Officer Larry Charters).

38. Grace Minor later became senior senator of Montserrado. According to Moses Blah (2008), former vice president in Taylor's administration, "she was always unofficially present at *[sic]* the president."

39. The AFRC was led by Maj Johnny Paul Koroma and was an ally to the RUF. Koroma was head of state of Sierra Leone from May 1997 to February 1998 (McGregor 1999, 486).

40. Joe Wylie later became the senior military advisor to LURD (Wylie 2008, 38), then he became deputy minister of defense in the NTGL of Liberia beginning in 2003 (Wylie 2008, 83). Joe Wylie information obtained from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Institutional and Thematic Hearings on 11 August 2008, Monrovia, from the Monrovia Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia (TRC). Unedited transcript of hearing. 120 pages. Retrieved by the author as electronic copy in May 2009, from the TRC in Monrovia.

41. Maxwell Khobe received military training in the US and the UK. In the US, Khobe attended the Armor Basic Officer Leaders Course at Fort Knox, Kentucky, and later the Advanced Armor Officer Course. In the UK, Khobe attended a gunnery course at the Royal Armoured Corps School, Bovington Camp (Omoigui 2003).

42. Joe Gballah has contributed to this research by declaring for the first time (in two interviews) how the USG was behind LURD and by providing documents on LURD's organization. Gballah served as secretary general of LURD and was a key member of ULIMO-J.

43. There are different versions of how and when LURD was established. According to documents retrieved from LURD's (now defunct) website, LURD was formed in Freetown in February 2000. Laveli Supuwood, a former minister of justice and a former senior member of the NPFL who had fallen out with Taylor, brought together a number of Liberians from organizations such as the Union of Democratic Forces of Liberia, Justice Coalition of Liberia, and the Organization of Displaced Liberians. Over a number of meetings, LURD was established in "liaison with British military" and enjoyed support from the Sierra Leonean government. LURD moved to Guinea and in July 2000 it is from here the insurgency into Liberia took place. Although "the US and Britain have admitted no involvement, the groups involved were in contact with military officers from these countries" (LURD 2001, 1-2). The same document also states that "LURD fighters claim to have been organized by Maxwell Khobe to attack Liberia in August of 1998." Gballah (2009) notes that many documents on LURD reflect internal disputes within LURD and the dates are often incorrect. This created a lot of confusion. Brabazon (2003, 2) states that according to senior LURD military personnel, the name LURD was coined by Joe Wylie, and "the movement was born in July 1999 in Freetown after a series of meetings between groups of Liberian exiles in Sierra Leone and Guinea." Brabazon himself was introduced to LURD through former US Army officer Bill Gobah, who informed Joe Wylie that LURD "needed to set a press team in the bush." Wylie took Brabazon behind the lines of LURD (Wylie 2008, 40). Brabazon produced two documentary films, "A Journey without Maps" and "Liberia: An Uncivil War," both released in 2003. Brabazon brought with him "as a bodyguard," Nick du Toit, "who was later imprisoned with Simon Mann after planning a failed coup attempt in Equatorial Guinea" (Brabazon 2010). Among the five coup plotters were Mark Thatcher, the son of former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (Mann 2008). Mann was a cofounder of the PMCs Executive Outcome and Sandline International, which were involved in the fighting against the RUF in Sierra Leone (BBC 2008). The GoL saw links between the PMCs' operation in Sierra Leone, the British government, and international diamond companies. Brabazon and Nick du Toit were perceived as spies for the British and USG, and a death warrant was issued for Brabazon in 2003 (Richardson 2009), leading him to leave Liberia (Brabazon 2003).

44. The arms embargo imposed by SRC 788 (1992) was not lifted after the election in 1997 (Holtom 2007, 2).

45. Peter Coleman contributed to this research with an interview. He served as minister of health and social welfare in Taylor's administration. Coleman further states that that the UN WFP systematically stockpiled food in areas that were expected to be captured by the LURD, while announcing that they had limited resources to distribute food in areas that were under the control of the GoL.

46. The notion of blood diamonds was later promoted by Global Witness to denounce President Mugabe's administration in Zimbabwe (Dunnebacke 2010).

47. The complexity of the diamond market, competition, and price fixing is further outlined by Sharife (2010), who notes that many observers consider the Kimberley Process as "fundamentally flawed" because diamonds cannot be traced to their place of origin, which is interlinked to the "opaque and secretive nature of the global financial architecture."

48. Winston A. Tubman, nephew to late president William Tubman. He served as Liberia's Permanent Representative to the UN in the latter part of the 1970s, and served as the former head of the UN Political Office for Somalia (UNPSO) in the early 1990s, the former senior advisor to the force commander of the UN Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM), and the chair of the Legal and Constitu-

tional Committee of the group of Liberian political leaders that met in Banjul, Gambia, that established the Interim Government in Liberia in 1990. Interview conducted and recorded by the author on 2 February 2009, in Tubman's office on Center Street, Monrovia.

49. On 30 March 2001, the UNSC adopted SCR 1346, which increased the military strength of the UN Armed Mission in Sierra Leone to a strength of 17,500 ("SCR 1346," UN 2001).

50. In January 2009, Susan E. Rice was appointed US Permanent Representative to the UN (House of Representatives, *Testimony of Ms. Susan E. Rice* 2011).

51. Taylor continued to use child soldiers after he became president of Liberia, as reflected in the fact that he maintained his special military unit known as the "Small Boys Unit," which included children under the age of 15 years (group interview with former child soldiers in 2006 and 2009). One of the former child soldiers interviewed in relation to this research stated that when he was forcibly recruited by an armed faction, he was forced to kill his own parents. If he refused, the rest of his family would be killed. This was how the commander ensured that the child could not return to his village, because he would never be accepted again by the community. Two other informants witnessed executions by an armed faction, which then adopted them and forced them to fight in the war.

52. Consequently, when the GoL realized that the arrival of US Ambassador Blaney did not mark a change in US foreign policy toward Liberia, the GoL arranged anti-American demonstrations in Monrovia (Richardson 2009). Blaney (2003) notes that these demonstrations were "against U.S. policies" and "not against Americans," but the USG was dissatisfied with these demonstrations.

53. In late 1999, Gen Robert Guéi led a coup d'état that removed Henri Konan Bédié, the French-supported president who had succeeded Houphouët-Boigny as president of Ivory Coast after his death in 1993 (Schraeder 2000, 410).

54. The conflict between France and Ivory Coast intensified after the Ivory Coast air force bombed a French military camp in the center of the country controlled by the rebel group "New Forces." The bombing left nine French soldiers and a US civilian dead. Immediately after, the French air force bombed and destroyed the entire Ivory Coast air force in November 2004. Next, the French army occupied strategic areas in Abidjan and opened fire on anti-French demonstrators, killing about 60 civilians (Nanga 2005).

55. Morris Matai was the former director of the Child Soldier Association in the Budumbura refugee camp, Ghana, and Director of Initiative for the Development of Former Child Soldiers. He was a soldier in the war from early 1990 until 2000. He fought for the INPFL and the NPFL in Ghana from 2000 to 2008. Interview conducted and recorded by the author on 28 December 2008, at the Village bar/cafe, Monrovia.

56. Kaibeneh Janneh contributed to this research with an interview. He was the leader of the LURD delegation at the peace talks in Accra. He later served as minister of justice in the Gyude Bryant-led interim government from 2003 to 2006 and was appointed as Supreme Court Justice by Pres. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in 2006.

57. A. Kassa was the head of Mission of *Médecins Sans Frontières* in Liberia from early 2003 to July 2004. This author, Niels Hahn worked under the directions of Kassa, from early 2003 to June 2004. The data is extracted from personal conversations with Kassa during this period.

58. Thomas Jaye contributed to this research with an interview in his role as a long term participant and observer of Liberian politics. At the time of the interview,

Jaye served as senior research fellow, conflict prevention, management, and resolution department, at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Accra.

59. The UN-backed Special Court in Sierra Leone was established by UNSC SCR 1315, which requested the UN Secretary-General to “negotiate an agreement with the Government of Sierra Leone to create an independent special court” (“SCR 1315,” UN 2000; Special Court for Sierra Leone 2002, article 1). On 16 January 2002, the Agreement between the UN and the Government of Sierra Leone on the Establishment of a Special Court for Sierra Leone was signed, with the mandate “to prosecute persons who bear the greatest responsibility for serious violations of international humanitarian law and Sierra Leonean law committed in the territory of Sierra Leone since 30 November 1996” (Special Court for Sierra Leone 2002, article 1). The court was predominantly funded by the US and the UK (USDOS 2010), and David Crane, the first appointed chief prosecutor was a former employee of the US Army, where he served as Waldemar A. Solf professor of international law at the US Army Judge Advocate General’s School (“Profile: David M. Crane,” Syracuse University 2011).

60. Tom Kamara contributed to this research with interviews and email correspondence. Kamara worked as a consultant and political analyst for several UN agencies in Liberia and is the chief editor of *The New Democrat* newspaper.

61. Interview in: *Liberia: An Uncivil War*. DVD. Produced by Jonathan Stack and James Brabazon. Silver Springs, MD: Discovery Times Channel, 2005.

62. Klein had a career in the USG, serving as political advisor to the commander-in-chief of the US European Command in Stuttgart, Germany. In 1996, in the UN system, Klein served at the rank of under-secretary-general under Boutros-Ghali, as transitional administrator for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja, and Western Sirmium. In 1997, he served as the principal deputy high representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in 1999 he became Kofi Annan’s special representative of the secretary-general and coordinator of the UN operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UN 2003). The GoL accused Jacques Klein of having private interests in Liberia’s diamonds. Former minister of Lands, Mines, and Energy, Jenkins Dunbar (2006 and 2009), and former chairperson of the NPP, Cyril Allen (2009), stated that Klein was previously engaged in diamond extraction and trade in Liberia through the South Africa-based company Greater Diamond Company Ltd., headed by Niko Shefer, which is a subsidiary of Greater Holdings interconnected to Greater Ministries. After Greater Diamonds was attacked by armed groups in a concession area close to Mano River, they wanted to bring in a PMC to protect their diamond field. Taylor would not allow the foreign mercenaries to enter Liberia, and after a dispute between the GoL and Shefer, Greater Diamonds was expelled from Liberia and its equipment handed over to the government agency for public works. Dunbar and Allen further argued that Jacques Klein continued to pursue his interests in the diamond business through the Liberian Reconstruction and Development Company while holding the position as special representative of the UN secretary-general in Liberia. However, in this position, he experienced problems, had to resign, and hurriedly left Liberia in early May 2005. According to IRIN News, “No reason was given for Klein’s sudden departure” (2003).



## Chapter 6

# The US-led UN Intervention

## The Theory and Policy behind UNMIL

After Charles Taylor resigned as president of Liberia and went into exile in Nigeria, the UN began to deploy one of the most comprehensive missions in UN history—under the UN Charter, Chapter VII. This chapter allows the UNSC to “take such action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security” (UN Charter 1945, article 42).

On 11 September 2003, the UNSC received the *Report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council in Liberia*. It outlined recommendations for the structure of the UN mission in Liberia (UNMIL) as a “multidimensional operation composed of political, military, civilian police, criminal justice, civil affairs, human rights, gender, child protection, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, public information and support components” (UN 2003, 14–15). This included a “mechanism for the coordination of its activities with those of the humanitarian and development community” in collaboration with the ECOWAS, the AU, UN Missions in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), UN Missions in Côte d’Ivoire, and the UN Office for West Africa. The mission was headed by the special representative of the UN secretary-general, assisted by two deputies, a force commander and a police commissioner (UN 2003, 14–15). This integrated approach developed into the concept known as the “UN Integrated Missions,” and UNMIL was among the first missions to implement this concept (Hull 2008, 10) and became the most developed example (Frerks 2006, 7). UNMIL became a critical case study for military, economic, and humanitarian interventions as is reflected in Atkinson (2008), Cleaver and Massey (2006), S. Ellis (2005), Fearon and Laitin (2004), Ford and Tienhaara (2010), Gompert et al. (2007), L. Howard (2008), Jennings (2008), Muntschick (2008), Paris (2004), Reisinger (2009), and Reno (2008).

The intellectual foundation of the UNMIL is the notion of “liberal peace,” which gradually revitalized in the decades after the end of the Cold War. To understand the practice of the UNMIL it is essential to outline and analyze these theories and how they transmuted into policy and practice.

The notion of liberal peace originates from Immanuel Kant's (1795) idea that perpetual peace can be achieved through the spread of free trade because trade creates mutual interests and interdependence, which makes the "spirit of commerce . . . incompatible with war" (Kant 1795, first supplement, point 3). Although Kant considered democracy as "despotism" (Kant 1795, first supplement, point 6), his notion of liberal peace transmuted into the "Liberal Democratic Peace Theory" also referred to as "Democratic Peace" or "Liberal Peace," which considers liberal democracies as peaceful entities that do not go to war, or at least do not go to war with each other (Doyle 1997; Rummel 1995, 2009).<sup>1</sup> Kant's liberal peace thesis became a powerful political instrument under Pres. Woodrow Wilson. Wilson's Committee on Public Information was established to "coordinate wartime propaganda and achieved great success in whipping the population into war fever" in support for US engagement during World War I (Chomsky 2002, 4). Wilson invested heavily in war propaganda that imprinted "democracy" in the American geopolitical lexicon as the highest term of praise (Schwartz and Skinner, 1999). For example, when Wilson declared war against Germany on 2 April 1917, he partly based US war engagement on the notion of liberal peace because "the world must be made safe for democracy" ("Joint Address to Congress," 1917).

Shortly before World War II, E. H. Carr warned against liberal idealism in his influential work *The Twenty Years' Crisis* which marks the establishment of modern classical realism as a school in international relations theory. Carr argued that it is a dangerous illusion to believe that economic interdependence and international cooperation through institutions such as the League of Nations can ensure peace among nations (Carr, 2001). With the outbreak of World War II and the collapse of the League of Nations, realism became the dominant theory among US policymakers and academics during the Cold War (Cox 2003). Carr and Hans Morgenthau were the leading classical realist thinkers (Griffiths 2006) who argued in different ways that the international sphere is anarchic, and that the UN is an international platform for negotiation dominated by the greatest powers, as it was in the case of the League of Nations, the Concert of Europe, and the Holy Alliance. Democratic or not, states are selfish and dangerous entities and peace is maintained by the balance of power through alliances. Zero-sum games are most significantly exemplified by the threat of mutually assured destruction if there is a direct war

between nuclear powers. International law is predominantly an instrument of strong states, used to set the rules of the game, but they will seek to optimize and expand their power, which makes them imperialistic by nature (Carr 2001; Morgenthau 2006).<sup>2</sup>

Carr's work is "strongly impregnated with Marxist ways of thinking, applied to international affairs" (Carr 2001, xix). However, the influence of Marx was toned down by Morgenthau (2006), who instead draws on Friedrich Nietzsche's notion of the human "will to power." Morgenthau applies this "will" to larger social groups and to the level of nation states, which he considers as aggressive and imperialistic. This is then toned down in Kenneth Waltz's (1979) "neorealism," also referred to as "scientific realism" or "structural realism" (Griffiths 2006), which focuses more on the nation-state as a unit in the international system and pays little attention to internal power struggles, class, and imperialism (Waltz 1979). Neorealism predominantly focuses on how states "think strategically about how to survive in the international system" (Mearsheimer 2006, 571–72), which presents Western capitalist states and its leaders in a more sympathetic light.<sup>3</sup>

However, neorealism still paints a grim picture of the world that does not correspond to the concept of liberal institutionalism (Mearsheimer 2006, 569–71). With the advance of neoliberalism in the 1980s and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, new theories such as constructivism promoted by Nicholas Onuf (1989) and Alexander Wendt (1992) became more influential. Accordingly, Western states should not be seen as selfish imperialistic actors locked into an anarchic international system dominated by the strongest states. Instead, the world should be understood as a social construction where "anarchy is what states make of it" (Wendt 1992). The realist concept of "power politics" is socially constructed and states are not necessarily "egoists" (Wendt 1999, chap. 6).

Perhaps the most influential critique of realism came from Fukuyama (1992), he declared the Marxist school of thought dead, and argued that realism does not comply with the reality of the world. Fukuyama states that "it is safe to say that were it not for the Third World, Marxism would have died a much quicker death in this century. But the continuing poverty of the underdeveloped world breathed new life into the doctrine by permitting the Left to attribute that poverty [*sic*] first to colonialism, and then, when there was no more colonialism, to "neo-colonialism," and finally to the behavior of multinational corporations. The most recent attempt to keep a form of

Marxism alive in the Third World was so-called *dependencia* (“dependency”) theory (Fukuyama 1992, 99). Fukuyama then moves on to realism and states that “realism played a large and beneficial role in shaping the way Americans thought about foreign policy after World War II.” “It did so by saving the United States from its tendency to seek security in a truly naïve form of liberal internationalism, such as primary reliance on the United Nations for security.” “Realism was an appropriate framework for understanding international politics in this period because the world operated according to realist premises” (Fukuyama 1992, 251).

However, Fukuyama continues, this was a “fitting view of international politics for a pessimistic century” (Fukuyama 1992, 252). After the end of the Cold War, he states “realism has become something of a fetish among foreign policy ‘sophisticates,’ who often accept the premises of realism uncritically, without recognizing the ways in which they no longer fit the world” (Fukuyama 1992, 252).

By marginalizing Marxism and classical realism, the focus could move further away from issues of class struggle and imperialism as root causes of conflicts. Instead, a body of literature began to emerge which focused on culture, religion, ethnicity, tribalism, and identity as root causes of contemporary conflict, rather than traditional distinctions of social groups used by imperial powers to divide and rule. This is perhaps best reflected in the work of Huntington (1993) and R. Kaplan (1994; 2000), which Taustad (2003) refers to as a new barbarism and neo-orientalist thesis. Said (2001) notes that Huntington’s “The Clash of Civilizations?” “was intended to supply Americans with an original thesis about ‘a new phase’ in world politics after the end of the Cold War,” which was inspired by Fukuyama’s idea of the “end of history” (Said 2001, intro.). Huntington’s central hypothesis is that “the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic.” “The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural.” “Nation states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations.” “The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics. The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future” (Huntington 1996, 22).

This new barbarism thesis grew more influential simultaneously with a revitalization of the liberal democratic peace thesis promoted by academics, such as Doyle (1997) and Rummel (1995) who consider

the United States as a democracy but marginalize the history of US wars of aggression.<sup>4</sup> The notion of democratic peace has been popularized by politicians, such as Bill Clinton (1994), who claims that “democracies don’t attack each other,” and Bush (The White House 2004), who has his “faith in democracies to promote peace.”<sup>5</sup>

In addition to these renewed theoretical frameworks, the director of the World Bank’s Development Research Group, Paul Collier initiated an influential debate through a number of articles on “Greed versus Grievance” (Collier and Hoeffler 1998; Collier 2000; World Bank 2001; Collier and Sambanis 2002; Collier, Hoeffler, and Rohner 2007). Collier (2000) argues that there are two main views on the causes of conflicts. One view is that rebellions “arise because the rebels aspire to wealth by capturing resources extralegally” which he defines as “greed.” The other view is that rebellions “arise because rebels aspire to rid the nation, or the group of people with which they identify, of an unjust regime” (Collier 2000, 91–92), which he defines as “grievance.” Grievance is based on four main factors: ethnic or religious hatred, economic inequality, lack of political rights, and government economic incompetence (Collier 2000, 95–96). In this way Collier “frames the debate” and “internalizes” the root causes of conflicts by excluding the greed of foreign corporations and the interest of external powers in removing African governments that do not comply with liberal economic systems such as in the case of Liberia under Tolbert’s administration. Within this framework and based on quantitative data, Collier concludes that “local” “greed seems more important than grievance” as the root cause of armed conflicts (Collier 2000, 110). Therefore, policy intervention should focus on how to reduce “economic incentives for rebellion and the economic power of the groups that tend to gain from the continuation of social disorder” rather than on the discourse of grievance (Collier 2000, 110). Collier’s statistical findings and arguments have been contested by mainstream academics in different ways, but most significant is that they maintain the “internalization” of conflicts where the role of external powers are ignored or marginalized as reflected in Bodea and Elbadawi (2007), Calderisi (2006), Elbadawi and Sambanis (2002), Fearon and Laitin (2003), Lujala et al. (2005), Kaarsholm (2006), Keen (2000), Murshed and Tadjoeeddin (2007), Snyder and Bhavnani (2005), Reno (2000, 2006), and Ross (2004).

Simultaneously with the greed versus grievance debate, Mary Kaldor (1999) introduced the notion of “new wars” which called for new

forms of intervention by the international community. Kaldor (1999, 1) refers to “new wars” as a type of organized violence developed during the 1980s and 1990s, especially in Africa and Eastern Europe. She uses the term “new” to “distinguish these wars from a prevailing perception of war drawn from an earlier era” where large national armies confronted each other. New wars predominantly refer to internal wars, civil wars, or low-intensity conflicts (Kaldor 1999, 2) involving a blurred distinction between war, organized crime, and large-scale violation of human rights. They must be understood in the context of globalization, which Kaldor refers to as “intensification of global interconnectedness—political, economic, military, and cultural—and the changing character of political authority” (Kaldor 1999, 4). It is also where the global presence includes “international reporters, mercenary troops, military advisors, and diaspora volunteers as well as a veritable ‘army’ of international agencies,” such as the UN, AU, and NGOs (Kaldor 1999, 4).

In response to the new wars, there must be new forms of interventions. Kaldor (1999, 112) notes that with the disintegration of the Soviet Union there was much optimism about solving global problems, such as wars. The deployment of peacekeeping forces would not be blocked in the UNSC, and the number of UN military interventions under Chapter VII increased significantly in the 1990s. Despite good intentions, UN interventions have been “shamed and humiliated” in Rwanda, Srebrenica, and Somalia (Kaldor 1999, 113). Kaldor argues that this is caused by a lack of understanding of political context and what is needed is “more political response to ‘new wars’ and a strategy of ‘capturing’ hearts and minds’ needs to be counterposed to the strategy of sowing ‘fear and hate.’” What is needed is a “new form of cosmopolitan political mobilization, which embraces both the so-called international community and local populations” (Kaldor 1999, 114).

Within ten years of the end of the Cold War, the dominant Western academic discourse had “internalized” and “localized” the causes of conflicts in Africa and promoted the idea that the West should intervene militarily in these conflicts for humanitarian reasons. Much of the literature on interventions refers to the ECOMOG experience in Liberia as an essential case study, but experience with the UN operations in Somalia, Rwanda, and Kosovo became central for the UN reforms that led to the integrated mission strategy in Liberia.

The first “humanitarian military interventions” in the post-Cold War were joint US and UN military operations in Somalia launched in December 1992, known as Operation Restore Hope (Bricmont 2006; Brauman 2010; Weissman 2010).<sup>6</sup> The humanitarian image of Operation Restore Hope became so dominant that most commentators refrained from mentioning that United States willingness to intervene could be related to oil resources rather than humanitarian concerns (Fineman 1993).<sup>7</sup> Even after US Cobra attack helicopters killed more than 50 Somali clan leaders during a peace negotiation meeting in Mogadishu on 12 July 1993, many journalists focused more on the four foreign journalists who were killed by the angry Somalis when they arrived at the site. The attack marked a turning point in the conflict, which resulted in a significant armed battle on 3 October 1993 between groups of Somali militia and the United States. Two US Black Hawk helicopters were shot down and 18 US Soldiers killed (Al-Hadi 2008).<sup>8</sup>

The dominant media did not provide the context for the Somali rage, but disseminated pictures of the dead US Soldiers being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu, and presented the Somalis as “ungrateful savages whom noble American troops had come to save from themselves” (Adebajo 2003, 75).<sup>9</sup> Six months later, the foreign military intervention withdrew from Somalia, and Operation Restore Hope became better known as the “Somalia Syndrome.” It is also often referred to as the reason for US inaction in Rwanda during the genocide in 1994 (Brunk 2008; Dallaire 2003). However, this argument is problematic because France and the United States were deeply involved in the Rwandan conflict. France supported the Habyarimana-led government of Rwanda, and the United States supported the Rwanda Patriotic Front headed by Paul Kagame, through the government of Uganda (Madsen 1999; I. Taylor 2003).<sup>10</sup>

Nevertheless, concerning NATO’s intervention in Kosovo in 1999, UN secretary-general, Kofi Annan noted that “a group of states intervened without seeking authority from the United Nations Security Council.” However, he justifies this action by referring to the genocide in Rwanda where “the international community stands accused of doing too little, too late” (Annan 1999), and as an example of “how terrible the consequences of inaction can be in the face of mass murder.” Annan further questions that if “there had been a coalition of states ready and willing to act in defense on the Tutsi population, but the council had refused or delayed giving the green light, should such

a coalition then have stood idly by while the horror unfolded?” (Annan 1999)

Preceding Annan’s statement, UK prime minister, Tony Blair, in a speech to the Economic Club of Chicago on 22 April 1999, presented the NATO intervention in Kosovo as a new “doctrine of the international community,” and justified the military action on humanitarian grounds as a “just war” (Blair 1999, 2).<sup>11</sup> He further promoted the British military forces as humanitarian actors who “have been busier than ever—delivering humanitarian aid, deterring attacks on defenceless people, backing up UN resolutions” (Blair 1999, 6) and praised the United States “readiness to shoulder burdens and responsibilities that come with its sole superpower status” (Blair 1999, 7).<sup>12</sup> Blair further indicated that the principle of noninterference, which has been a core principle of international order, should not apply to countries that can be described as “threats to international peace and security” with reference to regimes around the world “that are undemocratic and engaged in barbarous acts” (Blair 1999, 7). In such cases “those nations which have the power, have the responsibility” to intervene (Blair 1999, 10).

Blair’s doctrine guided the intervention in Sierra Leone in May 2000 as the UN “could not really contain the RUF” (Blair 2010, 140). Britain deployed around 1,000 soldiers who were directly involved in counterinsurgency activities and the capture of Foday Sankoh (Blair 2010, 140). The BBC presented this intervention, under the main heading “Crisis in Sierra Leone,” as a necessity to put an end to the atrocities committed by the rebels (BBC 2003), and later as a “successful humanitarian intervention” to be “held up by Tony Blair as proof of the success of the new doctrine of international community introduced in . . . [the] 1999 speech which justified later interventions into Afghanistan and Iraq” (BBC 2007; Mackenzie 2007). The *Guardian* stated that Britain acted in Sierra Leone, while the Clinton administration “had little appetite for peacekeeping adventures” after the United States experience in Somalia, but notes that the intervention “did not pass without critical comments” and can be seen “as a textbook example of the ‘new imperialism’ as advocated by Robert Cooper” (Tran 2002).<sup>13</sup>

According to Blair (2010), the intervention in Sierra Leone is “one of the things” of which he was “most proud” (139). It was the “direct effect of the success of the Sierra Leone intervention” that led to a comprehensive reform process of the UN leading to the “UN adopting

in 2005 the principle of the Responsibility to Protect [R2P]" (Blair 2010, 142). This principle was developed by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) established under the authority of the Canadian Government, and headed by Australia's former minister of foreign affairs, Gareth Evans (ICISS 2001).<sup>14</sup> In 2001 the ICISS published R2P report, with the main message "State sovereignty implies responsibility, and the primary responsibility for the protection of its people lies with the state itself," however; "where a population is suffering serious harm, as a result of internal war, insurgency, repression or state failure, and the state in question is unwilling or unable to halt or avert it, the principle of nonintervention yields to the international responsibility to protect" (ICISS 2001, vii).<sup>15</sup>

The ICISS report recommended "multilateral interventions led by a major power with regional or other interests at stake, supported by troops from developing countries" (2001, 8) and pointed to the ECOMOG interventions in Liberia as an example that was justified by its purpose of protecting humans without prior authorization from the UNSC (ICISS 2001, 16).<sup>16</sup> It did, however, recommend that military interventions should be executed by the UN and then followed by a comprehensive reconstruction program under the administration of the UN authority. However, the ICISS report noted that there is a "generalized resistance to any resurrection of a 'trusteeship' concept, on the grounds that it represents just another kind of intrusion into internal affairs." However, "failed states" are "quite likely to generate situations which the international community simply cannot ignore" (ICISS 2001, 43). Thomas Weiss (2013) a key person in establishing the ICISS notes that the ICISS was carefully put together by the Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lloyd Axworthy, so it looked international and inclusive, while excluding representatives from countries that would oppose military interventions in violation of the UN Charter.<sup>17</sup>

The idea of establishing UN trusteeships in "failed states" as recommended by the ICISS was further promoted by several scholars, who drew upon the new conflict and intervention theories. For example, Fearon and Laitin (2003, 88) argued that African civil wars were "mainly the result of an accumulation of protracted conflicts since the 1950s" due to decolonization, which created a number of weak states in Africa. These weak states "have been at risk of civil violence for the whole period, almost entirely in the form of insurgency,

or rural guerrilla warfare” (Fearon and Laitin 2003, 88). As a solution, they suggested that many of these weak states should “be viewed as candidates for ‘neotrusteeships’ under the United Nations or regional military and political organisations such as NATO and the European Union” (Fearon and Laitin 2003, 89).

Other scholars such as Ferguson (2005), Ignatieff (2003) and S. Ellis (2005), refer to Liberia as an example of a country that needed to come under foreign administration in order to “get things right.” For example, Ferguson argued that Liberia was a country that “would benefit immeasurably from something like an American colonial administration” (198), and for S. Ellis (2005) Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Somalia are examples of abject failures of African states that needed radical intervention (2). For Ellis, Liberia is the most obvious candidate for trusteeship. Other countries qualify as well, such as Congo and Sudan, but Liberia had fewer outside influences and allies and was already deeply attached to the United States. Recognizing that “intrusive outside meddling often smacks of colonialism and is thus a bitter pill for African nationalists to swallow,” Ellis argued that “there is simply no alternative” and welcomed the “growing body of international jurisprudence defining the circumstances in which the international community is justified, or even required, to bypass such nominal sovereignty in order to protect people” (2005, 5).

Morgenthau noted that weak states will often react to foreign intervention “with a fierce resistance to the threat of neocolonialism,” so foreign intervention must therefore either be “brutally direct in order to overcome resistance or it must be surreptitious in order to be acceptable, or the two extremes may be combined” (Morgenthau 1967, 4). In this context, PSYOP and “Hearts and Minds” campaigns are crucial. The US Army considers PSYOP as “a vital part of the broad range of US diplomatic, military, economic, and informational activities . . . [which] characteristically are delivered as information for effects, used during peacetime and conflict, to inform and influence” (US Joint Chiefs of Staff 2003). “Hearts” refers to “persuading people that their best interests are served by COIN [Counterinsurgency] success” and “Minds” relates to “convincing them that the force can protect them and that resisting it is pointless” (US Army 2006, A–5). Once the military deployment has occurred, the next task is to build trusted networks among local actors, NGOs, and the media. This can be done by identifying needs in the local community and fulfilling some of these needs and thereby mobilizing public sup-

port for the military deployment (US Army 2006, A-5). In Liberia, this materialized through humanitarian aid in cooperation with international NGOs and highly visible, quick impact projects. It included renovating schools and health clinics close to a main road and establishing sports facilities used by the local population with the UNMIL logo. In this circumstance, UN humanitarian agencies and NGOs played a central role because of their positive image. Civilian actors and military actors are increasingly being forced to cooperate under the concept of Civil Military Cooperation (CIMIC) (Corey 2006).<sup>18</sup>

This hearts and minds strategy is reflected in Machiavelli (2005) who notes that “although one may be very strong in armed forces, yet in entering a province one has always need of the goodwill of the natives” (4). The main characteristic of the UN Integrated Mission reflects this idea by moving away from the traditional divisions between the humanitarian operation and the political and military operation by integrating these activities under one single leadership of the UN special representative for the secretary-general (Hull 2008, 10). This began in Kosovo in 1999 where an attempt was made to ensure a more “effective division of labour between different actors operating on distinct mandates” (Eide et al. 2005, 12). This worked to a certain extent on a “technical” day-to-day level, but it did not solve the problem of conflict of interests between the major intervening powers (Eide et al. 2005, 12). The concept has been revised and adapted to UN interventions in Afghanistan, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Sudan, and Timor-Leste (Eide et al. 2005, 12).

Based on the problems faced by the UN operations in countries such as the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, and Somalia, the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (UN 2000) elaborated on the report known as the Brahimi Report. The report was named after the head of the panel, Lakhdar Brahimi, who had previously worked in Liberia as special envoy for the UN secretary-general and was appointed as the United Nations secretary-general (UNSG) Special Representative for Afghanistan in November 2001 (UN 2001). This report provides a “comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects” (UN, Brahimi Report 2000, 1) and sets out recommendations on how to reform UN operations with particular focus on conflict prevention, peacekeeping, and peace-building. It states that the UN “has bitterly and repeatedly discovered over the last decade, no amount of good intentions can sub-

stitute for the fundamental ability to project credible force in complex peacekeeping” (UN, Brahimi Report 2000, viii) It further states that “force alone cannot create peace; it can only create the space in which peace may be built” (UN Brahimi Report 2001, viii) and recommends that peacekeepers and peacebuilders should become “inseparable partners” (UN, Brahimi Report 2001, ix). Therefore, it calls upon “all who are engaged in conflict prevention and development—the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions, Government and civil society organizations—[to] address . . . challenges in a more integrated fashion” (UN, Brahimi Report 2001, 6).

The Brahimi Report was followed up by the “Prevention of Armed Conflict: Report of the Secretary-General” in 2001, which states that “a successful preventive strategy depends on the cooperation of many United Nations actors, including the Secretary-General, the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the International Court of Justice and United Nations agencies, offices, funds, and programmes, as well as the Bretton Woods institutions.” “The United Nations is not the only actor in prevention and may often not be the actor best suited to take the lead” (UN 2001, 2).

The question of who should lead intervention became important in the reform debate.<sup>19</sup> Fearon and Laitin (2004) argue that “there needs to be a lead state or regional organization with advanced technical and organizational capabilities to be the principal contractor with the UN” (26). They refer to Britain’s intervention in Sierra Leone as an example of where the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had failed, but the operation was “restored to effectiveness” after Britain intervened and took leadership (Fearon and Laitin 2004, 26). The lead agent, they argue, should be “the major power or regional actors with the greatest national security or economic interest in restoring stability and democracy to the collapsed state” (Fearon and Laitin 2004, 28). Reference is made to examples such as the NATO and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in Bosnia and Kosovo, Australia in East Timor, France in several francophone West African countries, the UK in Sierra Leone, and the United States in Afghanistan, Haiti, Iraq, and Liberia (Fearon and Laitin 2004, 28). As will be shown in the following section, the USG became the lead agent of the major UN military intervention in Liberia and the dominant power implementing the post war neoliberal reconstruction process.

## The UNMIL Experience

A few hours after Charles Taylor left Liberia, the US secretary of state, Colin Powell stated at a press conference in Washington DC that the United States government (USG) was very pleased with “the peaceful and constitutional transfer of power from Charles Taylor to now Pres. Blah” and congratulated the Nigerian forces for their work (“Colin Powell Remarks,” *Scoop World* 2003). Powell further noted that the USS *Iwo Jima* Task Group and the Marine Expeditionary Unit were “just offshore and visible” and would come ashore to

coordinate with the Nigerian commander, Brigadier General Okonkwo, and Ambassador Blaney . . . to assist the [ECOWAS Monitoring Group Mission in Liberia] ECOMIL forces in opening up the port of Freeport in order to facilitate the arrival and distribution of humanitarian aid and thereby allow the Nigerian and other forces that will be arriving as part of the international intervention force, assist them in making sure that the ceasefire stays in place and that routes are opened up so that humanitarian supplies can be distributed as they arrive . . . There are ships off the coast . . . carrying humanitarian supplies and the UN organizations and other international nongovernmental organizations [INGO] are prepared to swing into action (“Colin Powell Remarks,” *Scoop World* 2003).

Afterward, Nigerian General Okonkwo formally took control of Freeport in Monrovia from rebel commander, Sekou Fofana, “in the presence of US Ambassador John Blaney” (Office of Public Communications, Nigeria 2006)

A week later, the United States drafted the “Comprehensive Peace Agreement [CPA] Between the government of Liberia (GoL) and the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) and the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) and Political Parties” (US Institute of Peace [USIP] 2003) and it was signed by the relevant parties on 18 August 2003 (Janneh 2009; W. Johnson 2010).<sup>20</sup> The CPA was underpinned by UN SCR 1497 adopted on 1 August 2003 and implemented more or less according to the text (W. Johnson 2010). It ensured a ceasefire between the warring parties and was secured by the ECOWAS interposition force which kept the armed factions separated. It was supervised by the Joint Monitoring Committee—composed of representatives of the AU, ECOWAS, the International Contact Group (ICGL) on Liberia, the UN, and the parties of the Ceasefire Agreement (USIP 2003, article iii, 1). The interposition force was then integrated into the international stabilization force

with the mandate to observe and monitor the ceasefire, protect the population, demobilize and disarm the warring parties, assist in the “coordination and delivery of humanitarian assistance,” and along with ECOWAS and the ICGL “provide advice and support to the Transitional Government . . . on the formation of a new and restructured Liberian Army” (USIP 2003, article vi, 8).

On UN SSRs, the CPA stipulated that all irregular forces should be disbanded and the AFL should be “restructured” and “have a new command structure” where the parties requested the United States to “play a lead role in organising this restructuring program” (USIP 2003, Part 4, 1, a, b). Under the supervision of the United Nations Civil Police components (UNCIVPOL), this included an immediate restructuring of all security institutions, such as the National Police Force, Immigration Force, Special Security Service, and custom security guards (USIP 2003, article viii).

For governance reforms, the agreement established a Governance Reform Commission as a “vehicle for the promotion of the principles of good governance in Liberia.” It did not spell out that “good governance” means neoliberal reforms but indicates this by mandating the commission to “ensure an enabling environment which will attract private sector direct investment” (USIP 2003, part 8, article xvi, d, f).

On the political side, the CPA ensured that the National Election Commission would conform “with UN standards” and postponed the general elections scheduled for October 2003 to October 2005 (USIP 2003, article xviii). The vice-president assumed the duties of the president until 14 October 2003. He handed over power to the NTGL (USIP 2003, article xx) which was in power until the third Monday of January 2006, when the newly elected president of Liberia took office. Upon the “installation of the NTGL . . . all cabinet Ministers, Deputy and Assistant Ministers, heads of autonomous agencies, commissions, heads of public corporations and state-owned enterprises of the current Government of Liberia (GoL)” would be “deemed to have resigned” (USIP 2003, Article xxi).

The core mandate of the NTGL was to carry out regular government duties and to ensure implementation of the peace agreement (USIP 2003, article xxii). The three branches of the government remained in the form of the National Transitional Legislative Assembly (NTLA), the Executive, and the Judiciary. In the NTLA, the GoL was allocated 12 seats, LURD 12 seats, MODEL 12 seats, political parties 18 seats, Civil Society and Special Interest Groups seven seats, and

the counties 15 seats (USIP 2003, article xxiv). The Executive was to be led by a transitional chairman and a transitional vice chairman with the same cabinet structure as Taylor's administration (USIP 2003, Article xxv). Eighteen political parties and several Civil Society groups nominated three names, from which the three armed parties could select the chairperson (Jaye 2003, 644). The three competing candidates were Ellen Johnson Sirleaf from the UP, Rudolph Sherman from the True Whig Party, and Gyude Bryant from the Liberian Action Party. Bryant was considered the most neutral person and was selected as the chairperson (W. Johnson 2010, 00:15– 00:18 min.). Through a similar selection, Wesley M. Johnson from the UP Party and former chairperson of the PPP became vice-chairperson of the NTGL (W. Johnson 2010).

The CPA further ensured that allocation of ministerial positions, deputy and assistant minister, heads of independent agencies, commissions, public corporations, and state-owned enterprises would be negotiated among the parties according to the agreement (USIP 2003, article xxv, xxvi). However, in practice, this was only negotiated among LURD, MODEL, and the NPP, who were still armed and each got four to five ministries. For example, the ministry of foreign affairs went to MODEL, and LURD insisted on controlling the strategic city of Freeport. Because LURD and MODEL were split, they got twice as many assets as the NPP, but in fact "MODEL and LURD were the same group of people" (W. Johnson 2010, 00:20– 00:21 min.). It was the strategic ministries and money generating agencies that were most attractive to the three armed parties (W. Johnson 2010, 00:18–00:20 min.).

In order to support the daily operation of the government institutions, the CPA asked for the parties to "call on the United Nations, the ECOWAS, the AU, the IMF, the World Bank, African Development Bank and other international institutions . . . to assign trained personnel and international experts for the purpose of providing technical support and assistance to the NTGL, especially for the functioning of its ministries and parastatals" (USIP 2003, article xxvi, q).

Because of this required support, foreign advisors were again deployed to help in key Liberian institutions, similar to what had happened in the past. However, this time it was with an unprecedented magnitude and sophistication via the UN Integrated Mission headed by the US special representative of the secretary-general, Jacques Klein.

UNMIL was established by the SCR 1509 on 19 September 2003 (“SCR 1509,” UN 2003), and took over the peacekeeping duties from ECOWAS on 1 October 2003 (UNMIL 2011). The resolution welcomed the resignation and departure of Charles Taylor and the peaceful transfer of power (“SCR 1509,” UN 2003, 2). However, the resolution also stated that “the situation in Liberia continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region” (“SCR 1509,” UN 2003, 3), and therefore the UNSC decided to deploy 15,000 UN military personnel, 250 military observers, 160 staff officers, and 1,115 civilian police officers, and the appropriate civilian component for administration (“SCR 1509,” UN 2003, article 1). A few hours earlier, on 1 October 2003, the UNSC adopted SCR 1508, which extended the UNAMSIL for six months. This resolution stressed the “need for coordination of United Nations efforts to contribute to the consolidation of peace and security in the subregion” (“SCR 1508,” UN 2003, 1), and encouraged the Sierra Leonean armed forces and UNAMSIL “to maintain intensive patrolling of the border with Liberia” (“SCR 1508,” UN 2003, 2).

In contrast to the historical experience of interventions in Liberia, which was marked by rivalries between external powers, the UN Integrated Mission appeared to integrate better and accommodate the interests of external powers, which reduced the opportunity of local opposition groups to seek external assistance. Klein met with Pres. Laurent Gbagbo of Ivory Coast, Pres. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah of Sierra Leone, Prime Minister Lamine Sidimé of Guinea, Pres. Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, the Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and the Commander of the French Forces in Ivory Coast. US special representative of the secretary-general, Jacques Klein, hosted these meetings in order to gain their “support and full cooperation with UNMIL,” which he noted “is crucial if United Nations efforts in Liberia and the region are to be successful” (*Testimony of Jacques Paul Klein*, House of Representatives 2003, 53).

From the beginning, UNMIL included Russian military personnel and police officers, and around 600 Chinese soldiers (Corey 2006). Diplomatic relations between the GoL and the RoC ceased on 12 October 2003. This led the spokesperson from the ministry of foreign affairs in Taipei, Richard Shih to claim that the NTGL had terminated diplomatic ties with Taiwan “due to intimidation and bribery from China,” because it had used its power in the UNSC and threatened to block a \$250 million budget for the UN peacekeeping mission (Huang

2003). According to Francis Lee, the director general of the Department of African Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Taipei, the PRC had also bribed Liberian officials in the NTGL to break relations with the RoC (Huang 2006). In contrast, Gou Haudong, a political officer for the PRC embassy in Monrovia states that it was the USG that approached the PRC in the UNSC and informed them that there would be a shift in diplomatic relations from the RoC to the PRC (Gou 2009).<sup>21</sup>

In February 2004, as military forces were gradually deployed, the USG, the UN, and the World Bank co-hosted an International Reconstruction Conference. The objective was “ensuring a coordinated approach to rebuilding Liberia by encouraging participants to sign on to a national plan” (Office of the Director of National Intelligence 2004, 2). The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) considered an integrated approach for the donor community as crucial to the reconstruction process, and the initial framework was named “Results-Focused Transition Framework” (RFTF) (World Bank 2005, 3). RFTF was adopted by “Liberia’s partners” at the conference, and “served as the centerpiece of dialogue and assistance to Liberia’s humanitarian and reconstruction agenda” (NTGL 2005, 9). The World Bank classified Liberia as a Low-Income Country Under Stress (LICUS), and the RFTF functioned as a transitional framework for the implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP).<sup>22</sup> One of the key objectives of the RFTF was to begin the reconstruction of Liberia as a liberal state system by laying “the foundations for rebuilding Liberia’s infrastructure . . . and to create the environment necessary for private sector investment” (NTGL 2005, 14). Christopher Gabelle, the institutional development and governance advisor at the Office of the European Community in Liberia (2006), notes that this included preparation for the privatization of the deep sea Freeport, Roberts International Airport, Liberia Electricity Corporation, Liberia Telecommunications, and Liberia Water and Sewer Corporations. First, all of these organizations had to be improved with donor money in order to attract private investors.<sup>23</sup>

It was of particular importance that the RFTF was “premised on full national ownership” (NTGL 2005, 12), and most documents on the reconstruction program appear as if the GoL developed them in consultation with civil society groups and international organizations. This corresponds with the World Bank’s comprehensive development framework which emphasizes that each country should

“own” reforms in order to ensure a higher degree of commitment to implement them (World Bank 2011). However, Luigi Giovine, the World Bank country representative (2006) notes the RFTF fundamentally reflected the World Bank’s policies because it was conceptualized and drafted by Mats Karlsson, the former World Bank country director for Liberia, and then “modified . . . to fit the mission” (Giovine 2006, 00:09–00:11 min.).<sup>24</sup> The World Bank and international consultants guided many documents and procedures for the reconstruction program. For example, concerning the Interim PRSPs, Giovine (2006) states that “a lot of copy-paste went on” (Giovine, 00:21–00:22 min.) from PRSPs from other African countries. This is because in Liberia, the World Bank “operated with considerable substitution capacity instead of capacity building . . . the expats [expatriates] as seconded, supposedly to train and form—they [the Liberians] have to do the job themselves—so the transfer is not as fast as we [the World Bank] would want . . . therefore this draft [the I-PRSPs] has a very strong expatriate hand” (Giovine 2006, 00:23–00:24 min.).

The practical implementation of the reforms was undertaken by the RFTF Implementation and Monitoring Committee as the “apex body headed by the Chairman of NTGL, and supported by ten technical-level, RFTF Working Clusters” (NTGL 2005, 9) and “guided by international expatriates” (Gabelle 2006). This process was monitored by the Economic Governance Steering Committee (EGSC) which was chaired by the interim head of state and vice-chaired by the USG (EGSC 2006), however, the USG had the final say as the leading country of the UN Integrated Mission (Gabelle 2006).<sup>25</sup>

Under the EGSC the public sector was divided into four main pillars governed by committees: Security, Economic Revitalization, Governance and Rule of Law, and Infrastructure and Basic Services (see appendix D). The first pillar, the Security Committee, was chaired by the minister of defense and vice-chaired by ECOWAS, UNMIL, and the USG (EGSC 2006). Through this committee, the USG took de facto control of the Liberian military. A confidential agreement between the executive branch of the GoL and the USG ensured that the DOD would be in charge of the SSR (Sayndee 2009).<sup>26</sup> The DOD outsourced many of the practical tasks to private companies, such as PAE and DynCorp International.<sup>27</sup> The latter was contracted to restructure the entire national army and constituted the first example in Africa where a private military company was awarded this type of contract (Ebo 2007, 37). This extensive use of private military companies marks

a significant shift from previous USG interventions into the Liberian security sector. Previously, the USG responded directly by deploying military personnel and advisors. The second pillar, the Economic Revitalization Committee, was chaired by the minister of finance and vice-chaired by the USG, the World Bank, and the European Commission. The committee was attached to the Governance Economic Management Assistance Program (GEMAP), which deployed some “international experts with binding co-signature authority” (Dwan and Bailey 2006). The GEMAP became controversial because it meant that in practice the GoL could not make any significant decisions without the approval of international experts or without the approval of the USG (Gabelle 2006; Tamba 2009).<sup>28</sup> This form of intervention in the Liberian economic system is similar to previous interventions, but as in the case of the SSR, many of the tasks were assigned to foreign private corporations, such as PricewaterhouseCoopers, which established sub-offices in several Liberian Ministries (Tamba 2009).

The third pillar, the Governance and Rule of Law Committee, was chaired by the minister of planning and vice-chaired by the European Community and the UN, with the UK government, USG, and the World Bank as partners. The main aim of this committee was to adjust the legal system to fit with the needs of the reconstruction program (Sayndee 2009).

The fourth pillar, the Infrastructure and Basic Services Committee, was chaired by the minister of public works and, very significantly, vice-chaired by China, with the World Bank, UNMIL, and the USG as partners. China’s role in this pillar became essential for the reconstruction plan for Liberia’s infrastructure, as China could deliver more infrastructure at a lower price. Chinese companies won most of the World Bank-financed road reconstruction projects, which according to Gou (2009) was mostly because Chinese engineers’ and managers’ wages cost less than Western expatriates.

Just as Liberian intellectual and political elite objected to direct deployment of foreign military and economic advisors in the past, many contemporary politicians and intellectuals reacted strongly to the reconstruction strategy. In particular, outsourcing the SSR to US military corporations “created the perception among many Liberians that the reform process is designed to serve the interests of its external supporters, not Liberia or its people” (Jaye 2008, 4). Senior senator, Cletus Wotorson (2006); former minister of information, Joe Mulbah

(2006); and senior senator and former first lady of Liberia, Jewel Taylor (2006), note that the reconstruction strategy was seen by many members of the GoL as neocolonialism and a violation of the Liberian Constitution.<sup>29</sup> This was because the RFTF and the GEMAP had been imposed without approval from the Liberian legislature. Giovine (2006) acknowledges that some Liberians interpreted the GEMAP “as an attempt to deprive Liberia of its sovereignty” (00:12–00:13 min.), which caused problems in the legislature. So, the GEMAP “was crafted” in such a way that it could bypass the legislature and “was approved by executive orders” on the “background of the peace agreement” (Giovine 2006, 00:17–00:18 min.). Mike McGovern, West African program director of the ICG also acknowledged the critique and stated that the intervention was “a very fine balance between intrusive and overbearing . . . we are always going to be sensitive to charges of neo-colonialism, imperialism and racism” (McGovern, 2006).

### **Moving Toward China**

Under the guidance of UNMIL the general election took place as scheduled with the election campaign starting around mid-2005. Twenty-two parties competed, and the runoff election was between Ellen Johnson Sirleaf—from the UP who was appointed as head of the Governance Reform Commission in the Interim National Transitional Government of Liberia (INTGL)—and George Weah from the Congress of Democratic Change (Sirleaf 2009, 242). Weah was a popular international football star, however, he had little experience in politics, was married to an American living in the United States, and returned to Liberia for the election (Thielke 2005).

Among many election observers, an important discussion was over which candidate the USG would favor. Some argued that the United States wanted Weah because he was popular among young Liberians. However, he had little formal education and experience in politics, which some believed would make it easy for the United States to manipulate him. Others argued that the United States already tried something similar with Doe and it did not work well in the long-term. So, some believed that the United States would favor the experienced Sirleaf who was familiar with the UN system. Still others would argue that Sirleaf had been part of the Tolbert administration where she served as minister of finance and would therefore

not be trusted by the USG (Tarr 2009; N. Davis 2009; Logan 2009).<sup>30</sup> According to Sirleaf (2009), US ambassador, John Blaney openly expressed his support for Weah by telling him that Liberia “needs a young, fresh face to lead it” and that the old Liberian politicians should give way to the young politicians (Sirleaf 2009, 246).

Sirleaf won the runoff with 59.4 percent of the votes against Weah’s 40.6 percent. Weah claimed the National Election Commission was corrupt and that the election had been unfair. This caused some social unrest, but it was limited to local demonstrations which did not get out of control because of the 15,000 UN peacekeepers in the country (Haygood 2005).

Shortly after the inauguration, US congressman, Edward R. Royce who had previously linked Charles Taylor with al-Qaeda contacted Sirleaf and informed her that “if you want your government to succeed you’ve got to do something about this Charles Taylor. Because we are not going to support this government unless that Taylor issue is dealt with” (Sirleaf 2009, 275). Then, the GoL made an official request to the government of Nigeria to have Taylor extradited, and Nigeria sent Taylor back to Liberia on 29 March 2006. Escorted by Irish troops, Taylor was immediately transferred by helicopter to Freetown where he was handed over to the Special Court of Sierra Leone (Sirleaf 2009, 285). From Freetown, Taylor was transferred to The Hague where the Special Court tried him in the facilities of the International Criminal Court (ICC). He was tried based on a British drafted resolution adopted by the UNSC, which authorized the transfer based on the grounds that Taylor’s continued presence in the sub-region was “an impediment to stability and a threat to the peace of Liberia and of Sierra Leone and to international peace and security in the region” (UN 2006). This made Sirleaf unpopular among Taylor’s supporters in Liberia. Taylor’s former wife, Jewel Taylor who was still in close contact with her ex-husband and had become senior senator for Bong County (J. Taylor 2006). Sirleaf’s action was also controversial at a regional level because many African intellectuals and politicians perceived the Special Court and the ICC as a neocolonial instrument of Britain and the USG (Davis 2010).<sup>31</sup>

Another significant pro-USG initiative taken by Sirleaf was to welcome the new US Africa Command (AFRICOM). This stood in sharp contrast to many African government officials, intellectuals, and commentators who opposed AFRICOM: Campbell 2011; Cruz and Stephens 2010; Fancher et al. 2008; LeMelle 2008; LeVan 2010; Woods

and Pajibo 2007; Nia 2007; Otieno 2010; and Rozoff 2010. George W. Bush established AFRICOM on 7 February 2007 in order to “strengthen . . . [United States] security cooperation with Africa” and to promote “democracy, and economic growth in Africa” (The White House 2007). Next, in June 2007, Sirleaf published an article with the title “Africom Can Help Governments Willing to Help Themselves.” In this article, Sirleaf noted that “there has been much scepticism” about AFRICOM, but argues that AFRICOM could “develop a stable environment in which civil society can flourish and the quality of life for Africans can be improved.” Therefore, “African nations should work with Africom” and “not continue to project the notion that they are dependent on the support of a dominant ‘patron.’” Although AFRICOM is “undeniably about the projection of American interests . . . [it] does not mean that it is to the exclusion of African ones” (Sirleaf 2007). Additionally, Sirleaf stated that “Liberia, the US historic ally, has stood resolutely with the United States, through good times and bad, and is offering its territory as it has done in the past, for the establishment of AFRICOM headquarters” (Sirleaf 2007). Sirleaf’s invitation was well received by the USG (House of Representatives 2007), and regarding President Bush’s visit to Liberia on 21 February 2008 *The New York Times* wrote “Bush has an extraordinarily warm relationship with Johnson-Sirleaf” (Stolberg 2008). In February 2008, Sirleaf expressed her disappointment about the USG decision to base AFRICOM’s headquarters in Germany (“Liberian President Disappointed,” 2008). She felt that if AFRICOM had been based in Liberia that the USG would ensure the security of the country after the departure of UNMIL (Sirleaf 2009). However, within the foreseeable future it is not likely that there will be a need to an AFRICOM headquarters in Liberia or elsewhere in Africa because, as deputy assistant secretary of Defense for African Affairs, Theresa Whelan (2007) stated AFRICOM “will be a staff headquarters not a troop headquarters” (7). The intent is to “establish staff personnel presence in locations on the continent that best facilitate partnership with African nations and institutions based on consultations with those nations and institutions” (Whelan 2007, 7). The physical presence must not become “a burden for the host nation” so the “command footprint in any given location will likely be relatively small and discrete” (Whelan 2007, 7). AFRICOM became operational in October 2007 and besides a small unit at the US military base in Djibouti, most of the staff is “co-located with U.S. Embassies and diplomatic mission to coordinate Defense

Department programs supporting U.S. diplomacy” (Ward 2008, 4). In this way, the USG will operate more “behind the scenes” as in the case of the ECOWAS intervention in Liberia. The public image of AFRICOM was predominantly presented as peaceful and humanitarian where, as Ward states, AFRICOM sought “to incorporate partner nations and humanitarian organizations” (2008, 4).

AFRICOM’s engagement in Liberia was “on the cutting edge” of AFRICOM’s role in support of SSR (Fidler 2010). In January 2010, AFRICOM began a defense sector reform program in Liberia called Operation Onward Liberty, a five-year program that provided “uniformed U.S. military mentors and advisors to the Armed Forces of Liberia” (AFRICOM 2011). The development strategy for Liberia corresponds with DOD’s AFRICOM strategy, which according to Whelan (2008), was to provide security as the foundation for development that was divided into three pillars defined as 1) Economy, 2) Governance and Rule of Law, and 3) Social Development.<sup>32</sup> The implementation of these three pillars was led by USG agencies in cooperation with the World Bank, the IMF, other UN agencies and the international donor community (Whelan 2008) (see appendix A). Whelan notes that the underlying interests of the USG were to eliminate terrorist networks and safe havens, prevent weapons of mass destruction and illegal arms proliferation, secure strategic access and open sea lanes of communication, and ensure “free market access” (Whelan 2008, 4).

On 2 August 2007, at a US congressional hearing on “Africa Command: Opportunity for the Enhanced Engagement or the Militarization of U.S.–Africa Relations?” Whelan stated that AFRICOM was predominantly about “helping Africans build greater capacity to assure their own security” and not “to secure oil resources” or to “discourage China” in Africa (*Statement of Theresa Whelan*, House of Representatives 2007, 20). Nevertheless, the hearing was marked by the issue of China and oil resources. Shillinger (2007) argued that given the “prevailing distrust” of the United States, it is “unlikely that any amount of public relations work will fully quench anti-imperialist concerns that AFRICOM is fundamentally an attempt to erect a bulwark in Africa against transnational terrorism or China’s appetite for Africa’s oil, minerals and timber” (*Statement of Mr. Kurt Shillinger*, House of Representatives 2007, 38).<sup>33</sup> Okumu (2007) noted that “ironically, AFRICOM was announced as Chinese Pres. Hu Jintao was touring eight African nations to negotiate deals that will enable

China to secure oil flows from Africa” (*Statement of Mr. Wafula Okumu*, House of Representatives 2007,42). Okumu further pointed out that the GoC has “published the first ever official white paper elaborating the bases of its policy toward Africa” (House of Representatives 2007, 61). He also noted that in October 2006, President Hu announced a three-year, \$3 billion program in “preferential loans and expanded aid for Africa.” This was on top of “the \$3 billion in loans and \$2 billion in export credits” at “the historic Beijing summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) which brought nearly 50 African heads of state and ministers to the Chinese capital” (*Statement of Mr. Wafula Okumu*, House of Representatives 2007, 62). He further stressed that “many analysts expect that Africa—especially the states along its oil-rich Western coastline—will increasingly become a theatre for strategic competition between the United States and its only real near-peer competitor on the global stage, China, as both countries seek to expand their influence and secure access to resources” (*Statement of Mr. Wafula Okumu*, House of Representatives 2007, 62).

In Liberia, beginning in 2006, competition between China and the United States developed rapidly. Gou Haodong, the political counselor and head of chancellery of the Chinese Embassy in Liberia, notes that China reopened its embassy in Monrovia in January 2004.<sup>34</sup> Due to the historically complicated relations with Liberia over the issue of Taiwan, the PRC was cautious. However, after the inauguration of President Sirleaf and the reiteration of a resolution from August 2005—by the new legislature that emphasized that Liberia would maintain recognition of the PRC, and Taiwan as a province of the PRC—the relations between GoC and GoL entered into a new era. China began the construction of a new, large embassy complex in Monrovia which opened in March 2009. It was located in the Oldest Congo Town and far from the US Embassy, which signaled that China was very serious about its relations with Liberia (Gou 2009).

George Wisner, Liberian assistant minister for African and Asian affairs, stated that China’s African policy was very attractive to the GoL because it respected Liberia’s sovereignty and provided an alternative to the Western development agenda (Wisner 2009).<sup>35</sup> This policy was first published in 2006 and it began by noting that China sought to establish relations with other countries based on the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence (Gou 2009).<sup>36</sup> These principles were first formulated in the “Agreement Between the People’s Republic

of China and the Republic of India on Trade and Intercourse Between the Tibet Region of China and India” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, People’s Republic of China [MoFAPRC] 2000). The agreements included:

1. Respect for each other’s territorial integrity and sovereignty,
2. Mutual nonaggression,
3. Mutual noninterference in each other’s internal affairs,
4. Equality and mutual benefit, and
5. Peaceful co-existence (“Agreement between the People’s Republic” 1954, 70).

Chinese principles and practices stand in sharp contrast to Liberia’s Western partners who found it legitimate to bypass the GoL and channel funds through international NGOs to local NGOs. This often occurred without involving or even informing the GoL. The GoL had little knowledge of what these foreign NGOs were doing in Liberia (Wisner 2009). Brandy (2009) stated that, in contrast to the Chinese, Western expatriates “come into the country and get involved in the running of the government” through the UN and NGOs.<sup>37</sup> Sometimes they used threats of reducing foreign aid and cancelling the debt relief initiative if the GoL did not comply with their policies, and this undermined Liberia’s sovereignty (Brandy 2009, 00:14–00:15 min.). They were paid extremely high salaries which were taken from the development budget and lived in luxury in gated communities.<sup>38</sup> This created tensions between many Liberians and Western expatriates because the division was seen as a continuation of the dominance of the West. This was a very sensitive issue in Liberia and rooted in the country’s history of slavery, racism, and subordination to foreign imperialism.

However, the most critical aspect of China’s African policy that appealed to the GoL was the statement that China “respects African countries’ independent choice of the road of development and supports African countries’ efforts to grow stronger through unity” (China–Africa Cooperation Forum [FOCAC] 2006, 40). Gou (2009) states that China’s economic development model stood in sharp contrast to the free market approach to development promoted by the World Bank, IMF, UNDP, and major Western donors. China, he notes, did just the opposite and applied long-term central planning, subsidies, and protected its domestic industries through import tar-

iffs. As the Chinese industries grew strong enough to compete internationally, the Chinese government gradually reduced its protectionist measures. For Gou (2009) it was difficult to see how Liberia could have industrialized through a free market approach, which is a view he shared with the GoL.

Former minister of finance (2006–8), Antoinette Sayeh, noted that Liberia had “a lot to learn from” China’s “progress over the past several decades in reducing poverty” (Brautigam 2009, 11–12). Additionally, President Sirleaf stated that the GoL did not accept the free market approach to development as promoted by “major financial institutions such as the World Bank. “This is especially important in the agricultural sector because the GoL knew that many developed countries “subsidised their agricultural sector” and “enabled that sector to reach that place where they could move into agri-industrial activities and subsequently full industrialisation.” A country “should not be bound by the free market concept to limit their own ability to . . . advance their development goals” (Sirleaf 2009, 00:02–00:04 min.). Tolbert’s “policies were right, but the politics was wrong, and that was what brought him down” (Sirleaf 2009, 00:09 min.). The USG is Liberia’s number one partner, however, China was also an increasingly important partner to Liberia because the United States did “not have the capacity or the willingness to provide what . . . [Liberia] needs in terms of support” until Liberia can sustain its own development “on the basis on . . . [its] own resources” (Sirleaf 2009, 00:22–00:24 min.).

In October 2006, Sirleaf made a state visit to China and attended the Beijing Summit of the FOCAC. During this visit, the GoL reached a “broad agreement” with the GoC on “growing Liberia’s relations with China in the new century” (Z. Li 2007). Later, President Hu visited Liberia on 1 February 2007—one year before George Bush—and China “signed a debt cancellation agreement with Liberia” (Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in the Republic of Liberia [EPR-CRL] 2011). This included several bilateral agreements “giving top priority to cooperation in such fields as infrastructure, telecommunications and resources” and encouraged the “Chinese businesses to make an investment in Liberia and support the efforts of the Liberian side to promote economic and social development” (Mission of the People’s Republic of China to the European Union, 2007). The agreements also included cooperation in culture, education, and personnel training, which materialized in the form of scholarship programs. By 2010, this included more than 100 Liberians, mainly in the fields of

administration, agriculture, engineering, and health. Most of these scholarship programs lasted five to seven years and provided the Liberian students with a masters' degree. Students started with Chinese language courses because most of the teaching was in Chinese. The program aimed to transfer knowledge that would support the reconstruction process and enhance cooperation between the GoC and the GoL. The expectation was that many of the students would work in the GoL when they returned, and the GoC would have good connections to people who were literate in the Chinese language (Demawu 2010).<sup>39</sup> Besides the scholarship programs, the GoC established short-term training courses in China for over 500 Liberians in influential positions from different sectors. During these courses, Liberians were informed about the Chinese development strategy (Caesar 2009).<sup>40</sup>

The Chinese government also opened a Confucius Institute at the University of Liberia in December 2008. At the inauguration, the Chinese Ambassador, Zhou Yuxiao, noted that this was not a “cultural invasion as some people worries” [*sic*], but an opportunity for Liberians to learn a foreign language spoken by nearly one-fourth of the world's population (“Confucius Institute” 2008). Around that time, the GoC started the construction of new buildings that were given to the GoL before mid-2011. This included the modern Fendall campus of University of Liberia on the outskirts of Monrovia covering an area of 110,000 square meters with 24,800 square meters of usable space (EPRCRL 2010), a modern 100-bed hospital in Tapeta, Nimba County (MoFAPRC 2011), an Agricultural Technology Demonstration Center in Bong County, and a number of rural schools. Also, the GoC renovated the Tubman Military Barracks and the LBS and completed the construction of the Samuel Kanyon Doe Sports Complex. The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare which began under Doe's administration—but stopped when Doe established relations with Taipei—was also completed. With these projects, China provided most of the inventory and financial means for the GoL to run the facilities, including Chinese technical personnel to provide training for the Liberian staff (Gou 2009).

The Chinese Embassy also provided support for private Chinese companies to bid for reconstruction contracts funded by the World Bank and international donors. This resulted in many construction contracts being awarded to Chinese companies such as the state-owned China Henan International Corporation for the rehabilitation

of roads and bridges. Furthermore, Chinese telecommunication companies such as Huawei and ZTE, which operated in Liberia since 2007, and the China Union Investment Corporation had plans to build an exclusive economic zone in Buchanan (EPRCL 2011). A range of Chinese companies were interested in investing in Liberia. Most significant was China Union Investment Corporation, which won the concession for the Bong Mines' iron ore in December 2008. With an investment of \$2.6 billion, this was the largest foreign direct investment project in Liberia. It included the construction of a steel processing plant under the Build-Operate-Transfer concept, which meant that it would be built and operated by the Chinese for many years. During those years, Liberian staff were trained so the plant could eventually be handed over to the GoL (Gou 2009). If realized, this would have fulfilled late President Tolbert's vision of Liberia becoming a steel-producing nation.

Many people in the GoL uncritically embraced China as a critical partner and many government officials in Liberia reflected Zhou's (2004) work on China's diplomacy disseminated by the Chinese Embassy in Monrovia. It stated "China holds that poverty in developing countries results from exploitation and plundering by old—and neo-colonialists," who through their "advantages in high technology and control of international financial institutions . . . obtain huge profits from developing countries through unjust and irrational economic, banking and trade activities" with the result that "developing countries are troubled by heavy debts and faced with serious economic difficulties" (Zhou 2004, 94–95). Former Liberian minister of foreign affairs (2006–7), George Wallace argued that African governments "turn towards the Chinese" because the Western powers only want African countries to export "raw or semi-processed materials" whereas in contrast "China wants to see African countries develop" (Wallace, 00:11–00:12 min.).<sup>41</sup> Liberia is one of the biggest rubber producers in the world but has never produced any rubber products. According to Wallace, this is because feasibility studies for industrialization projects financed by Western donors usually turned out to be negative. In contrast, similar feasibility studies financed by the GoC turned out to be positive, which is one reason why African governments became "energised from the Chinese" (Wallace, 00:12–00:13 min.).

In similar ways, special advisor to the minister of foreign affairs, Carlton Karphe argues that China acted differently from the Western

donors and provided hope that “Liberia can have the same kind of thing that China has achieved” in the form of industrialization (Karpeh 2009, 00:31–00:32 min.).<sup>42</sup> Karpeh notes that the GoL applied sophisticated diplomacy to appease the USG and that President Sirleaf was skilled because she “got experience from the World Bank and the UN” where she “has got some insight into the backroom manoeuvring” and how the West “protects its . . . material interests” and sought to control African natural resources “even at the expense of having a suffering of the masses of Africans [*sic*] . . . either through war [or] through poverty” (Karpeh 2009, 00:29–00:31 min.).

Minister of state, Natty D. Davis (2009) described Liberia as being in a neocolonial grip of the USG.<sup>43</sup> He added that the GoL needed to be very careful about how to escape from this situation based on the experience of the late President Tolbert. China provided new opportunities, but received threats from some countries that they would not cancel the debt under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative. This kept Liberia “in the grip of the West” which is why debt relief was the priority of the GoL (Karpeh 2009, 00:48–50 min.). Until Liberia reached the completion point of the HIPC initiative “Liberia doesn’t have the option of fully exploiting the Chinese means” (Karpeh 2009, 00:51–00:52 min.).

However, when Liberia reached the HIPC completion point in mid-2010 (World Bank 2010), China’s pledge and actual investment in Liberia had been significant and reflected long term commitment. This was revealed when the Chinese vice-minister of commerce, Fu Ziyang signed six new bilateral agreements with the GoL for economic and technical cooperation (“Liberia, China Sign Six Agreements” 2010). The US Embassy in Beijing stated that several “USAID missions in Africa have discussions with Chinese embassies in host countries to seek ways to improve on-the-ground development assistance cooperation with China” with references to Liberia as an example (Embassy of the United States, Beijing, China 2011). However, in practice, the USG did not appreciate relations between the GoC and the GoL, which became apparent in the Chinese proposals for providing electricity in Liberia.

Electricity is central for Liberia’s development. China provided plans for the construction of new hydropower plants and for the renovation of the 64 MW Mount Coffee Hydropower plant built in 1964 with funds from the World Bank. However, it was destroyed during the war (Gou 2009; Wisner 2009). Wisner (2009) states that the US

Embassy cautioned the GoL not to sign any agreements on electricity with the RoC and informed him in 2008 that “if you [*GoL*] take that offer [*from China*] you are going to forfeit your obligations under the heavily indebted poor country initiative—you will not have debt relief” (Wisner 2009, 00:18–00:19 min.). Wisner further noted that it was difficult for anything to happen in Liberia “whether it’s big investment or political decisions without the expressed approval of the US” (2009, 00:29–)00:30). If the USG is unhappy with a political or economic development in Liberia the embassy will invite the relevant minister “over for a cup of tea or lunch, where they get to understand how Uncle Sam feels about certain things,” or in more severe cases “the President will get a visit from the US Ambassador” (Wisner 2009, 00:31–32 min.). Pres. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf notes that sometimes she would receive

a little bit of a word of caution [from the USG] . . . but at this stage we [*GoL*] will continue to work in partnership with China. It may lead somewhere down the road to some tensions with the US . . . we try to manage that tension as best we can. I don’t know if we will ever reach that place . . . where someone would draw the line and say either you take China as a partner or you take the US as a partner—we haven’t reached there yet (Sirleaf 2009, 00:19–00:20).

Sirleaf frequently went to the United States on official visits to show that Liberia had not forgotten the United States and preferred China (Kofa 2009).<sup>44</sup>

## United States and China in Liberia

Many Western academics and politicians have expressed their concerns about China’s engagement with African countries, especially in relation to the lack of transparency and respect for democracy and human rights (Alden 2007, 108; Brautigam 2009, 284; Brookes and Shin 2006; Guttal 2008, 25–26; A. Li 2009 and 2011; Samy 2010; I. Taylor 2007; Wissenbach 2009). The dominant Western media frequently used words such as neocolonialism and imperialism to characterize China’s role in Africa, as was exemplified by *The Economist* (“A Ravenous Dragon” 2008). The journal named the Chinese “The New Colonialists” on the cover with special reports of China’s “ravenous dragon” quest for Africa’s resources. More significantly, during a visit to Zambia, US secretary of state, Hillary Clinton stated in relation to China’s increasing influence in Africa that “We don’t

want to see a new colonialism in Africa” and noted that “there are more lessons to learn from the United States and democracies” than from China (H. Clinton 2011).

In Liberia, rumors were circulating about the GoC sending an excessive number of Chinese laborers to Africa who would take jobs from the Africans. According to Department for International Development (DFID) consultant, Joel Cutting (2009) some of the Chinese “workers are political prisoners” that China exported to Africa, “to get rid of them” (00:47–00:48 min.). Many Liberian intellectuals considered such rumors as anti-Chinese propaganda because the contracts between the GoC and GoL stipulated the number of Chinese expatriates relative to the number of Liberians trained for a given project (Wallace 2009). Additionally, there were not any signs of Chinese convict labor in Liberia (Hoff 2009).<sup>45</sup> There were some communication problems due to language, but the Chinese workers were appreciated (Wisner 2009).<sup>46</sup> China did not present its interests in Africa as pure charity but was open about its interests in Africa’s natural resources. This was especially true with oil and iron ore for its domestic industries. The GoL sold natural resources in return for infrastructure and technical support for industrialization, and the bilateral relations and negotiations were based on mutual interests and benefits (Davis 2009; Karpeh 2009; Kofa 2009; Wallace 2009; Wisner 2009). Davis (2009) notes that the GoL did “not have the technologies to make sure that the agreement is good or not.” Insufficient data and lack of experience were, in particular, a problem concerning the oil concessions “because the oil companies had very good estimates in contrast to the state [*so*] they have all the cards when negotiating. “However, this was a general problem related to all contract negotiations involving the GoL and transnational companies (Davis 2009, 00:53–00:55).

As the bilateral relations between the GoC and GoL grew stronger, the USG increased its support to civil society groups. This was similar to a tactic used in the 1970s when the USG supported the PAL in opposition to Tolbert’s administration. In the 1970s, it was Tolbert’s liberalization of the political system that made it possible for PAL and MOJA to operate. However, in the post-Cold War era, it was the USG promotion of liberal democracy and the human rights prescribed in the UN International Covenant of the Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) in 1966 that provided the political infrastructure for government opposition to flourish.

The executive director of the Democratic Institute of Liberia, Dan Saryee (2009) stated that organizations such as USAID and the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) established and funded several local civil society organizations in Liberia to promote liberal democracy and the ICCPR.<sup>47</sup> In many cases, this support came through other INGOs that were partnering with local NGOs (Saryee 2009). Liberia also ratified the International Covenant of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) in 2004 (UN 2011), which focused on socioeconomic rights, such as free access to health and education (UN, ICESCR 1966, article 12 and 13), labor rights and social protection (UN, ICESCR 1996, article 8). However, most Western donors and NGOs discouraged Liberian organizations from engaging with this set of rights. This was based on the argument that Liberia had to prioritize because of limited resources, and the ICCPR was more critical than the ICESCR (Saryee 2009). This corresponds with Evans (2001) who noted that most Western donors and NGOs neglected or marginalized the importance of the ICESCR. He further argued that social services such as education and health care were considered as being ensured by the free market, rather than being financed by taxing corporations and the wealthy (Evans 2002).<sup>48</sup>

The two sets of rights that emerged from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 (UN 1948) can be seen as interdependent because a population must be healthy and educated in order to be able to fully participate in a democracy, as Tolbert noted in 1972. Furthermore, if a government delivers excellent social services, it may also gain more popular support from the citizens based on Machiavelli's (1515) principle that "well ordered states . . . have taken every care . . . to keep the people satisfied and contented" in order to avoid uprisings (90).

In contrast, if socioeconomic rights are not satisfied while retaining the civil and political rights to protest, then opposition groups may be established more quickly and supported by external actors. This occurred when the CIA supported PAL in the 1970s. Former advisor to Bill Clinton, Joseph Nye (2007) noted that the NED was a component of the USG's "soft power" with references to the cofounder of NED, Allen Weinstein, who stated that "A lot of what we [NED] do today was done covertly 25 years ago by the CIA" (Nye 2007, 13). In this context, NED's support for NGOs in Liberia can be juxtaposed with the CIA's support for PAL in the 1970s, although on a more comprehensive scale.

After the armed conflict ended in 2003, the number of NGOs in Liberia gradually increased significantly. Sirleaf (2009) noted that this “proliferation of international NGOs has to be watched very carefully” because they come in with different ideas and “interact with people in the society at all levels.” The INGOs establish partnerships with local NGOs and conduct workshops that influence Liberian civil society. This included US political institutions such as the Democracy Institute and the International Republican Institute that were “involved in the political dialogue” with the Liberian people (Sirleaf, 00:20 min.). Besides this, the USG had direct contact with political parties in Liberia, as is reflected by the visits of US Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield to all the Liberian political parties before the election in September 2011. During this time, she tried to get to know the leadership of the political parties and “figure out which party is a legitimate party of the people and which party is a party of a personality” (Thomas-Greenfield 2009, 00:30–00:32 min.).<sup>49</sup> Cofounder of the New Deal Movement, Alaric Tokpa (2010), stated that the US Embassy did not provide resources directly to US-friendly parties but through a network of US-based NGOs.<sup>50</sup> Tokpa further noted that most political parties appeared friendly to the USG in order to receive resources for the election campaign (2010). However, because of the experience with the United States in Liberia, it had become difficult for the USG to identify a political party that would not turn toward China if it won the election.

In mid-2008, the GoL elaborated on a national policy on NGOs in Liberia. While acknowledging that some NGOs were carrying out important work that supported Liberia’s development, the GoL raised some key concerns, such as “little or no reference and engagement by NGOs with line ministries and local authorities,” abuse of duty free privileges and evading payment of taxes, disregard of “some portions of the laws of Liberia,” working against the government’s development agenda, “disrespect towards local authorities,” and inadequate accountability and transparency (Republic of Liberia 2008, 6). The policy aimed at ensuring “better coordination among various ministries/agencies involved with the operations of NGOs” so resources could be better utilized for national development and “ensuring stronger accountability and transparency” with the NGO sector (Republic of Liberia 2008, 4). However, in practice, the NGOs were very difficult to control and it was challenging to implement the policy and hold them accountable (Sirleaf 2009).

The INGOs worked at all levels of Liberian society and represented very different interests.<sup>51</sup> Some worked in partnership with the Liberian Government Commission, headed by Amos Sawyer, with the mandate to promote “good governance” and elaborate strategies for the implementation of government reforms based on the PRSPs (Sawyer 2009).<sup>52</sup> Most of these reform proposals were elaborated in cooperation with expatriates from the West in consultation with international and local NGOs (Dorliae 2009; Cutting 2009), and funded by multiple donors, such as the British government, the European Commission, UN agencies, USAID, and private corporate funds, such as the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA) funded by George Soros.<sup>53</sup> The reform proposals were then promoted within the executive branch of the government and in Liberian civil society through a network of people working for the donor agencies, the UN, and international and local NGOs (Dorliae 2009).<sup>54</sup> For example, in 2009, the Tony Blair Africa Governance Initiative (AGI) launched its program in Liberia, which “embedded” a team of foreign advisors in the Liberian Ministry of State to support “the development of Liberia’s Cabinet processes, as well as putting in place systems to deliver those policies most necessary to get Liberia on the road to prosperity” (Tony Blair AGI 2010, 4). The AGI began January 2008 in Sierra Leone with the deployment of eight to ten staff in “key government institutions, including the Office of the President” to help develop a “vibrant private sector” (Tony Blair AGI 2011).<sup>55</sup> Cutting (2009) notes that Britain was facing problems with China in Sierra Leone and “among the DFID staff, there is a great deal of concern and even anger about the way in which the Chinese operate in Sierra Leone . . . [which] is definitely seen by DFID as being a British arena,” as “Liberia for the US” (Cutting 2009, 01:12–13 min.).

The NGOs also formulated and promoted government reforms outside the government institutions, which is most significantly seen with the state-owned LBS that received significant support from the GoC.

There were around 20 newspapers in Liberia, of which today, around five newspapers are considered influential and mostly friendly to the government. However, the newspapers predominantly reach the literate people in Monrovia, and the total number of readers is estimated to be less than 20,000. The most influential media is the radio, and there were around eight radio stations that reached more than half of the population in Liberia (Kamara, 2009).<sup>56</sup> The most influential radio station was the UNMIL station followed by STAR

Radio. STAR Radio, which broadcasts in more than 15 local languages in Liberia, was established by the USG due to the general election in 1997 and was managed by the Hironnelle Foundation based in Switzerland (Morlu 2009).<sup>57</sup> The USG encouraged the establishment of private radio stations operated by local civil society organizations in cooperation with international NGOs (Morlu 2009). These stations dominated the airwaves in Liberia together with VOA, the BBC, and Radio France International (Snetter 2009).<sup>58</sup>

While the USG encouraged private radio stations, they sought to weaken the LBS by discouraging donors from providing financial support to the station (Snetter 2009). China stepped in 2008 and supported the LBS and it gradually became the most powerful broadcasting system in Liberia, which included radio, television, and Internet service (Gou 2009). Charles Snetter, who helped the USG to establish STAR Radio in 1997 became director for LBS in 2006. He stated that China did not add to the LBS building that was built by the USG in the 1960s, however, they added prefab units behind the original building, installed a powerful FM transmitter including a new tower, brought in equipment, and put up six regional relay stations to cover the entire country. The Chinese then asked if it was possible “to bring in China Radio International so at least Liberians can know what China is about. So they put up five transmitters that are operating in Monrovia . . . so they are broadcasting directly from China” (Snetter 2009, 00:27–00:28 min.). Furthermore, the GoL could then disseminate information directly to the Liberian population without having to pass through privately owned radio stations (Snetter 2009).

From information obtained from contacts at the US Embassy, Snetter (2009) stated that the United States expected the LBS to close down because of lack of funding. However, after China provided support for the LBS, the USG then tried to move LBS away from the control of the GoL by placing it under a board of trustees made up by members from civil society organizations and funded by donors and foreign corporations. Attempting to do so, the US NED used its partnership with Liberian NGOs, such as the Center for Media Studies and Peace Building (CEMESP), the Press Union of Liberia, and the Liberia Democratic Institute (Joseph 2009; Quaqua 2009; Saryee 2009).<sup>59</sup> CEMESP was the local lead agent and received many expatriates who organized workshops with Liberian civil society organizations on media freedom and reforms. These workshops focused on the problem of having the LBS under the control of the Liberian state

by drawing on the historical experiences of how Liberian presidents used the LBS in favor of their propaganda. Media corporations such as BBC and CNN were used as good role models of independent and free media (Joseph 2009; Quaqua 2009).

Many of the workshops were funded by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization which hired the executive director of the Nigerian NGO Media Rights Agenda, Edetean Ojo. He assisted many Liberian lawyers, most notably Councilor T. Negbalee Warner, to draft a media act (Joseph 2010).<sup>60</sup> The draft of the act aimed at repealing the existing legal acts that underpinned the LBS as a state-owned institution and suggested that the LBS should be transformed into Liberia Public Broadcasting Service (LPBS) and governed by a board of directors composed of representatives from civil society with minimum influence from the GoL.<sup>61</sup> The board of directors would report directly to the legislature (Draft of an Act to Establish an Independent Broadcasting Regulator for Liberia 2008, 87.7), and the funding of \$1 million would come from the government budget, while the LPBS “shall have the right to seek and receive donations and contributions from foreign donors and business entities operating in Liberia” (Draft of an Act to Establish an Independent Broadcasting Regulator for Liberia 2008, 87.16, d). After the act was drafted and forwarded to the legislature, Liberian civil society organizations received funding from their Western partner NGOs to make demonstrations in both the streets of Monrovia and in front of the legislature, as a means of pressuring the legislature to adopt the act (Joseph 2009). Minister of information, culture, and tourism, Laurence Bropleh (2009) acknowledged that there was massive pressure from international and local NGOs for passing the media bill, but it was deeply problematic to have the LBS under indirect control of foreign powers, and the GoL did what it could to reject this bill.<sup>62</sup>

Snetter noted that it was generally known that the US-based National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the NED, who subsidized the media bill were closely connected to the CIA. He knew many of the young Liberians working with these organizations, and most of them were not proud of working indirectly for the USG, but they needed the job and they wanted “to go to America, so they will do anything” (Snetter 2009, 01:00–00:04 min.). The executive director of CEMESP, Malcolm W. Joseph (2010) and the president of the Press Union of Liberia, Peter M. Quaqua (2009) acknowledged the strong influence of the NED and NDI, but emphasized that the Liberian media reform pro-

cess was “home grown.” They did, however, find it problematic that the dominant media in Liberia would be dependent on foreign donors, INGOs, and private corporations but did not see any other alternative than hoping that they had good intentions.

The relations between international donors, NGOs, UN agencies, and local Liberian NGOs were not harmonious. Director general of New African Research and Development Agency (NARDA) and chairperson of the National Civil Society Organizations Advisory Committee, Lancedell Matthews (2009) noted that the INGOs had the money and were very powerful.<sup>63</sup> They established, equipped, and funded local NGOs as “implementing partners” and disguised the imbalanced power relations by words such as “partnership,” “people’s participation,” and “local empowerment and ownership.” He further noted that some Liberians working within the NGOs were very suspicious of the foreign NGOs and believed there were hidden agendas because it did not make sense that the Western powers suddenly became benevolent after exploiting Africa for centuries. However, they were poor people, had families to feed, had school fees for their children, and had medical bills that needed to be paid. So, they did not have many alternatives other than working for the foreign NGOs, UN agencies, international donors, and foreign corporations.

Minister of Labor Kofi Woods (2009) estimated that the unemployment rate in Liberia was around 80 percent. Young Liberians were desperate to get a job, and the situation was not much better in neighboring countries such as Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast.<sup>64</sup> There were millions of young unemployed people in West Africa and several hundred thousands were ex-combatants surviving on petty crime while looking for jobs and education. They were willing to sell their labor power to any agency, NGO, or private company—including private military corporations (PMC). Since 2009, British and American PMCs recruited more than 10,000 mercenaries in Liberia and Sierra Leone for Afghanistan and Iraq. Some soldiers were informed that they would receive a monthly payment of between \$200–\$600, which for them was very high pay. The government of Sierra Leone supported this recruitment but the GoL prohibited it because many government officials saw this as a modern form of slave labor, and feared that when, or if, the young men returned to Liberia, then they would be more traumatized and more willing to be recruited for new rebellions in the region (Woods 2009).

There were many places in West Africa where young people could sell their labor power as soldiers. The region had not stabilized after the departure of Charles Taylor—whom many Western academics, journalists, and politicians considered to be the critical person—who caused the instability in the region. According to Taylor, these conflicts were predominantly rooted in access to oil resources, and China was the primary concern of the Western powers (C. Taylor 2010). The “Cheney Report” from 2001 stated that West Africa was the third most crucial strategic oil area in the world for the United States, after the Persian Gulf and the Caspian Basin (National Energy Policy Group 2001), and in late 2007, US oil imports from Africa exceeded the imports of oil from the Middle East (A. Cohen 2007). It was expected that oil from Africa would reach 25 percent of total US imports by the year 2015 (USDOS 2004, 5).<sup>65</sup>

It is difficult to prove that there is a direct correlation between the recent armed conflicts in Liberia and access to natural resources. However, it is significant that the region continues to be very unstable, which is evidenced by many coups d'état. After oil was discovered in Mauritania (Auty and Pontara 2008, 60), two military coups took place on 3 August 2005 and 6 August 2008 (USDOS, Bureau of African Affairs 2011). Guinea was estimated to possess “up to one-half of the world’s” bauxite and experienced a military coup in December 2008, immediately after the death of President Conte (USDOS, Bureau of African Affairs 2011). The new government “reallocated part of [US-based] Hyperdynamics’s concession” to China Sonangol International Holdings Limited (Arieff and Cook 2010, 5). Next, former US assistant secretary of state for African affairs, Herman Cohen, who was involved in the Liberian conflict in the early 1990s renegotiated the concession agreements with the government of Guinea (Arieff and Cook 2010).<sup>66</sup> On 2 March 2009, the president of Guinea-Bissau, João Bernardo Vieira was killed. According to the USG, Guinea-Bissau “may hold up to 450 million barrels of oil” and in June 2011, US-based oil companies started comprehensive offshore explorations. In 2011, the government of France was directly involved in the removal of Gbagbo’s administration in Ivory Coast and the installment of Alassane D. Ouattara, former prime minister from 1990–93 under Houphouët-Boigny (Guguen 2010; VOA 2010; Busch 2011; John and Aboa 2011; Bremer 2011).<sup>67</sup>

China had strong relations with all of these countries. For example, in Mauritania, the Nouakchott Port project was the second largest

construction project in Africa undertaken by the GoC (“Mauritanian Leader,” Xinhau News 2009). In October 2009, the BBC reported that “Guinea’s military rulers have agreed [to] a huge mining and oil deal with China” of more than \$7 billion (BBC 2009). In Guinea-Bissau, the GoC funded and constructed a new Parliament building, a new government headquarters hosting most of the ministries, a military hospital, and provided equipment for the army (Abreu 2011).<sup>68</sup> Beginning in 2001, the conflict in Ivory Coast developed gradually as Gbagbo’s government moved closer to China.

In 2010, in Liberia, the US-based oil company, Chevron established three offshore oil concessions and started operations in mid-2011 (Chevron 2011). However, China also gained the right to explore for oil off the coast of Liberia (Gou 2009; Neyor 2009; Reeves 2009).<sup>69</sup> Moreover, NOCAL also welcomed the Russian oil company Gazprom in Liberia, which made headlines such as Liberia “Embraces Russia, China over U.S.” (“New Global Trend,” *FrontPageAfrica* 2011). The NOCAL was established under Taylor’s administration in 2000, to “exclusively handle activities” related to oil exploration “because the oil industry is aggressive and highly competitive” (NOCAL 2006, 2).<sup>70</sup> Neyor (2009) noted that there were underlying, severe tensions between the West and China over access to the oil resources in Liberia, which at the surface materialized through the “proliferation of articles in Liberia by Western media” and “propaganda” stating that “China is not for democracy, they are anti-human rights . . . [and] they don’t care about the environment” (Neyor 2009, 01:00–00:02 min.).

In her annual message to the Liberian legislature in 2011, Sirleaf stated that “Liberia is on the verge of becoming a petroleum exporter in the coming decade . . . If properly managed, resources from oil wealth can be invested to transform . . . [the] nation” (Sirleaf 2011, 10). A key policy goal was “industrialization so that . . . [Liberia could] begin to manufacture finished goods. . . instead of simply exporting raw materials” (Sirleaf 2001, 11).

This is similar to the vision of Tolbert’s government in the 1970s, as outlined in chapter three. At that time, the USG responded by covertly supporting civil society groups in opposition to the government in order to fertilize the grounds for the military coup in 1980. A similar strategy of intervention through civil society organizations appeared to be applied by the USG as a response to the increasingly close relations between Sirleaf’s administration and the GoC, but this

time, more overtly through the army of Western government-funded NGOs and their local partners.

In sum, the promotion of civil and political rights in combination with liberal democracy can be seen as essential for ensuring the political spaces where opposition parties and NGOs can flourish. Through international advisory support and funding, these civil society organizations can sway the public opinion through traditional and social media. As the national government's relations with China deepen, mass demonstrations and uprisings can be organized drawing from real social problems rooted in poverty and underdevelopment. Regular elections provide the opportunity for regime change through the ballot box, and otherwise opposition groups can be armed and mobilized covertly.

### Notes

1. Proponents of the Liberal Democratic Peace Thesis such as Doyle (1997) and Rummel (1995; 2009) consider capitalist countries such as Britain, France and the United States as democracies and ignore the critique from the left such as Lenin (1919, pt. 2) who argued that “in no capitalist country does ‘democracy in general’ exist; all that exists is bourgeois democracy,” which in essence is the dictatorship of the ruling capitalist elite. See also Chomsky (2008) who argued that the United States is not a democracy but in essence “a one-party system and the ruling party is the business party,” and Parenti (2000) who argued that the United States is a plutocracy where the election mechanism serves as a way to deceive people into believing that they can peacefully change their government through the ballot box and therefore reduces the risk of violent revolutions.

2. There is some confusion about classical realism and its intellectual origins and to what extent classical realism is associated with the left or the right of the political spectrum, as reflected in Aron (2003), Doyle (1997), Fukuyama (1992), Keohane (1986), Legro and Moravcsik (1999), Mearsheimer (2001; 2006), Rosenberg (2001), Scheurman (2008), Schuett (2007), Shilliam (2007), and Waltz (2000). According to Carr, the foundational stones of the realist philosophy are Machiavelli's doctrines, which are built on three essential tenets. First, “history is a sequence of causes and effect, whose course can be analyzed and understood by intellectual effort.” Second, “theory does not create practice, but practice theory.” Third, “politics are not . . . a function of ethics, but ethics of politics. Men ‘are kept honest by constraint’ . . . [and] morality is the product of power.” From here, the modern “historical school” of realism has “its home in Germany, and its development is traced through . . . Hegel and Marx” (Carr 2001, 63).

3. Waltz (1979) does pay some attention to imperialism but his main focus is on how states seek to maintain the status quo of power among nations in order to ensure peace.

4. Proponents of the liberal democracy peace theses generally invariably consider the US as a democracy. However, Williams (2006) notes that from 1787 to 1941

the USG conducted 154 undeclared overseas military interventions, and Grossman (2011) documents 85 US military overt and covert military operations from 1945 to 2011. These interventions include the overthrow of democratically elected presidents, such as Iranian President Mossadegh in 1953, Pres. Jacobo Árbenz Guzmán of Guatemala in 1954, Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba in Congo in 1961, and Chile's President Allende in 1973. Furthermore, the US supported dictatorial regimes, such as Mobutu in Congo (Ikambana 2007. 1), Saddam Hussein in Iraq, Suharto in Indonesia (Chomsky 2002, 15, 51), the Mujahideen, and the Taliban in Afghanistan (A. Rashid 2001).

5. The US commitment to spreading liberal democracy in the world is enshrined in the *United States National Security Strategy of the United States* (2002), in which President Bush stated that in order to promote global peace the US will “actively work to bring the hope of democracy, development, free markets, and free trade to every corner of the world” (The White House, preface).

6. R. Brauman was the former President of *Médecins Sans Frontières*, French section (1982-1994). Personal conversations with Niels Hahn, 3 March 2010 at SOAS, University of London.

7. At the time of intervention, US-based oil companies, most notably Conoco, Amoco, Chevron, and Phillips were engaged in large-scale oil exploration in Somalia. Conoco's compound in Mogadishu was transformed into a de facto American embassy and military headquarters (Fineman 1993). Conoco was “investing in oil exploration in Somalia on a scale unmatched by its rivals, building roads and airstrips . . . [and had] recruited a well-armed force . . . to provide security.” But without a more stable situation Conoco would not be able to operate properly (USG 1990, Cable from US Embassy in Mogadishu to USDOS Headquarters, 21 March 1990. Cable Number: Mogadishu 02844. Freedom of Information Act release 2006-01-286 to Keith Yearman).

8. M. Al-Hadi was a member of the Somali Parliament and Al-Shahid Centre for Research and Media Studies. Personal conversation with Niels Hahn in January 2008 at SOAS, University of London.

9. This image was further disseminated worldwide through the Hollywood film *Black Hawk Down* released in 2001, which Lisle and Pepper (2005, 166) note was perceived by critical scholars as “Hollywood propaganda used to justify a new American imperialism.”

10. In 2008, the government of Rwanda, under the leadership of Kagame, accused France of being involved in the genocide (*BBC* 2008; government of Rwanda 2008).

11. The concept of Just War theory is rooted in the work of St. Thomas Aquinas. It has developed to imply that warfare must be based on a “just cause” by a “legitimate authority,” with a “just intent” with proportional use of force as a last resort, with reasonable hope of success, to an established peace (Cook 2004, 28)

12. Likewise, former German chancellor, Gerhard Schröder (2006) stated that for Germany the goal of intervening in Kosovo “was exclusively humanitarian.”

13. Cooper (2002), served as advisor on foreign affairs to Tony Blair and then became director general for External and Politico-Military Affairs at the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union. Cooper argues that “postmodern imperialism . . . that is usually operated by an international consortium through International Financial Institutions, such as the IMF and the World Bank,” is insufficient and there is a need for deeper intervention (Cooper 2002). This reflects the view of some American neo-conservative scholars who argued in different ways that the US “should start calling things by their correct name” and “stop pretending that the United States . . . [is] not an Empire.” For the world to become a safer place, the

US has “to act in much the same imperial fashion as the British and Romans had done in the past” (Cox 2003, 6).

14. As Australia’s minister of foreign affairs, Evans had a “special relationship” with Indonesia’s Pres. Suharto (Hazeldine 2010, 26). Pilger (1994, 00:56 min.) connected Evans to a genocide in East Timor during the securing of oil concessions to Australian based companies. Evans then became president of the ICG (Hazeldine 2010, 25), which was connected to the Enough campaign, the Save Darfur Coalition, and the Center for American Progress. They presented themselves as independent NGOs but were closely connected to Western governments through funding and personal relations. For example, the Center for American Progress was associated with USG officials, such as former US assistant secretary of defense Lawrence Korb (Korb 2008). Korb contributed to this research through a personal conversation.

15. In 2011, R2P became the guiding doctrine for the NATO-led military operations. It covered Libya, beginning in March 2011 (Bajoria 2011), and the French-led UN military operation in Ivory Coast that removed Pres. Laurent Gbagbo from power during the same period.

16. The concept of R2P was embraced by the UN secretary-general’s report to the General Assembly with the title “In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All,” which encouraged the General Assembly to “embrace the Responsibility to Protect, and, when necessary . . . [to] act on it” (UN 2005, 35). The concept was adopted by the UNGA on 15 September 2005 (Evans 2008, 44–50).

17. Thomas Weiss contributed to this research by sharing information on how the ICISS were established. Since the notion of the R2P was central in seeking legitimacy for the military interventions in Ivory Coast (2011) and Libya (2014), this note provides parts of the transcript from the interview that was conducted at SOAS, University of London, 19 January 2013. Weiss states that it was the former Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lloyd Axworthy, who put the ICISS together. According to Weiss

Azworthy asked me to what I thought, Lloyd and I were in graduate school together . . . so we talked about various people . . . selected the chairs first. Gareth Evans was the key person . . . we got to have a balance so (Mohamed) Sahnoun actually happened to have resign from Somalia (where) he had been involved in several UN issues . . . he was a fellow in what was called International Development Research centre in Ottawa, so . . . he became the co-chair. You have a kind of an ark, in which you got to have an American, former congressman works on defence, so we did him . . . (We needed) representation from all over the world in order to ensure legitimacy . . . but we didn’t have anybody from China, that would have been ridiculous because they would have said no to everything. The Indian who was on, it is a friend of mine, Remesh Thakur, who actually was educated in Canada, so it looks—ok . . . then there were this German chief of staff and commander of the UN force (and) the former head of the ICRC . . . we had to have an African so we had Cyril Ramaphosa who is now becoming a major political figure. We needed a former head of state, so we got Fidel Ramos because he was a friend of Gareth . . . You sort of put it together to look—one way. You also have to put it together to work. The Secretary General checks with member states, and obviously could not do something with the Chinese as it would have to be an official Chinese representative, and so that would stop the conversation . . . so this—the construction of the group was quiet—well done—carefully—but it was done totally by Lloyd Axworthy. Once he got it together he went to see Kofi Annan

and said this is what we think will work, will you support it—or . . . not support it financially, but . . . look at its findings? So that is how it happened.

18. Col Peter Corey, US Army, contributed to this research with two meetings and an interview. Corey served as chief G5, CIMIC at UNMIL in Monrovia.

19. The history of foreign intervention in Liberia demonstrates the external powers' conflict over key positions when deploying advisors and, in particular, military and economic advisors.

20. Kaibeneh Janneh contributed to this research with an interview. He was the leader of the LURD delegation at the peace talks in Accra. He subsequently served as minister of justice in the Gyude Bryant-led interim government from 2003 to 2006 and was appointed as supreme court justice by President Johnson Sirleaf in 2006. W. M. Johnson was the Liberian ambassador to the UK, vice chairman of the INTGL 2003–06, vice chairman of PPP 1978–90, and subsequently chairman of the PPP. Interview conducted and recorded by Niels Hahn on 6 December 2010 in his office at the Liberian Embassy in London.

21. Gou Haudong contributed to this research with several meetings and the provision of books and documents on Chinese policy toward Africa.

22. The World Bank measures a country's performance and capacity to implement the PRSPs through the Bank's Country Policy Institutional Assessment (CPIA). Countries ranking low on the CPIA are classified as LICUS, which are countries characterized by civil unrest, armed conflicts, or fragile peace (World Bank 2004). The RFTF was replaced by the Interim PRSPs, leading to the full PRSP in April 2008, and renamed "Lift Liberia" in order to give it a more local and popular name to enhance the notion of local ownership (Davis 2009). By end of 2011, the PRSPs should have been replaced by a revised long-term development plan (PRSPs 2008, 1.1).

23. Gabelle contributed to this research with an interview in 2006. On October 2010, APM Terminals signed a 25-year concession agreement for the operation of the Freeport in Monrovia ("APM Terminals Signs..." 2010). APM Terminals is a division of the Copenhagen-based company A.P. Møller–Maersk Group (ATM Terminals 2010), which is one of Pentagon's largest international contractors that operated cargo ships for the US-led wars in Iraq (Phinney 2005).

24. Giovine contributed to this research with two interviews and the provision of documents. Giovine further noted that Karlsson served as World Bank country director in West Africa for Burkina Faso, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone from 2002 up to the time of this interview. Previously, he served as World Bank vice-president of External Affairs and United Nations Affairs.

25. EGSC. "Organisation Chart," 2006. Retrieved by Niels Hahn from the World Bank in Monrovia.

26. T. Debey Sayndee was the director of the Kofi Annan Institute for Conflict Transformation at the University of Liberia. Interview conducted and recorded by Niels Hahn on 2 February 2009 in his office at the University of Liberia.

27. Other security assignments such as protection of the UNMIL headquarters were outsourced to US-based security corporation Inter-Con Security (Fahnbulleh 2009).

28. Elfrieda Stewart Tamba, deputy minister for revenue at the time of this research, contributed with an interview.

29. Cletus Wotorson, Joe Worlorbah Mulbah, and Jewel Taylor contributed to this research with interviews. At the time of the interview, Wotorson served as senior senator in the Liberian Legislature. Next, he became president pro tempore of the Liberian Senate in 2009. Wotorson served in the Tolbert administration as minister of lands, mines, and energy (1978–80). In the Doe administration, he served as chairman of the Liberian Petroleum Refinery Company (1980–83). Mulbah served

as minister of information in Taylor's administration. At the time of the interview, Mulbah held the position of associate professor and chairman of the mass communication department at the University of Liberia. Jewel Taylor was married to Charles Taylor when he went into exile. At the time of the interview, she served as senior senator for Bong County.

30. Byron Tarr contributed to this research through a number of interviews and e-mail correspondence. Tarr served as special assistant to finance minister, Steve Tolbert, 1972; assistant/deputy minister for revenues from May 1972 to 1974; and was responsible for state enterprises as controller general for public enterprises in 1977. He subsequently served as minister of planning from 1981 to 1982 and minister of finance from 1991 to 1992. Natty D. Davis was the minister of state for Development and Reconstruction. Interview conducted and recorded by Niels Hahn on 14 April 2009 at the Mamba Point Hotel, Monrovia. James Logan contributed to this research through several interviews. At the time of this interview, Logan served as deputy minister of agriculture for planning and development. In the 1970s he received a scholarship from the Tolbert administration to study the political economy of agriculture at the Karl Marx University of Economic Sciences in Hungary, later renamed Corvinus University of Budapest.

31. D. Davis was the editor of *African Prospects* and the former editor of *West Africa Magazine*. Personal communication with Niels Hahn on 12 October 2010 at SOAS, University of London. Many African politicians wondered why the ICC targeted Africans and not George Bush and Tony Blair for war crimes in Afghanistan and Iraq (D. Davis 2010). By mid-2011, the ICC indicted 18 people from Africa (ICC 2011). The 2008 ICC indictment of President Bashir of Sudan led many African countries to work against the ICC. For example, in June 2010, the AU was close to adopting a resolution stating that AU member states "shall not co-operate with the ICC in the arrest and surrender of President Bashir" (*Sudan Tribune* 2010). This notion of the ICC as a neocolonial instrument gained momentum in June 2009 when the chief prosecutor of the ICC, Luis Moreno-Ocampo stated that there was a need for the ICC to cooperate with the US military to enforce ICC arrest warrants in Africa (Bulushi and Branch 2010)

32. Theresa Whelan contributed to this research with personal communication and by providing documents on AFRICOM.

33. At the hearing, Pham (2007) also pointed out that in relation to AFRICOM's role in fighting terrorism in Africa, that "some Africans recall the colonial and/or apartheid eras when their own national liberation struggles were labeled [sic] 'terrorist'" (Pham 2007, 56).

34. Gou Haodong contributed to this research with two interviews in 2009.

35. George Wisner contributed to this research with two interviews.

36. The expression of "peaceful co-existence" was used by Lenin and sometimes referred to as the "Leninist principle" (Fifield 1958, 504). Mao Zedong adopted the term and expounded upon it in the Common Program adopted by the first session of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference on 29 September 1949.

37. Othello Brandy contributed to this research through several interviews. At the time of the interviews, Othello Brandy held the position as lead consultant in land commission at the Liberian Governance Commission. He served as minister of agriculture from 2002 to 2005, and as ambassador to EU and the Benelux from 1997 to 2002.

38. According to Joel Cutting, consultant to Department for International Development (DFID), the "going rate at DFID is about £400 a day for short-term

work . . . but slightly less for longer term work, but then you get some benefits such as accommodation allowances” (Cutting 2009, 01:19-01:20 min.). Cutting contributed to this research with an interview and the provision of documents.

39. Henry Demawu was a Liberian architecture student studying under the Chinese scholarship program in Beijing. Interview conducted and recorded by Niels Hahn on 17 April 2010 at his home in Beijing.

40. Augustus Caesar contributed to this research through his knowledge of the built environment in Liberia. At the time of the interview, Caesar was the CEO of Caesar’s Architects Inc., and president of the Liberian Chamber of Architects.

41. George W. Wallace contributed to this research through several interviews that took place in Wallace’s office at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He has been involved in Liberian politics for more than 40 years in various capacities. At the time of the interviews Wallace served as ambassador at large and advisor to the president on foreign affairs. Prior to this position, Wallace served as minister of foreign affairs.

42. Carlton A. Karpheh contributed to this research through several interviews. He has been involved in Liberia politics for more than 40 years in various capacities. At the time of the interviews Karpheh served as senior ambassador-at-large and advisor to the minister of foreign affairs.

43. Natty D. Davis contributed to this research with an interview.

44. Marcus M. Kofa contributed to this research with an interview. He served as Liberian ambassador and assistant minister for Americas.

45. Edwin E. Hoff contributed to this research with personal conversations with Niels Hahn in his role as special assistant to the commissioner at the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization.

46. In June 2010, a similar rumor emerged on a global scale claiming that the GoC sent convicted labor to Africa, Sri Lanka, and elsewhere. Brautigam (2010) noted that this rumor was started by the New Delhi-based security analyst, Brahma Chellaney and was reproduced by *The Washington Times*, *Sri Lanka Guardian*, *Japan Times*, *The Hindu*, *Bloomberg News*, Canada’s *Globe and Mail*, and *The Guardian*. According to her research, these claims have been reproduced without any supporting evidence.

47. Dan Saryee contributed to this research with interviews and the provision of documents.

48. This reflects the USG policy on human rights that ratified the ICCPR on 2 June 1992 with a number of reservations (UN 2011), but did not ratify the ICESCR (UN 2011) together with a number of other international conventions that demanded state intervention to secure basic social economic rights, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN 2011) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (UN 2011).

49. From the experience of George Weah, who lost the run-off to Sirleaf in 2006, Thomas-Greenfield (2009) stated that it had become clear that it was not possible to “be committed to your country and committed to your government and living in the United States, and only come home when it is time for elections” (00:30-00:32 min.). Thomas-Greenfield meeting with the New Deal Movement on 28 May 2009 at their headquarters in Monrovia. Meeting observed and recorded by Niels Hahn.

50. Laaric Tokpa contributed to this research through several interviews. At the time of the interviews, Tokpa served as assistant professor of political science at the University of Liberia. He was head of the Liberia National Student Union (LUNSU) in the 1970s and active member in the MOJA. Tokpa was sentenced to death by the military junta in 1980 for promoting leftist views, but released within two years. He is co-founder of the political party the New Deal Movement.

51. For more general conceptualizations and different perspectives on NGOs see Hazeldine (2010), Hearn (2007), Laipson (2007), Petras (1999), Stoddard (2003), Macrae (1996), Manji and Coill (2002), Shivji (2007), and T. Wallace (2003).

52. Amos Sawyer contributed to this research through two interviews. He was a key member of MOJA and served as interim head of state from 1990 to 1994, and as chairperson of the Government Commission from 2006.

53. OSIWA was established in 2000 as a part of the global network of the autonomous Soros Foundation, which “works to build vibrant, open democracies” in West Africa (OSIWA 2011) and as a part of the Open Society Foundation established by George Soros in 1984 (Open Society Foundation 2011). The share of corporate funding increased in Liberia as was reflected by the opening of the “Philanthropy Secretariat” in 2009 by the GoL with “generous support from NoVo Foundation, Humanity United, the Daphne Foundation and the McCall McBain Foundation, and in cooperation with “Philanthropic Partners,” such as the Arcelor Mittal Global Foundation, Nike Foundation, Open Society Institute, OSIWA, The Small Enterprise Development Fund, RLJ Companies, and the William J. Clinton Foundation.” An aim of the Philanthropic Secretariat is to enhance “alignment between Liberia’s Poverty Reduction Strategy and philanthropist-supported activities by identifying specific strategic opportunities” (Philanthropy Secretariat 2009). According to the Secretariat “philanthropic dollars and private investment” are needed to help the GoL’s “commitment to sound policies for sustained success.” Bill Clinton noted that this foundation had “the ability to form a partnership with the government and revolutionize the country” (Philanthropy Secretariat 2009).

54. Weh Yarsuo Dorlaie contributed to this research with an interview focusing on his role as the commissioner for decentralization, Governance Commission, and by providing documents on the decentralization process.

55. AGI was working in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Rwanda and “embed teams . . . from the international public and private sectors within the hearts of governments” (Tony Blair AGI 2010, 2).

56. Tom Kamara contributed to this research through interviews and e-mail correspondence. Kamara worked as a consultant and political analyst for several UN agencies in Liberia, and was the chief editor of *The New Democrat* newspaper until 2012. At the time of this writing, the more permanent radio stations broadcasting in Liberia are: ELBC, LBS, LUX 106.6 FM, Radio Veritas, STAR Radio, Truth FM, Voice of Firestone, and UNMIL.

57. James K. Morlu contributed to this research with an interview in his role as relation manager of STAR Radio 104FM, 9.525Mhz and 11.965Mhz, and by providing related documents.

58. Charles Snetter contributed to this research through an interview and a tour of LBS in Monrovia. In 2006 he became general director of LBS, which predominantly is funded by the government of the PRC.

59. Malcom W. Joseph and Peter M Quaqua contributed to this research with interviews. At the time of the interview, Joseph served as the executive director of the CEMESP, and Quaqua served as president of the Press Union of Liberia.

60. Media Rights Agenda worked in partnership with organizations such as US-based Freedom House (Joseph 2010).

61. Draft of an Act to Establish an Independent Broadcasting Regulator for Liberia (2008). Document retrieved by Niels Hahn in Monrovia, April 2009, from Malcom W. Joseph, executive director for the CEMESP.

62. Laurence Konmla Bropleh contributed to this research with an interview in his role as minister of information, culture, and tourism. On the request of Bropleh, part of the interview was kept confidential.

63. Lancedell Matthews contributed to this research with an interview and by providing supporting documents. NARDA is a consortium of Liberian NGOs with more than 40 members.

64. Samuel Kofi Woods contributed to this research with an interview in his role as minister of labor. At the time of this interview he was transitioning to the position minister of public works.

65. USDOS Briefing on Liberia. 7 January 2004. Washington, DC. Retrieved by Niels Hahn in Monrovia.

66. According to a research report issued to the US Congress, Herman Cohen sits on the board of Hyperdynamics (Arieff and Cook 2010, 5).

67. Ouattara also served as deputy managing director of the IMF from 1994 to 1999.

68. A. Abreu, PhD, researches the political economy of migration in Guinea-Bissau. He is based in the department of economics at the SOAS, University of London. Personal communication via e-mail from Guinea-Bissau with Niels Hahn on 21 July 2011.

69. Christopher Neyor and Fulton D. Reeves contributed to this research with interviews and the provision of documents. At the time of the interview, Neyor served as energy specialist and advisor to the president, and was shortly after promoted to president and CEO of NOCAL. Reeves served as Comptroller at NOCAL.

70. Management briefing to the Board of Directors of NOCAL, April 2006. Retrieved by Niels Hahn from NOCAL in Monrovia in 2006.



## Conclusion

This conclusion focuses on three main features of the Liberian conflict. They have been identified in this research and can be useful for the analysis of other armed conflicts in Africa. First, is the internalization of African conflicts by the mainstream Western media and most academics, who tend to neglect or marginalize the involvement of Western powers. Second, notions of philanthropy present the role of Western powers as protectors and peacebuilders in order to create public support for military interventions. Third, is how neoliberal reconstruction policies impose liberal democracy and a free market economy on countries that are recovering from war.

### Internalization of African Conflicts

“All warfare is based on deception” (Sun Tzu 2005, 5), and this research demonstrates that Liberia is not an exception. Although the United States government (USG) has played a central role in the conflict, most academic literature and the dominant media ignore or marginalize this fact. Instead, the focus is on internal conflict dynamics, mainly documented through secondary sources.

When researching specific events in the recent armed conflict, it appears that there are many different versions of what has occurred and who did what, when, and why. Most events are marked by rumors, misinformation, false flag operations, and propaganda. Many key Liberian actors interviewed in relation to the recent armed conflict such as Alhaji Kromah, Charles Taylor, John Richardson and Joe Gballah (see Appendix E), stated that during the war they did not have a coordinated overview of events. The war included so many state actors and nongovernmental actors with different interests, and most of the strategic, important information was confidential and compartmentalized. They argue that most of the data about the war was concentrated in the DOD because the USG was the central actor in contact with all parties.

Nevertheless, rumors and interpretations of specific events of the war have been reproduced by academics and journalists and presented as facts. Often these facts are based on secondary sources or partial informants. The most notable example that many key Liberian informants refer to is the book by Ellis (1999), *The Mask of Anarchy: The Destruction of Liberia and the Religious Dimension of an African*

*Civil War* first published in 2001, followed by an updated version in 2006 (Ellis 2001 and 2006). This work became the primary reference used by academics and journalists writing on the Liberian conflict.<sup>1</sup> Ellis (2001) acknowledged that he “relied heavily on the Liberian press” although they could “be influenced by one or other political party” and “were susceptible to printing highly partial accounts of events” (321). Nevertheless, Ellis used many of these references to present the Liberian conflict as rooted in religion, barbarism, and greed, which supports Huntington’s and Kaplan’s barbarism thesis, and Collier’s greed thesis (see chapter 6 “The Theory and Policy behind UNMIL”). Ellis does acknowledge the involvement of the USG in the conflicts (see chapter 5 “Towards the General Elections 1997”) but he marginalizes this, and states that “Liberians are often inclined to overestimate the extent of US responsibility for whatever transpires in their country” and emphasizes that Liberians have “indulged in an orgy of conspiracy-theorising” about the United States (2001, 2).

Instead of analyzing the role of the USG in the war, most of the academic literature and media coverage focused on the brutality of the war and enhanced the notion of barbarism. None of the key informants for this research have denied the atrocities and war crimes that took place during the war, but they note that all parties to the conflict bear a great responsibility for those crimes.

The chairperson of the TRC, Jerome Verdier (2009) stated that during the TRC hearings there was much talk about the role of the USG in the Liberian conflict.<sup>2</sup> This was due to the fact that many Liberians worked for the CIA. The final TRC report published in 2009 stated as one of its key findings that “external State Actors in Africa, North America, and Europe, participated, supported, aided, abetted, conspired and instigated violence, war and regime change against constituted authorities in Liberia and against the people of Liberia for political, economic and foreign policy advantages or gains” (TRC report 2009, 10, point 19). Although many Western researchers and organizations that have worked with the TRC are well aware of the role of the USG in the conflict, they continue to ignore participation and instead focus on the local conflict dynamic (Verdier 2009).

It is also significant that the issues of great power rivalry over access to natural resources, in particular, oil, are ignored or marginalized in most of the literature on the Liberian conflict. This is similar to what former US chairman of the Federal Reserve, Alan Greenspan

(2007) notes about the war in Iraq, that it is “politically inconvenient to acknowledge . . . [that the] war is largely about oil” (463).

This great power rivalry over natural resources, especially oil, is a feature that is also ignored in many analyses of other conflicts in Africa. A significant example is in Sudan, where the courses of conflicts have been internalized and presented as being between the Muslim North and the Christian South. Another example is Darfur, where most of the population are Muslims, the conflict division has predominantly been presented as Sudanese Arabs killing Black Africans (Mamdani 2007; 2009). There has been relatively little focus on great power rivalry over access to oil resources in Darfur and strategic oil pipelines for the export of oil from South Sudan. Prominent academics such as Julie Flint and Alex de Waal stated directly that Darfur does not have significant oil resources (Flint and Wall 2008, 149), although it is well-known that there is useful data on oil resources in Darfur when Chinese companies carried out explorations (Abusabib 2007).<sup>3</sup> These concessions were already indicated on a map published by the USAID in 2001.

The conflict in Somalia has also been internalized with little attention paid to the issue of oil resources. Even when information about significant US military actions reached the dominant media—such as in 2006 when *The Washington Post* indicated that the USG was “Secretly Backing Warlords in Somalia” (Wax and Deyong), and when the BBC in 2007 reported that “the US had carried out at least two air strikes in southern Somalia”—most Western academics working on those conflicts failed to follow-up on these issues and further examine the interests of external power in these conflicts.

There is a critical question concerning this, which needs further research: How can it be possible that so many Western academics, who work on African conflicts, ignore or marginalize the role of external powers? This question was not a central part of this research, but it was posed during this research to several scholars working on armed conflicts. Liberian scholars such as Byron Tarr, T. Debey Sayndee, and Thomas Jaye, stated that most Liberian scholars are dependent on consultant jobs funded by INGOs, UN agencies, USAID, and Western donors. Therefore, they must be careful about what they publish because of fear of being blacklisted by some of these organizations. When asking Paul Collier why he had not included the role of the great powers in his dataset on conflicts in Africa in the post-Cold War era, he stated that “we did consult for the Cold War . . . the Cold

War was the big driver for that . . . we sort of picked that up . . . [but after the Cold War] all the international powers switched off—they said [Africa] does not matter anymore” (Collier 2010, 01:32-01:33).<sup>4</sup>

It may be argued that it is difficult to prove the involvement of external powers in most African conflicts because many of these operations were covert. However, covert operations were conducted through a large number of people in Africa, and from this research on Liberia, it appears that many of these people were willing to share their knowledge and experience. Naturally, there are many different narratives and stories about the war in Liberia, and it should be the responsibility of academics and journalists to collect, filter, triangulate, analyze, and present data and findings as objectively as possible. Nation-states act according to national interests, and academics should analyze those actions as objectively as possible and publish the results. Information and different critical academic analyses are essential for the improvement of future policies and decision-making. Academic pandering can become a threat to national interests if decision makers act on educational material that is incomplete.

### **Notions of Philanthropy**

The politics of disguising policies and interests as philanthropy is well reflected in the founding of Liberia. Most academics, journalists, and politicians present the ACS as a philanthropic organization that helped emancipated black American slaves with resettling in Liberia (see chapter 1 “Establishment of American Colonies in West Africa”). As was demonstrated in chapter 1, the reality was very different, marked by slave rebellions, inter-imperial rivalries, and wars. However, it has become the notion of philanthropy that is dominant in the contemporary literature on Liberia. This demonstrates how simple notions of philanthropy over the years can develop into a doxa. Bourdieu and Wacquant (2005) describe a doxa as a “range of postulates and axioms” that is rarely questioned and becomes the foundation of theory, domination, and politics (272).

The notion of philanthropic colonization was perhaps best articulated around 80 years after the colonization of Liberia, in Rudyard Kipling’s poem “The White Man’s Burden,” which commemorates the USG’s colonization of the Philippines (Kipling 1899). As was presented in chapter one and two, the imperial powers competed in providing “protection” to the GoL and made attempts to establish Liberia

as a trusteeship under the League of Nations in the 1930s—as a philanthropic duty of the imperial powers. In historical context, it became clear that the notion of “protection” and “trusteeship” concerning Liberia had to do with great power rivalries and the struggle for power in the West African region. As shown in chapter 4, the USG-funded ECOMOG intervention in Liberia was presented as a “humanitarian intervention” under the slogan “an African solution to an African problem,” thus minimizing potential allegations of US imperialism, which is a common expression among many intellectuals in Africa. As specified in chapter 6, the UN reforms on interventions and the recent US-led UN intervention in Liberia revitalized terms such as “trusteeships/neo-trusteeships” and “protection,” in particular through the “responsibility to protect” doctrine. This doctrine can be seen as a modern version of Kipling’s (1899), “White Man’s Burden,” by African intellectuals and politicians.

It can be questioned to what extent the promotion of the R2P doctrine is propaganda or driven by good intentions. Said (1989) noted that Kipling wrote: “From the perspective of a massive colonial system whose economy, functioning, and history had acquired the status almost of a fact of nature” (10). Therefore, Kipling “could no more have questioned . . . the right of the white European to rule, than he would have argued with the Himalayas” (10). The same can be said regarding much of the literature that promotes contemporary interventionism where the great powers have the “right” or the “duty” to intervene in other countries. Usually, it is based on a philanthropic ideology of promoting human rights, democracy, a free market economy, or protecting their citizens as in the case of the Russian *de facto* annexation of parts of Ukraine. Mannheim (1979) argues that conceptions of ideology and politics are marked by distortions that range from “conscious lies to half-conscious and unwitting disguises; from calculated attempts to dupe others to self-deception” (49). Notions of philanthropy can be seen as a combination of all these factors, and it is useful when it can be disseminated on a scale that enables it to shape public opinion in favor of military interventions. In this relation, Bernays (1947) noted that the promotion of “freedom of speech and its democratic corollary, a free press” provides “open doors to the public mind.” With this and the expansion of communication techniques, Bernays noted that the United States has become “the world’s most penetrating and effective apparatus for the transmission of ideas” and the “engineering of consent” (1947, 113). The lack of criti-

cal literature and journalism in relation to the war in Liberia, and the promotion of the ECOMOG and UNMIL as altruistic peacekeeping military forces can be seen as an example of how notions of philanthropy helped to shape the public opinion to be in favor of military interventions. This was further backed by the fact that the US-led UNMIL intervention did stop the war, and the application of a superior military power did bring peace.

The conflict in Darfur is another example of how notions of philanthropy—promoted by celebrities—have engineered a form of consent that mobilized many social movements calling for military intervention while denouncing China as being implicitly involved in genocide through its relations with the government of Sudan. The Save Darfur Coalition united more than 180 organizations across the political spectrum to promote the notion of genocide in Darfur. It called for a military intervention after US Secretary of State Colin Powell, in September 2004, stated that the USG concluded “that genocide has been committed in Darfur and that the government of Sudan and the Janjaweed bear responsibility, and that genocide may still be occurring” (G. Kessler 2004). In January 2005, “The Report of the International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur to the United Nations Secretary-General” stated that the “crucial element of genocidal intent appears to be missing,” (N. Rashid, 4) however, celebrities such as Mia Farrow and George Clooney joined the coalition and advocated for a military intervention (H. Cooper 2007). Influential academics and journalists paid significant attention to China’s arms sales to the government of Sudan as reflected in Alden (2007, 25–26) Andersson (2008), Kristof (2008) and Reeves (2007, 283), but they failed to raise fundamental questions, such as: Where do the rebels in Darfur get their arms and funding from?

Reeves (2007, 138) argues that the “fundamental problem” was that China rejected “any UN effort to authorize humanitarian intervention” in the UNSC (138-139). The pressure on China to not veto a military intervention increased in 2007 after Ronan and Mia Farrow published an article in *The Wall Street Journal* with the title “The Genocide Olympics.” They called on private corporations to boycott the Olympic Games in Beijing and stated that Steven Spielberg, who was artistic advisor to the opening of the Games could “go down in history as the Leni Riefenstahl of the Beijing Games” (Farrow and Farrow 2007). Soon after, Spielberg stated that his “conscience will not allow . . . [him] to continue with business as usual” (H. Cooper 2008).

Shortly after *The Independent* stated that there had been significant steps in “boycotting firms whose revenues are said to fuel the genocide” (Sengupta 2008). With increased pressure, the GoC did not veto UNSC SCR 1769. It was adopted on 31 July 2007 and established the United Nations and African Union (UN-AU) hybrid operation in Darfur (UNAMID) which consisted of approximately 26,000 soldiers—including police forces and support personnel (“SCR 1769,” UN 2007, 3, point 2). Alex De Waal (2007) stated that the UNAMID force “was floated by the United States and China” (1042), influenced by the notion of the R2P and by George Clooney’s address to the UNSC in September 2006. Two days after Clooney’s speech was followed by “tens of thousands of demonstrators” demanding “UN troops to stop genocide in Darfur” (De Waal 2007, 1043). However, De Waal concludes that the “pursuit of the responsibility to protect in Darfur has not been achieved” where “more concerted international pressure could have brought a bigger and better-equipped international force to Darfur earlier” (2007, 1054).

In the first half of 2011, the R2P doctrine was more comprehensively applied to the military intervention in Libya, which was “hailed . . . as a victory” for R2P (Bajoria 2011). What is perhaps most significant in this case is that Western support to the rebels in Libya was overt as was reflected in the *BBC* (2011) headline “Libya: France and Italy to Send Officers to Aid Rebels” and the *CNN* (2011) headline “U.S. Recognizes Libyan Rebels’ Authority,” whereas in Liberia the support was covert.

### **Neoliberal Reconstruction**

As the causes of conflicts have been internalized and notions of philanthropy have legitimized intervention in Liberia, reconstruction took place by following neoliberal ideology under the protection of more than 15,000 UN soldiers.

As was indicated in chapter 2, Liberia has extensive experience with liberalism. It expanded under President Tubman’s Open Door Policy and provided a lucrative business environment for foreign corporations in Liberia. This resulted in high economic growth, but it did not trickle down to benefit the general population, and it did not facilitate industrialization and development. Tolbert’s administration attempted to close the door and industrialize Liberia by establishing close relations with countries such as the USSR and China, from

whom the GoL received technical and financial support for its industrialization policy. The USG intervened and supported the military coup, which then led to a protracted armed struggle with devastating consequences for the general population and destroyed most of the infrastructure in the country. It is widely assumed that it was not possible for the USG to remove Tolbert's administration through the ballot box by supporting opposition parties, such as PAL and MOJA. Even if either party had come to power, there is not a guarantee that they would have reversed Tolbert's policies. This is because many prominent Liberian academics and politicians were influenced by the Pan-African ideas promoted by Kwame Nkrumah and the vision of industrialization.

With the UNMIL-led reconstruction program, all key Liberian informants were asked, during this research, if they believed Liberia could develop and industrialize by applying a free market approach, as recommended by the PRSPs. The question was based on Chang's (2007) work, which in turn draws on the German economist Friedrich List who "criticised Britain for preaching free trade to other countries, while having achieved its economic supremacy through high tariffs and extensive subsidies" (Chang 2007, xxii).<sup>5</sup> List argued that

it is a very common clever device that when anyone has attained the summit of greatness, he kicks away the ladder by which he has climbed up, in order to deprive others of the means of climbing up after him . . . Any nation which by means of protective duties and restrictions on navigation has raised her manufacturing power and her navigation to such a degree of development that no other nation can sustain free competition with her, can do nothing wiser than to throw away these ladders of her greatness, to preach to other nations the benefits of free trade (List 2005, 46).<sup>6</sup>

List's statement formed part of the question, and all the informants responded, in various ways, that the notion of "ladder kicking" was well-known in Liberia. Most of them referred to the removal of Tolbert and subsequent reversal of the industrialization policy as an example. They further expressed that the primary concern of the GoL was how best to deal with this reality, and most of the informants saw China as a better partner than the United States, because of China's plans to establish a steel processing plant, and other Chinese projects in Liberia.<sup>7</sup>

In contrast, most expatriates working for the World Bank, UNDP, and INGOs who were interviewed concerning the reconstruction program would not comment on this issue.<sup>8</sup> The Policy Aid Coordi-

nator of the UNDP, appointed by the World Bank, Sarya S. Tripathi (2006) and World Bank representative, Luigi Giovine (2006) acknowledged the importance of this argument at an academic level, however, not as something which should be discussed at the country level, where the primary focus should be on implementation of the PRSPs.<sup>9</sup> Isabelle Marie (2006), the INGO liaison officer of the Monitoring and Steering Group (MSG), a consortium of more than 35 significant INGOs working in Liberia, stated that there have not been any discussions among the INGOs at MSG level about a neoliberal approach to development.<sup>10</sup> Most INGOs welcomed the development strategy led by the World Bank and worked closely with the UN civil and military sections to implement the policies.<sup>11</sup>

In general, the GoL's view on the neoliberal reconstruction program is significantly different from the general view of its Western partners. This, however, is not apparent in public statements or publications from the GoL, but mainly from the interviews conducted during this research, and when talking informally with Liberian politicians and intellectuals. The experience from the 1970s and the military coup in 1980 appears to stand clear in the minds of most of the Liberian intellectuals and politicians, as a lesson on how dangerous it is to challenge the liberal economic system in Liberia, which Tolbert attempted to do in the 1970s.

### Summing Up

The level of USG involvement in the recent Liberian war is significant, and the war should be considered and analyzed as an international conflict that started with the military coup of 1980, rather than a civil war that started at the end of 1989. In such a perspective, analysis of the political economy of the armed conflict in Liberia will include the international dimension, which can then be linked to conflict dynamics at the local level, national level, regional level, continental level, and international level.

Perhaps the most significant feature in public perception of the Liberian armed conflict is the production and reproduction of the notion of barbarism and local greed by mainstream academics and the dominant media, while international political and economic interests have been neglected. Focus on this skewed perception raises questions on how knowledge is produced, reproduced, and interlinked with information warfare. From the case of Liberia, it appears

that the internalization of the causes of conflict paved the way for the intellectual conviction that this was a civil war, primarily instigated by local and regional actors who were motivated by greed, revenge, and aspiration for power. Images and descriptions of the horror of the war have been disseminated internationally, promoting the notion of barbarism, thus creating in the West a moral obligation to intervene, because Western nation-states cannot just “stand by” and watch people being slaughtered in a “civil” war. The UNMIL intervention did, in fact, stop the war, a fact which is appreciated by all the Liberians who have been interviewed concerning this research. However, it must be questioned whether or not UNMIL provided a foundation on which a sustainable peace can be built when the reconstruction program is imposing a political and economic system based on liberalism, which this research considers as one of the leading causes of the conflict.

Liberian intellectuals and government officials interviewed about the reconstruction program have expressed a healthy skepticism about the USG as their primary partner, and about the free market approach to development. In contrast, they have expressed enthusiasm about the bilateral relations between the GoC and the GoL. It appears that the policy and practice of the GoL in many ways are similar to those of the Tolbert administration. The USG is reacting similarly as it did in the 1970s, but this time with a higher degree of control over the AFL, and increased support of Liberian civil society organizations through the army of INGOs. Based on the experience of the 1970s, much indicates that new conflict will arise in the future.

The level of violence that future conflicts will inflict on Liberia and the West African region will to a large extent depend on the ability of decision makers in central positions to understand great power politics, and address issues of poverty and class struggle.

#### Notes

1. This work was first published in 1999, 2nd impression, corrected in 2001, and published again with corrections in 2007.
2. J. Jerome Verdier was the chairperson of the TRC of Liberia. Interview conducted and recorded by Niels Hahn on 6 June 2009 in his office at the TRC in Monrovia.
3. Hassan Ali Abusabib was the first secretary at the Embassy of the Republic of the Sudan in London. Interview conducted and recorded by Niels Hahn on 14 December 2007 in his office at the Embassy of the Republic of Sudan in London.

4. Paul Collier, professor of economics, Oxford University, and former director of the Development Research Group of the World Bank (1998–2003). Interview conducted and recorded by Niels Hahn on 18 November 2010 in the Attlee Suite at Portcullis House, Westminster, after the conference “The Next Frontier for a New Global Age? Dr. Donald Kaberuka in conversation with Professor Paul Collier.”

5. Chang (2003) is questioning if the developed countries are “trying to ‘kick away the ladder’ by insisting that developing countries adopt policies and institutions that were not the ones that they had used in order to develop?” (139).

6. List’s argument corresponds well with Classical Realism in International Relation theory and Morgenthau’s (2006, chapter 9) argument that an industrial base is a central component of national power, not least in relation to military production. Therefore, a country that succeeds in industrializing will increase its international power and change the balance of power. Depriving a nation from industrializing will therefore maintain the status quo.

7. This corresponds with views of other African politicians, such as Ethiopia’s Pres. Meles Zenawi, who in 2007 announced to *The Financial Times* that the World Bank’s “neo-liberal” reforms in Africa had failed to “generate the type of growth it [the neoliberal reforms] sought,” and welcomed enhanced bilateral relations between the China and Ethiopia (“Financial Times Interview: Meles Zenawi” 2007).

8. Many of these informants were interviewed during preliminary research in 2006.

9. Satya Tripathi was appointed by the World Bank as international policy and aid coordinator advisor for the UNDP in Liberia. Interview conducted and recorded by Niels Hahn on 3 July 2006 in his office at the UNDP office, Mamba Point, Monrovia. Luigi Giovine contributed to this research through two interviews and the provision of documents. Giovine further noted that Karlsson served as World Bank country director in West Africa for Burkina Faso, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone in 2002. Prior to this position he served as World Bank vice-president of external affairs and UN affairs.

10. Isabelle Marie was an INGO liaison officer for the MSG and also worked for UNMIL Quick Impact Programs. Interview conducted and recorded by Niels Hahn on 18 July 2006 in her office at Mamba Point, Monrovia.

11. The MSG has changed its name to Liberian International Nongovernmental Organizations (LINGO) Forum, which consisted of 59 member organizations in 2001. They “play a key role” in implementing the PRSPs (LINGO 2011).



## Abbreviations

AAPC	All-African People's Conference
A-APRA	All-African People's Revolutionary Army
A-APRP	All-African People's Revolutionary Party
ACDL	Association for Constitutional Democracy in Liberia
ACS	American Colonization Society
AFL	Armed Forces of Liberia
AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
AFRICOM	United States Africa Command
AGI	Africa Governance Initiative
APRP	All People's Republican Party
ARG	Amphibious Readiness Group
AU	African Union
CEMESP	Center for Media Studies and Peace Building
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIMIC	Civil Military Cooperation
CIO	Congress of Industrial Organizations
Comintern	Communist International
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the GoL, LURD, MODEL, and Political Parties
CPP	Conventional People's Party
CRC-NPFL	Central Revolutionary Council of the NPFL
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DOD	Department of Defense (USG)
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EGSC	Economic Governance Steering Committee
ELWA	Eternal Love Winning Africa (Radio Station)
EPRCRL	Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of Liberia
EU	European Union

FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FLN	National Liberation Front
FOCAC	Forum on China-Africa Cooperation
GEMAP	Governance and Economic Management Assistance Program
GoC	Government of China (People's Republic of China, PRC)
GoL	Government of Liberia
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation Agency
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IAWG	Interagency Working Group
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICCPR	International Covenant of the Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICISS	International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty
IDP	Internally Displaced People
IFI	International Financial Institutions
IFMC	Inter-faith Mediation Committee
IGNU	Interim Government of National Unity
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGO	International Nongovernmental Organization
INN	International Negotiation Network
INPFL	Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia
INTGL	Interim National Transitional Government of Liberia
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Network
LBS	Liberia Broadcasting System
LCL	Labor Congress of Liberia
LDF	Lofa Defense Force

LFF	Liberian Frontier Force
LICUS	Low Income Countries Under Stress
LINGO	Liberian International Nongovernmental Organizations Forum
LNC	Liberian National Conference
LNTG	Liberia National Transitional Government
LPBS	Liberia Public Broadcasting Service
LPC	Liberian Peace Council
LPP	Liberian People's Party
LUDF	Liberians United Defense Force
LURD	Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy
MICAT	Ministry of Information Cultural Affairs and Tourism
MODEL	Movement for Democracy in Liberia
MoFAPRC	Ministry of Foreign Affairs People's Republic of China
MOJA	Movement for Justice in Africa
MoLME	Ministry of Lands, Mines, and Energy
MRM	Movement for Redemption of Muslims
MSG	Monitoring and Steering Group (NGOs)
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
NARDA	New African Research and Development Agency
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NDPL	National Democratic Party of Liberia
NEC	National Executive Commission
NED	National Endowment for Democracy (US)
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NIEO	New International Economic Order
NOCAL	National Oil Company of Liberia
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NPP	National Patriotic Party
NPRAG	National Patriotic Reconstruction Assembly Government

NSC	National Security Council (USG)
NTGL	National Transitional Government of Liberia
NTLA	National Transitional Legislative Assembly
OAAU	Organization of Afro-American Unity
OAU	Organization of African Unity
ODL	Organization of Displaced Liberians
OPC	Office of Policy Coordination (USG/CIA)
OSIWA	Open Society Initiative for West Africa
PAE	Pacific Architects and Engineers
PAL	Progressive Alliance of Liberia
PCC	Policy Coordinating Committee (USG)
PL 480	US Agricultural Trade Development Assistance Act, Public Law 480
PMC	Private Military Corporation
PPP	Progressive People's Party
PRC	People's Redemption Council
PRC	People's Republic of China (distinguished in the text from People's Redemption Council)
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSYOP	Psychological Operations
R2P	Responsibility to Protect
RFTF	Results-Focused Transitional Framework
RoC	Republic of China (Taiwan)
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SCR	Security Council Resolution
SECOM	Special Elections Commission
SMC	Standing Mediation Committee
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London
SSR	Security Sector Reforms
TANC	Office of Trade Agreements Negotiation and Compliance
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission

UAM	Union Africaine et Malgache (African Union)
UK	United Kingdom
ULIMO	United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy
ULIMO-J	United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy- Johnson
ULIMO-K	United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy- Kromah
UN	United Nations
UNAMID	United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur
UNAMSIL	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNIA	Universal Negro Improvement Association
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UP	Unity Party
UPP	United People's Party
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDOS	US Department of State
USG	United States Government
USIA	United States Information Agency
USIP	United States Institute of Peace
VOA	Voice of America
WB	World Bank
WDC	World Diamond Council
WFP	World Food Program
WHO	World Health Organization

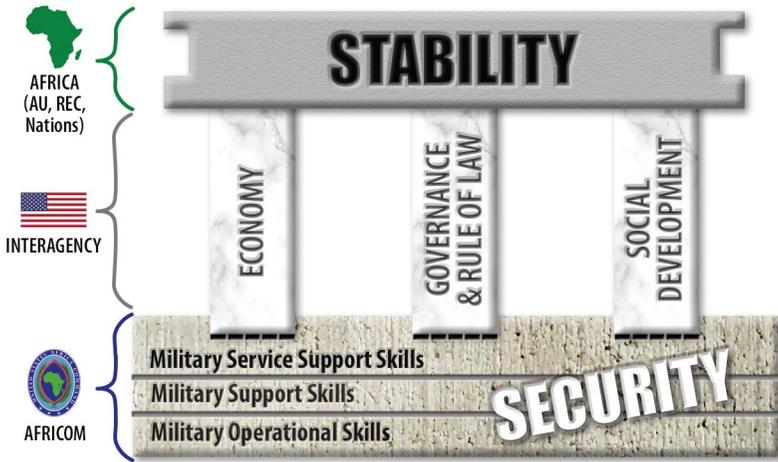


# Map of Liberia





## Appendix A



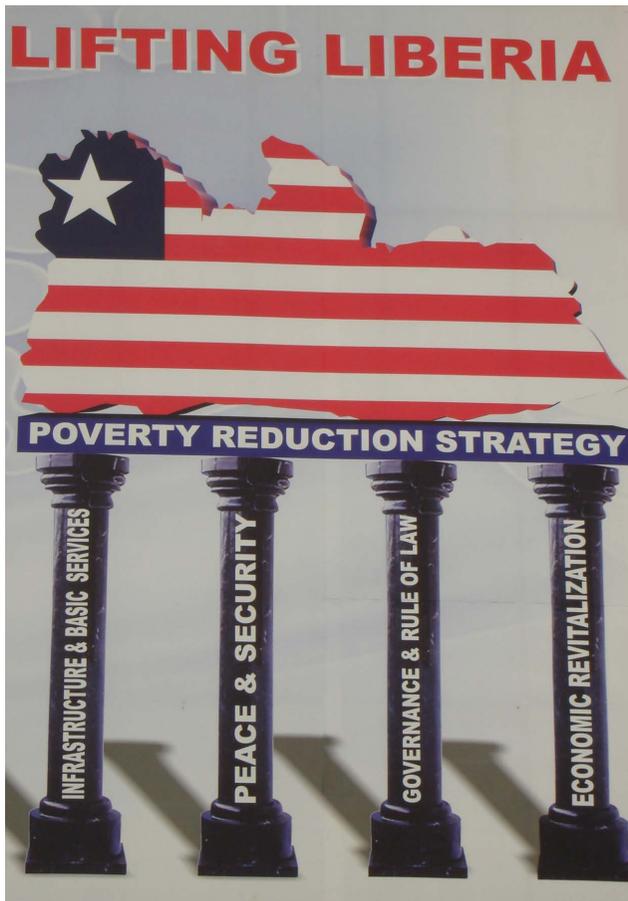
### Security Support Environment

**USG's vision of the Security Support Environment in Africa.** US Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence for African Affairs, Theresa Whelan (2008), states that this model represents an African country, symbolized as a building where AFRICOM provides the “foundation” on which the three pillars of Economy, Governance & Rule of Law, and Social Development are based. US Inter-Agencies are responsible for the implementation of these pillars, while African nation states, regional organizations and the AU are responsible for the stability, symbolized as the roof.

*Retrieved by Niels Hahn from Theresa Whelan in 2008.*



## Appendix B



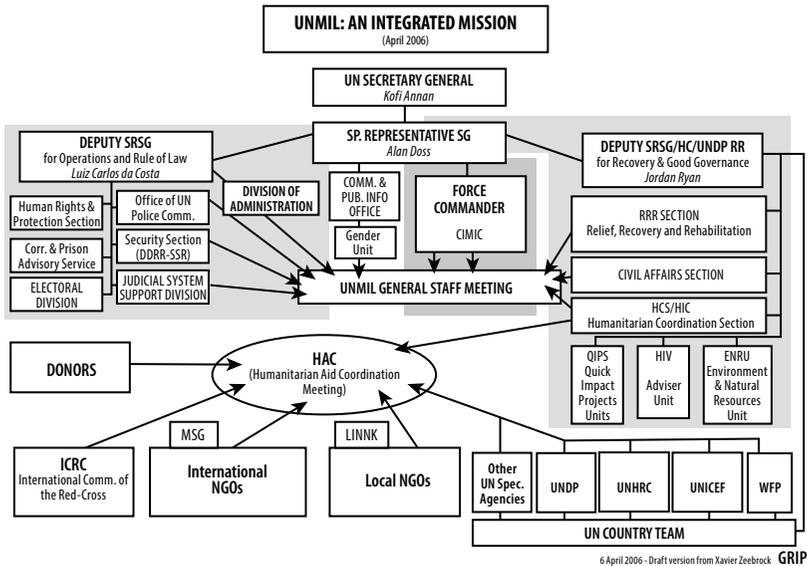
### Lifting Liberia

**Poster of the Poverty Reduction Strategy, named Lift Liberia.** This poster has been disseminated in Monrovia, to provide a simplified model of the reconstruction strategy. It reflects the organization chart of Liberia Reconstruction and Development Committee (LRDC) (see appendix D).

*Photo taken by Niels Hahn, in 2009, near the main road to Congo Town from central Monrovia. The poster measures approximately 3x6 meters*



# Appendix C



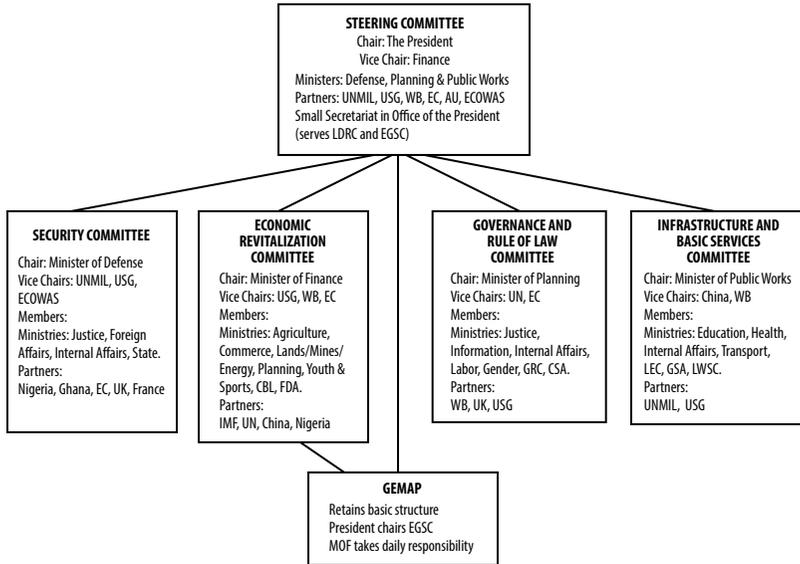
## UNMIL: An Integrated Mission figure

**Organization chart of UN Integrated Mission in Liberia (UNMIL).** The chart shows how international organizations, including local NGOs should coordinate their activities.

*Retrieved by Niels Hahn from the World Bank in 2006.*



# Appendix D



## Liberia Reconstruction and Development Committee

**Organization Chart of Liberia Reconstruction and Development Committee (LRDC).** The chart shows the structure of the LRDC, including the: Chair, Vice Chairs, and Members.

*Retrieved by Niels Hahn from the World Bank in 2006.*



## Appendix E

The following is a list of people interviewed and listed in alphabetical order for this book. Not all the people mentioned in this list have been cited in this work, but they have all contributed to the research by sharing their knowledge and views. Some informants had several interviews, and the dates and places stated are from the primary interviews. Recordings are available for approximately 95 percent of the interviews.

**Abusabib, Hassan Ali Hassan.** First secretary, Embassy of the Republic of Sudan, London. Interview 14 December 2007 in his office at the Embassy of the Republic of Sudan, London. The interview focused on oil and potential oil pipelines in Darfur, funding of the rebel groups, and the role of the USG in the conflict. The information used as a comparative study to Liberia.

**Allen, Cyril.** Chairman emeritus and chairman/advisory board of the NPP. He was interviewed 7 April 2009 in his home at Paynesville, Liberia, and 24 April 2009 in his car in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Amin, Samir.** Director of the Third World Forum in Dakar, Senegal, and author of *Neo-Colonialism in West Africa* (1973). He researched the region during the formation of the OAU. He was interviewed on 2 December 2010 at the SOAS at the University of London.

**Asante, Kwaku Bapru.** Former principal secretary African affairs secretariat, office of Pres. Kwame Nkrumah. Subsequently served as ambassador of Ghana to Switzerland, Austria, and Belgium, ambassador to UN organizations in Geneva and Austria, and Ghana's high commissioner to London. He was interviewed on 3 November 2008, 13 November 2008, and 3 December 2008 at his home in Accra, Ghana. The total length of the interviews is 15 hours.

**Asante, Sabra.** Management consultant Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration. Consultant for the USAID projects in Liberia. He was interviewed on 20 November 2008 in Dzorwulu, Accra.

**Attuquayefio, Philip.** Research Fellow at the Legon Center for International Affairs. He contributed research on plantation labor in Liberia. He was interviewed on 16 November 2008 in Dzorwulu, Accra.

- Bility, Yusuf A.** General secretary of the Forum for the Establishment of a War Crimes Court in Liberia. He was interviewed on 6 June 2009 on Broad St. in Monrovia.
- Borishade, Adetokunbo K.** Director-curator of the Africana Museum and chair of the Africana and Liberian studies department at Cuttington University in Suacoco, Liberia. She was interviewed on 13 May 2009 and 16 May 2009 at the University of Liberia in Monrovia, Liberia.
- Bowier, Emmanuel.** Former minister of information from 1987 until 1990. He was interviewed on 2 February 2009 at the MICAT in Monrovia and on 5 May 2009 at Restaurant Mona Lisa in Monrovia, Liberia. Also, Bowier was a critical person to facilitate contact with other vital informants and held a private library of essential documents and books.
- Brandy, Othello.** Lead consultant for the Land Commission at the Liberian Governance Commission. Former minister of agriculture 2002–4. Former ambassador to the EU and the Benelux 1997–2002. He was interviewed on 20 February 2009, 27 March 2009, and 3 April 2009 at his Governance Commission office in Monrovia.
- Bropleh, Laurence Konmla.** Minister of MICAT. Some sections of the interview are off-the-record and are not featured in this work. He was interviewed on 28 May 2009 at MICAT in Monrovia, Liberia.
- Caesar, Augustus.** Chief executive officer of Caesar's Architects in Monrovia, president of the Liberian Chamber of Architects, and consultant for *Médecins Sans Frontières's* hospital construction programs in Liberia from 2002 to 2004. Data obtained by this author from personal conversations between August 2002 and June 2004, in Monrovia, Liberia and from interviews in 2009. Caesar further contributed to this research by taking the author to Buchanan, Liberia, and explaining details about city planning, port infrastructure, iron ore exportation.
- Chang, Ha-Joon.** Director of the Centre of Development Studies and a reader in the political economy of development in economics at the University of Cambridge. He was interviewed on 4 February 2011, at Christania, and Wilders Café, Christianshavn in Copenhagen, Denmark.

- Chea, Daniel.** Former minister of defense during President Taylor's administration and the NTGL. He was interviewed several times over the phone. The primary interview was on 5 January 2009.
- Chesson, Mike.** A street vendor and student at the University of Liberia. He has followed the recruitment of soldiers in Monrovia by foreign PMCs. He was interviewed on 19 March 2009 on Broad Street in Monrovia.
- Coleman, Peter, MD.** Former minister of health and social welfare and surgeon. He was interviewed on 20 April 2009 in his clinic on Mechlin Street in Monrovia.
- Collier, Paul.** Professor of economics at Oxford University and former director of the Development Research Group of the World Bank (1998–2003). Personal conversations were conducted with the author on 18 November 2010 in the Attlee Suite at Portcullis House in Westminster, London.
- Corey, Peter.** Colonel, G5 of the CIMIC at the UNMIL. He was interviewed on 11 July 2006 in his office at UNMIL Headquarters in Monrovia.
- Cutting, Joel.** Consultant for Adam Smith International, and the Department for International Development. He worked on public sector reform in Liberia with the Liberian Government Commission. He was interviewed on 27 May 2009 at the Mamba Point Hotel in Monrovia, Liberia.
- Dada, Taban J.** Medical director at the Redemption Hospital. He was interviewed on 22 May 2009 in his office at Redemption Hospital in Monrovia.
- Dahn, Bernice.** Deputy minister of Health and Social Welfare and chief medical officer. She was interviewed on 19 March 2009 in her office at the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare in Monrovia, Liberia.
- Dahn, Marcus.** Founding member of the PAL and secretary-general of PAL and deputy minister of education 2003–5. He was interviewed on 6 January 2009 at the Ministry of Post and Telecommunication in Monrovia, Liberia.
- Danso, Antwi Vladimir, PhD.** Senior research fellow at the Legon Center for International Affairs and a spokesperson for the CPP on foreign affairs. He was interviewed on 11 November 2008 in Legon, Accra.

**Davis, Natty D.** Minister of state for Development and Reconstruction. He was interviewed on 14 April 2009 at the Mamba Point Hotel in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Demawu, Henry.** Liberian architect student who studied under the Chinese scholarship program in Beijing, China. Interview conducted on 17 April 2010, at Demawu's home in Beijing, China. The author employed Demawu as a construction manager in 2003.

**Doe, Jackson E.** Minister of transport and brother of the deceased Pres. Samuel K. Doe. He was interviewed on 30 April 2009 in his office at the Ministry of Transport in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Dorliae, Yarsuo Weh.** Commissioner for Decentralization and Governance Commission. He was interviewed on 30 April 2009 in his office at the Government Commission in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Dossen, Benedict.** Researcher on service sector reforms at Mother Patern College of Health Sciences in Monrovia, Liberia. He was interviewed 14 May 2009 at the University of Liberia, Tubman Hall, in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Dunbar, James.** Former ex-combatant. At the time of this interview, he was being recruited as soldier by a PMC. He was interviewed on 20 March 2009 on Benson Street in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Dunbar, Jenkins.** Former minister of Lands, Mines, and Energy during President Taylor's administration. He was interviewed 16 July 2006 at his home in Monrovia, Liberia, and 7 May 2009 at Café Evelyns in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Eastman, Earnest.** Served as minister of foreign affairs during President Tubman's administration, President Doe's administration, and President Taylor's administration. He was interviewed on 16 April 2009 at his home, Old Congo Town, in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Fahnbulleh, H. Boima.** National security advisor and former minister of foreign affairs from 1 December 1998 to 4 July 1984. He was part of the leadership of the MOJA in the 1970s and author of the book *Voices of Protest* (2004). He was interviewed 8 May 2009 in his office at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Gabelle, Christopher.** Institutional development and governance advisor at the Office of the European Community in Liberia. He was interviewed on 6 July 2006 in his office in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Gbadyu, Joe-Hoover.** Economic advisor at the Economic Growth Office, USAID-Liberia. He was interviewed 22 January 2009 in the restaurant at John F. Kennedy (JFK) Hospital in Monrovia,

Liberia. The interview was confidential, and information provided by Gbadyu is not contained in this work.

**Gballah, Joe.** Former secretary-general of LURD. He was interviewed on 3 May 2009 and 10 May 2009 in his home, Duala, in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Geebro, Joseph W.** Deputy minister for Social Welfare at the Ministry of Health (MoH) and Social Welfare. Former chairperson of the Grand Ghede Association in the Americas. He was interviewed on 18 March 2009 and 19 March 2009 in his office at the MoH in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Giovine, Luigi.** A senior representative of the World Bank in Liberia. He was interviewed 15 July 2006 in his office at the World Bank in Monrovia, Liberia, and 18 July 2006 at the Mamba Point Hotel in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Gobah, Christiana.** Former child soldier fighting for LURD. He was interviewed on 23 July 2006 in Zwedru, Liberia, about UNMIL's Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration program in Liberia.

**Golafale, Kanda.** Former hospital director at Redemption Hospital. He was interviewed 13 February 2009 on Bushrod Island regarding service sector reforms.

**Gou, Haodong.** Political counselor and head of the chancellery. He was interviewed 5 May 2009 at the Chinese Embassy in Monrovia, Liberia, and 24 May 2009 at the Shanghai restaurant in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Graham, Yao.** Coordinator of the Third World Network in Africa. He was interviewed on 7 December 2008 at his home in Legon, Accra. The focus on the interview was on neocolonialism and New Partnership for Africa's Development.

**Group Interview with Former Child Soldiers.** Interview with Akoi Mawolo, Ezekiel Mavolo, and Morris Si Kamara, who were fighting for LURD. The interview focused on how they saw the role of the USG in armed conflicts. They were interviewed on 10 January 2009 at the Pentecostal School Compound in Voinjama, Lofa County, Liberia.

\_\_\_\_\_. Interview with key members of the Initiative for the Development of Former Child Soldiers; Morris Y. Matadi, executive director, Brocks K. Polai, secretary-general, and Benjamin Ojuku Geedah (General Eagle), youth officer. They were interviewed on 2 May 2009 in their office at Red Light, in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Group Interview with Progressive Hataye Congress.** Information obtained via a political forum in Voinjama, Lofa County, Liberia, on 10 January 2009. Losene S. Massalay chaired the forum, and it had participation from 15 attendees.

**Guannu, Joseph Saye.** A historian at Cuttington University, Liberia. Former assistant minister of foreign affairs for foreign service at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Liberia's ambassador to the United States from 1981 to 1983. He was interviewed on 8 January 2009 in his office at Red Light, in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Hoff, Edwin E.** Special assistant to the commissioner at the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization. Private conversation with the author on January 6, 2009, in Hoff's office at the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization in Monrovia, Liberia. Hoff further contributed to this research by assisting the author with residence permits for research, on the request from the Liberia Senate research director.

**Izmestiev, Artemy.** Program specialist for Aid Effectiveness, UNDP. He was interviewed on 13 November 2008 in his office at UNDP in Accra, Ghana. He contributed research on how bribery can be disguised as philanthropic assistance.

**Jabateh, Morris.** Ex-combatant who fought UILMO, NPFL, and LURD. He was also later recruited by DynCorp International. He was interviewed on 1 February 2009 and 30 March 2009 at Hatayee Coffee Shop, New Port Street, in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Janneh, Kaibeneh.** Legal Advisor to LURD and head of Delegation of the Accra Peace Agreement (advisor of legal affairs) At the time of the interview, he was the assistant justice of Supreme Court. He was interviewed on 3 March 2009 in his office at the Temple of Justice in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Jaye, Thomas.** Senior research fellow in the Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution Department at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center (KAIPTC). He was interviewed on 20 November 2008 at KAIPTC, Accra, Ghana.

**Johnson, Edward G.** Former adjutant (S1) and secretary of the headquarters of the Ministry of Defence from 1988 to 2005. At the time of this interview, he was retired. He was interviewed on 21 March 2009 at Café at Ashmun Street in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Johnson, Prince.** Former leader of the INPFL. At the time of the interview he was the senior senator for Nimba County. He was inter-

viewed on 5 July 2006 and 18 February 2009 in his office at the Liberian Senate in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Johnson, Wesley M.** Vice-chairman of the INTGL from 2003 to 2006, vice-chairman of the PPP from 1978 to 1990, and subsequently chairman of the PPP. At the time of the interview, he was the Liberian ambassador to the UK. He was interviewed on 6 December 2010 in his office at the Liberian Embassy in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Joseph, Malcom W.** Executive director for the CEMESP, interviewed on 16 April 2009 in his office, Benson Street, in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Kamara, Tom.** Chief editor of *The New Democrat Newspaper*. He was interviewed on 17 April 2009 in his office on Clay Street in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Kanalyden, Kamil.** UNDP Coordinator for RFTF. He was interviewed on 15 July 2006 in his UNDP office at the UNDP in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Karpeh, Carlton Alexwyn.** Senior ambassador at large and advisor to the minister of foreign affairs. He was interviewed on 28 April 2009 in Ambassador Wallace's office at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Kennedy, Emmett.** Director of protocol at the Executive Mansion. He was interviewed on 20 June 2009 in Ambassador Wallace's office at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Kofa, Marcus M.** Ambassador and assistant minister for Americas. He was interviewed on 1 June 2009 in his office at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Konneh, Sheikh Kafumba.** As the national chairman of the National Muslim Council Of Liberia, Konneh served as the co-chair of the IFMC from 1990 to 2006. In 2006, he served as president of the Interreligious Council of Liberia and was appointed as one of six commissioners of the TRC of Liberia. He was interviewed on 14 February 2009 and 17 March 2009 in his home on Clay Street in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Konowa, J. B.** Minister of Lands, Mines, and Energy. Personal communication on 28 July 2006 in his office at the MoLME in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Kromah, Alhaji.** Leader of the UNIMLO-K. At the time of the interview, he was a professor at the University of Liberia. Formerly, he was the special assistant to the vice-president of Tolbert's administration, assistant minister of information, director-general of the

LBS during the Doe administration. He was interviewed on 13 February 2009 at the University of Liberia and on 24 May 2009 at his home, Congo Town, in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Kromah, Foday.** Director-general of NOCAL. He was interviewed on 30 June 2006 in his office at NOCAL in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Kromah, S. Alexander.** Commissioner of the Bureau of Direct Taxation. He was interviewed on 8 July 2006 at Mamba Point Hotel in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Kwenu, Arnold.** Force commander of ECOMOG from 24 August 1990 until the end of September 1990. General in the armed forces of Ghana. He was interviewed 10 December 2008 and 11 December 2008 in his office and training compound in Dzorwulu, Accra, Ghana.

**Laurence, George.** Serves as the executive director for the National Civic and Development Foundation. Formerly served as the deputy minister for Administration and Ministry of State during the NTGL. He was interviewed on 26 June 2006 in his office on Broad Street in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Leys, Colin.** Professor emeritus for the department of political studies at Queen's University. He is the author of *Underdevelopment in Kenya: The Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism, 1964–1971* and former co-editor of *The Socialist Register*. Interview on 13 January 2010 at a café near King Cross, London. His contribution was on Pan-Africanism in the 1960s.

**Liepins, Imants.** Serves as an investigative journalist for economic crimes in the Public Investigation Bureau, Riga, Latvia. He was interviewed on 19 February 2009 over lunch on Center Street in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Logan, James.** Deputy minister of Agriculture for Planning and Development, since 2006. He was interviewed on 22 January 2009 at the restaurant at the JFK Hospital in Monrovia, Liberia. In addition, Logan was a vital person to facilitate contacts to other key informants.

**Logan, James.** Soldier recruited by a PMC to deploy to Iraq. He was interviewed on 19 March 2009 on Broad Street in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Lugala, Peter Clement.** Emergency preparedness and humanitarian action advisor at the World Health Organization (WHO) and WHO representative for Liberia. He was interviewed on 13 May 2009 in his office at the WHO in Monrovia.

- Mallah, Lasana.** Commander of LURD, 1st Battalion. He was interviewed on 10 January 2009 at his home in Voinjama, Liberia.
- Manu, Thomas.** Director of exploration and production, Ghana National Petroleum Groups (GNPC). He was interviewed on 8 December 2008 in his office at GNPC, Tema, Accra, Ghana.
- Marie, Isabelle.** INGO liaison officer for the MSG. She also worked for UNMIL Quick Impact Programs. She was interviewed 18 July 2006 in her office at Mamba Point in Monrovia, Liberia.
- Massalay, S. Losene.** Deputy chief of staff of operations for ULIMO from 1995 to 1997, Lt Gen (3 stars) in LURD, military advisor to chairman of LURD (Sekou Conneh) and the Military High Command of LURD forces, and deputy minister for Internal Affairs in the NTGL from 2004 to 2006. He was interviewed on 14 February 2009 and 17 February 2009 at a coffee shop on Newport Street in Monrovia, Liberia.
- Massaquoi, Roland.** Former minister of agriculture in the National Patriotic Reconstruction Assembly government from 1993 to 1997, minister of agriculture for the GoL from 1997 to 2003, and presidential candidate for the NPP in 2005. He was interviewed on 14 May 2009 at the University of Liberia in Monrovia, Liberia.
- Matadi, Morris.** Director of the Child Soldier Association and former child soldier fighting for NPFL and the INDPF. He lived in the Bujumbura camp near Accra, Ghana, from 2000 to 2008. He was interviewed on 28 December 2008 at the Village Café, Randal Street, in Monrovia, Liberia.
- Matthews, Lancedell.** The general director of the NARDA and chairperson of National Civil Society Organization's Advisory Committee. He was interviewed on 1 June 2009 in his office on Johnson Street in Monrovia, Liberia.
- Morlu, James K.** Station manager of STAR Radio 104FM, 9.525Mhz, and 11.965Mhz. He was interviewed on 21 April 2009 in his office at STAR Radio on Broad Street in Monrovia, Liberia.
- Moses G. Y. Pewu, MD., MPH.** An assistant minister for Curative Services. He was interviewed on 9 March 2009 in his office at the MoH and Social Welfare in Monrovia, Liberia.
- Mulbah, Worlorbah Joe.** Former minister of information during President Taylor's administration. At the time of interview, he was an associate professor and chairman of the Mass Communication Department at the University of Liberia in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Neyor, Christopher.** Energy specialist and senior energy, environment, and climate advisor to President Sirleaf. Subsequently president and chief executive of NOCAL. He was interviewed on 12 May 2009 in his office at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Nicholas Jackson Dunan and Rally Jah.** Ex-combatants. They were recruited to serve in Iraq. They were interviewed on 2 April 2009 on Broad Street in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Nkrumah, Samia.** Member of Ghana Parliament for the CPP and daughter of deceased Pres. Kwame Nkrumah. She was interviewed on 14 August 2009 at Café Wilders in Copenhagen, Denmark.

**Odim, Jude.** Pastor for President Charles Taylor's family. Helped the author to establish contact with Agnes Taylor, Charles Taylor's former wife, who lives in London. He was interviewed on 3 December 2008 in Dzorwulu, Accra, Ghana.

**Perbi, Akosua.** PhD in History at and professor at the department of history at the University of Ghana. She was interviewed on 27 November 2008 in her office at Legon, Accra, Ghana.

**Pratt, Kwesi.** Managing editor at *The Insight*, on Kotoko Avenue in Kokomlemle, Ghana. He was interviewed on 1 December 2008 in his office, Accra, Ghana.

**Purser, Jackson.** Director of archives for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He was interviewed on 20 May 2009 in his office at the archives in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Quaqua, Peter M.** President of the Press Union of Liberia. He was interviewed on 16 April 2009 in his office at the Press Union, Clay Street in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Quinn, Tom.** Quinn contributed to this research through friendship and moral support to the author in 2002 and 2003 when the intensity of the armed conflict in Liberia was at its peak. Quinn further supported the author as head of the mission of *Médecins Sans Frontières* in Liberia (Operational Center, Brussels) by providing shelter and transportation concerning the preliminary field research for this work, which was carried out in June and July 2006. This book is partially dedicated to the memory of Mr. Quinn who passed away in 2011.

**Reeves, Fulton D.** Comptroller at NOCAL. He was interviewed on 27 April 2009 in his office at NOCAL on Ashmond Street, in

Monrovia, Liberia. Also, Reeves provided essential documents on the oil concession in Liberia.

**Richardson, John.** Former national security advisor during President Taylor's administration. Formerly he was a member of the Liberian Security Council, minister of public works in 1991, head of the Disarmament Commission, and chief negotiator with LURD. He was interviewed on 17 July 2007 in his office, in Sinkor, in Monrovia, Liberia, and 2 February 2009 and 26 March 2009 at the Royal Hotel in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Saah, Jackson.** A security guard employed by the US-based company InterCon. He was interviewed on 12 July 2006 at UNMIL Headquarters in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Sanders, Nick.** Project Manager for Landmine Action in Liberia. Responsible for disarmament of small arms. He was interviewed on 30 June 2006 in his office at Mamba Point in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Saryee, Dan T.** The executive director of Liberia Democratic Institute. He was interviewed on 16 May 2009 in his office on Randall Street, in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Saryon, Amara B.** A former AFL soldier (since 1974) ("Number 7") in the army during President Doe's administration and minister of defense and master general in LURD from 1999 to 2003. He was interviewed on 10 January 2009 in his uncle's home in Voinjama, Liberia.

**Sawyer, Amos.** Chairman of the Governance Commission and former interim president of Liberia from 1990 to 1994. He was interviewed on 20 February 2009 in his office at the Governance Commission in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Sayeh, P. Bloh.** Director-general at the Center for National Documents and Records Archives (CNDRA). She was interviewed on 11 May 2009 in her office at the National Archives on Ashmond Street in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Sayndee, T. Debey.** Professor and director of the Kofi Annan Institute for Conflict Transformation based at the University of Liberia. He was interviewed on 2 February 2009, 9 February 2009, and 28 April 2009 in his office at the University of Liberia in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Shameem, M.** Served as Maj in the UNMI and was responsible for the CIMIC program in Zwedru, Liberia. He was interviewed on 22 June 2006.

**Sheriff, El Mohamed.** Former advisor and special envoy to President Sirleaf, 2006 to 2008, former member of the Council of State 1994 to 1995, and former minister of Technical and Professional Education from 1977 to mid-1982. He was interviewed on 7 June 2006, 19 July 2006, and 17 May 2009 at his home in Barnersville, Monrovia, Liberia. Total interview time is approximately 10 hours.

**Simson, Rebecca.** Research analyst for the World Bank. She was interviewed on 4 June 2009 in her office at the World Bank in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Sirleaf, Ellen Johnson.** President of Liberia. She was interviewed on 2 June 2009 in her office at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Snetter, Charles A.** Director-general of the LBS. He was a former middleman for setting up STAR Radio in 1996. He was interviewed on 8 April 2009 in his office at the LBS in Paynesville, Monrovia, Liberia.

**Songa, Michael.** Engineer for the Minister of Education's Division of Educational Facility Section and chief engineer of Caesar Architects Inc. Consultant for *Médecins Sans Frontières* in Liberia from 2002 to 2003. Songa worked with the author of this work from August 2002 to June 2003, in Monrovia, Liberia, and provided valuable data about the infrastructure of Liberia. This work is partly dedicated to the memory of Mr. Songa who passed away in 2003.

**Tamba, Elfrieda Stewart.** Deputy minister for revenue. She was interviewed on 6 May 2009 in her office at the Ministry of Finance in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Tarr, Byron.** Served as special assistant to finance minister, Steve Tolbert in 1972 and assistant minister for revenues from May 1972 to the end of 1974. He left the UN but returned to government in 1977 and was responsible for the State Enterprises position of controller general for public enterprises. He then served as minister of planning from 1981 to 1982 and minister of finance in 1991. He was interviewed on 6 April 2009 and 23 April 2009 in his office at the corner of Johnson and Broad Streets in Monrovia, Liberia. Also, Tarr provided essential documents and connections to key informants.

**Taylor, Agnes.** The former wife of President Charles Taylor. She played a vital role during the NPFL intervention in late 1989. She

was interviewed on 13 May 2010 and 23 November 2010 in her house at Ealing Broadway, London.

**Taylor, Jewel.** Senior senator for Bong County and former first lady of Liberia. She was married to President Charles Taylor from 1997 to 2006. She was interviewed on 10 July 2006.

**Tipoteh, Togba Nah.** The founding member and leader of MOJA and former minister of Planning of Economic Affairs from 1980 to 1981 under President Tolbert. He was interviewed on 7 January 2009 at the French Café on Carry Street in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Thomas-Greenfield, Linda.** United States ambassador. On 27 May 2009, the author observed her meeting with New Deal Movement (political party), at their headquarters in Monrovia, Liberia. The author had a brief personal communication after the meeting. The author has not found it possible to gain access to interviews with any USG representatives in Liberia.

**Toe, Albert.** A former member of the PRC who participated in the military coup in 1980 (as one of the 17 soldiers that overthrew President Tolbert's administration). At the time of interview, Toe served as the representative for the Liberian Legislature for River Gee Country, co-chair of the National Defense Committee, and member of the National Security Committee. He was interviewed on 28 January 2009 in his legislative office in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Tokpa, Alaric.** Assistant professor in the department of politics at the University of Liberia and co-founder of the New Deal Movement in 1999. He had visions of establishing a socialist party in Liberia. He was interviewed on 26 January 2009 at New Port Street in Monrovia, Liberia, and on 12 March 2010 at SOAS. In addition, Tokpa helped the author establish connections with a number of key informants in Monrovia.

**Tripathi, Satya.** Appointed by the World Bank as international policy and aid coordinator advisor for the UNDP in Liberia. He was interviewed 3 July 2006 in his office at the UNDP in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Tubman, A. Winston.** Nephew to the deceased Pres. William Tubman and presidential candidate for 1997, 2005, and 2011 elections. Formerly he was Liberia's permanent representative to the UN in the late-1970s, head of the UN Political Office for Somalia in the early-1990s, senior advisor to the force commander of the UN Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission, and chair of the Legal and

- Constitutional Committee of the group of Liberian political leaders meeting in Banjul, Gambia, that established the interim government in Liberia in 1990. He was interviewed 2 February 2009, 15 March 2009, and 23 March 2009 in his office on Center Street in Monrovia, Liberia.
- Varpilah, S. Tornorlah.** The deputy minister of health planning, research, and development. He was interviewed 10 February 2009 in his office at MoH and Social Welfare in Monrovia, Liberia.
- Verdier, J. Jerome.** The chairman of the Liberian TRC (counselor-at-law). He was interviewed on 12 July 2006 and 3 June 2009 in his office at the TRC in Monrovia, Liberia.
- Volpin, Gianni.** The deputy head of regional delegation at the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). He was interviewed on 14 July 2009 at his office at the ICRC in Monrovia, Liberia.
- Wallace, George W. Jr.** Ambassador and advisor to President Sirleaf on Foreign Affairs and former minister of foreign affairs from 2006 to 2007. He was interviewed on 28 April 2009 in his office at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Monrovia, Liberia.
- Waritay, Frank.** Retired Capt from the AFL (forced retirement in December 2005). He worked as a “military observer” at the Redemption Hospital during the recent war in Liberia (He worked undercover as an electrician). He was interviewed on 17 March 2009 at a Café on New Port Street in Monrovia, Liberia.
- Weh, McCarthy.** Research director of the Liberia Senate. Weh contributed to this research by assisting the author with documents and connections to key people in the Liberian Senate.
- Williams, Michael.** Professor and director of the Center for Africana Studies and executive director at the AUA Center, Legon, University of Ghana. He was interviewed on 14 November 2008 at Chec Afrique, Accra, Ghana.
- Wisner, George W.** Assistant minister of African and Asian Affairs. He was interviewed 2 June 2009 in his office at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Monrovia, Liberia.
- Woods, Samuel Kofi.** Minister of labor and subsequently minister of public works. He was interviewed on 7 June 2009 at his home on Front Street in Monrovia, Liberia.
- Wotorson, Cletus.** Senior senator in the Liberian Legislature and president pro tempore of the Liberian Senate since 2009. Formerly he was the minister of Lands, Mines, and Energy (1978–80) and chairman of the Liberian Petroleum Refinery Company. He

was interviewed on 30 June 2006 at his office in the Senate in Monrovia, Liberia.

**Yogei, Jolin Y.** CNDRA senior archivist and director. She was interviewed 11 May 2009 in her office at the National Archives on Ashmond Street in Monrovia, Liberia.



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This book reviews the history of the United States-Liberia relations from the early 1820s to 2015, with particular attention paid to the role of the US armed forces. Contrary to most literature on the genesis and development of Liberia, this book demonstrates how US military power has been the primary influence shaping the Liberian state. This includes the role played by the US military in the founding of Liberia, the protection of the country during the European formal colonial era, multiple covert operations in securing US-friendly administrations in Liberia, and direct military interventions when necessary to secure American interests in the region.

