TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION OF LIBERIA

DIASPORA PROJECT

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HAMLINE UNIVERSITY
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St. Paul, Minnesota U.S.A

TESTIMONY OF
GARSWAH BLACKTOM

TRC Commissioners:
Chairman Jerome Verdier
Vice Chairperson Dede Dolepe
Oumu Syllah
Bishop Arthur Kulah
Sheikh Kafumba Konneh
Pearl Brown Bull
Rev. Gerald Coleman
John H.T. Stewart
Massa Washington

Court Reporter: Holly Nordahl
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Verbatim Reporters & Captioners
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Marshall, Minnesota 56258 U.S.A.
(The following proceedings were had and made of record, commencing at approximately 3:34 p.m.)

GARSWAH BLACKTOM

being first duly sworn,

testified as follows:

TESTIMONY OF GARSWAH BLACKTOM

MR. SIRLEAF: Please be seated.

CHAIRMAN JEROME VERDIER:

Mr. Witness -- excuse me -- we say welcome, and thanks for coming. We at the TRC are gratified that you could come to share with us in this forum as a way of understanding our past in fostering genuine peace, unity and reconciliation in our country.

The TRC was established as a part of the Accra Peace Agreement where all the parties, including the international community, agree that this would be the way forward in redressing the abuses, the atrocities and the wrongs of the past so that the Accra experiences we had will not be repeated in the future so that a better country can be inherited by our children and our children's children. So, thanks for
coming, and I will use this time to introduce commissioners to you. Commissioner Sheikh Kafumba Konneh, Commissioner Pearl Brown Bull, Commissioner Gerald Coleman, Dede Dolopei, Massa Washington, John Stewart, and Oumu Syllah.

I will ask you preliminary introductory questions, following which you can make your presentation. Can you kindly repeat your name so that our records are clear.

THE WITNESS: Garswah Abba Blacktom.

CHAIRMAN JEROME VERDIER: Albert Gaton?

THE WITNESS: Blacktom.

CHAIRMAN JEROME VERDIER: Okay, Blacktom.


CHAIRMAN JEROME VERDIER: A date of birth, please?

THE WITNESS: 11-20-60.

CHAIRMAN JEROME VERDIER: Where do you reside currently?


CHAIRMAN JEROME VERDIER: Vocation, vocation, what do you do?

THE WITNESS: Teacher.

CHAIRMAN JEROME VERDIER: Teacher.
THE WITNESS: Education.

CHAIRMAN JEROME VERDIER: When did you migrate to the U.S.?


CHAIRMAN JEROME VERDIER: Okay. Thank you again, and you may proceed.

THE WITNESS: Okay. Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen of the commissioner, for volunteers, community leaders, Liberians and friends of Liberia. My name is Garswah Blacktom, residing in state of Illinois, and I was born and live in Mount Barclay. That's lower Kieresbrad (ph).

I will commend the Commission for the wonderful work you are doing, and (unintelligible) in Liberia, Africa and the United States. I serve as president of the Liberian community in Illinois and will host a time or meeting of the commissioner, and we have Commissioner Washington and Syllah, and also we have our TRC member, Laura Tendence (ph), and after that time, I have been in constant contact with them. We also have a volunteer in -- sorry, in Chicago, Tom White, the law firm help to work with the -- with TRC. And whenever they have problem, they call on to me to help them, for the fact that most of the Liberians in Illinois were very reluctant to come to the hearing, so
I had to go and talk to them, help them with the process. And I also volunteered to be one -- to give statement so that a volunteer would know the process, and after that process, I was called again to come to Minnesota and help with the process for the fact that most of the Liberian people are very reluctant to give statement. So if the leader in the community is not giving statement, you cannot tell them to go and give statement. You have to lead by example. For the fact that I have given statement in Illinois, I can encourage them to go and give statement also and let them know that the process is very easy.

I also want to thank Laura for inviting me for the fact that on two front, I come here to lead by example, and also I were lucky to meet a relative I haven't seen for ten years. If he is still here, Bennie Warner, I have not seen for over ten years, so I'm very happy to be here and also happy to help with the process.

Okay. I have some issue of the Rice Riot in 1979. I took part in that demonstration on Gurley Street at PAL headquarter. And after the soldier came in, scatter us, we all went running around and went to where Gurley Street and Broad Street, at the store in the corner, the jewelry store, that it were ransacked,
and people were taking stuff out. I took a watch, and
the soldier, Kewah (ph), has gone and told me to give
him the watch. I give it to him, and he send me back
to take one for myself, and thank God that -- I mean, I
was not dumb to say, well, I'm not giving it to you,
but with God in my corner, I give him the watch, and he
told me to take another one, and I took it and ran.
And, I mean, there was no pause, I just start running.
So at that time we living in Sinkor behind the
APEA (sp) building and we -- I hit the wall from Gurley
Street, went toward the University of Liberia where
there were large amount of people that were shooting in
the air, and I mean, there were a lot of chaos, and I
had to walk from that area all the way to Sinkor area.

Also, in 1980, the coup took -- the coup
started. There was a coup. At that time, we were back
in Kieresbrad (ph) living with my mother, and I would
-- they were said, of course, they have people
ransacking everywhere, taking cars and driving around,
and they come in your area. If you know how to drive,
they give you the car key and you just going to go in
that car. Most of the (unintelligible) in that area
gone missing after this, so you took, then, they did
not come back of this -- this time, five or 10, but
then nobody know their whereabouts. In that process, I
lost a brother, and one of my brother got -- he was killed, and I lost a -- half brother had gone missing in the same process. Nobody knew his whereabout. And I lost a sister. She had a medical condition and there was no medical care, so I lost a family member also in the process.

I came to America in 1984, and since then I've been back two times. My mother came to visit in '88, and I had to take her back in '89. And coming from Temple of Justice, my uncle work at Temple of Justice, in my '80s, I went to visit him and come towards Minnesota education. There was a soldier, Budet (ph), and the soldier over there, they stopped me. I had my (unintelligible) in my bag and they say, "Oh, you one of the rebel?" I say, "I don't know what you're talking about," and I was there for over two hours, and they were just talking what they going to do to me and all of that.

And luckily for me, another soldier stopped by and he had a Walkman, and when they asked why was I detained, and so they make up why America (unintelligible) rebel, and he had just told him that he had barely just came from America and brought in a Walkman. Anyway, he intervened on my behalf, and after two hours, I was happy to leave, and I left and told
you, "Oh, mom, I'm going home." She said, "No, this is your home." I say, "I know that." I said, "I want to go to a safer home so that in the future I can help do something for you."

And my second trip was the end of -- in 2000. When she pass away, we had to go and bury her.

Just of our personal experiences and emotion. The top root causes, I think, was that the president or the leader of the government had too much power. They did what they wanted to do, nobody questioned them, and that was many -- the causes of the war, and corruption, nepotism, tribalism. The president can appoint any relative to any position, and he or she might say with the consent of the cabinet, but whatever he says goes, and Doe has many causes.

Also, the class system, the Congo, the country people, I mean, most of the time they were student over here in America, they have a job waiting for them in Liberia, and we have student graduating from the university cannot get a job, but when people leave and go to Liberia, the job is there waiting for them. I mean, that was one of the issue. And in terms of recommendation, I mean, security system need to be improved, border need to be protected and improved, and I mean the child, child soldier, they need to be
integrated.

After the war, they took the gun from them. What did it do for them? What did it teach them? What can they do? They are used to taking thing by force, and you took the gun from them, they have nothing else to do. So if they want something, what do we expect them to do? They will go back to violence. They need to be integrated into the society, teach them the trade of something that will make them an official leader of the country. They have to get away from war-like attitude because that is all entered in.

The kids, even those that come to America here, they do not listen to us, they do not listen to anybody because that is all entered in. They have their pants dragging all on the ground. They are worse than our American kids here. You cannot tell them anything. They have -- thousand and thousand of them every year committing crime, so to -- so that, I mean, your recommendation at the end of this process, and to put into your recommendation the kids need to be integrated into the society or else we don't know, the massacre begin, something need to be done.

So, I guess a short comment I have to make, I mean because of time factor, and I mean, I said as a community leader, I'm doing this so that I can
encourage other people in the community to come and speak up, because they are afraid to come and speak up, and we, as leader, if we are now coming to say something, and if you tell and say, "Oh, you have to go and visit TROC," they say, "For what? Have you gone there?" If you tell them no, they say, "Why do you want me to go there?" So, I'm here living as an example that the system is easy: come and tell your story. If you do not tell your story, somebody will tell the wrong story, and then you just say, well, that is not truth, but if you want the truth to be heard, come and tell your story. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN JEROME VERDIER: Thank you very much. I say thanks for your testimony and the morals you have imbedded in your testimony that we should learn to lead by examples. I think that is a lesson for all of us and something our country can learn from. At this stage, the commissioners will ask you some questions.

THE WITNESS: Sure.

CHAIRMAN JEROME VERDIER: Okay.

COMMISSIONER OUMU SYLLAH: Thank you very much, Mr. Witness, for volunteering to come to give the testimony today. You talk about a Rice Riot. Most Liberian believe that our problem actually started
from this Rice Riot, and you say you was one of the
participants. Besides you, can you remember the name
of other participant in the Rice Riot? If so --

THE WITNESS: Pardon?

COMMISSIONER OUMU SYLLAH: Other people
besides you that participated in the Rice Riot, can you
remember some of them? Are they still around?

THE WITNESS: No, no, no, uh-uh, no. I
just agree to attend a PAL meeting, and they have
planned a mass demonstration, so we just all went and
supported the organization to take part in the
demonstration, but I do not know any one of them.

COMMISSIONER OUMU SYLLAH: So after
all this years, if you sit to reflect, can you say the
Rice Riot was justified?

THE WITNESS: During that time we did
not know better; we did not understand what the
circumstances were. It were true that Baccus Matthew
say that he could get a bag of rice for $10, and the
price for rice has gone up to $20, so we feel that it
was not right. And, I mean, the person who benefitted,
for the fact that he was a businessman, he has made to
run the rice project. Do not -- we did not know
better; I did not know better. The information I got
was that Tolbert has made that we're going to sell rice
and he were going to benefit from it, but now that I
know better, I mean, I won't go back to -- to -- to --
to join a rally.

COMMISSIONER OUMU SYLLAH: Thank you
for that. You also talk about children coming to the
United States with this war-like attitude. As
community leader in the Liberian community, what are
you doing to assist these children because you learned
that some of them grew up in this war, was brought up
in the war, and as a result, they have been
traumatized. As community leader, what are you doing
to help these kids?

THE WITNESS: We try to talk to them.
We found psychologies, and whatever, to talk to them,
but the kids, they are not addressing like the
immigration issue. Those that have the problem when
you bring immigration through to talk to them, they do
not show up. The kids are very difficult to deal with,
but we try our best to talk to them on a one-on-one
basis, and that's all we can do. We keep on telling
them, now listen, you need to do something for
yourself. You need to prepare yourself. In case you
get deported to Liberia, what are you going to do?
Some of them left Liberia when they were
five or 10 years old. They live in refugee's camp for
10-15 years, and they came to America. Some of them had ten years of -- they do not know nothing better. And after March of 2009, if the GED process is not okayed, they are going to be going home. The same thing happened in Ghana. What are they doing? And when you bring the issue, they don't want to listen to you.

Some of them come in with good opportunity; they get green card when they get here. Somalis came who had to go through a lot of process to get green card, but most of the kids are coming with green card. They do not want to go to school. When you talk to them, "Hey, ol' papa, get away from here." I mean, you can't say -- you can't say too much. You say what you have to do, and if you know they did not listen to you, what else can you do? You know, you just try your best.

COMMISSIONER OUMU SYLLAH: Thank you very much for coming to share your experience.

THE WITNESS: Okay.

COMMISSIONER JOHN STEWART: Thank you, Mr. Blacktom, for coming. Reflecting, as my colleague said, on the years gone by since the Rice Riots, can you reflect for a minute and describe the series of events? You said you were at the PAL headquarters --
THE WITNESS: Yes.

COMMISSIONER JOHN STEWART: -- in 1997?

THE WITNESS: Yeah, that Saturday morning, I was there.

COMMISSIONER JOHN STEWART: And you said the soldiers went and drove you from there?

THE WITNESS: Yeah. well, when we got there, the office door were open already, and we said, (unintelligible) as soon as I come here, I have to leave, so people were scattered all around Monrovia. And since I were on Gurley Street, I work my way up there, and people was all over, so we decided to find our way home. And they have soldiers all around with their guns drawn, and nobody (unintelligible) you see soldier with their gun drawn, I mean in those situation, there's no law and order, so you have to find a way out of the situation.

COMMISSIONER JOHN STEWART: And did you witness the shooting of anybody by any of the security forces at that time?

THE WITNESS: No, no, I didn't witness. I saw some people with -- I mean, they had -- their hand are bloodied with gunshot, but to see this -- a dead person, or a soldier walking up and down with blood all over their hands and stuff, but I did not --
I didn't see any shooting.

COMMISSIONER JOHN STEWART: Do you hold the opinion that your assembly -- was your assembly at the PAL headquarters disrupted or --

THE WITNESS: Yeah, yeah, it was --

COMMISSIONER JOHN STEWART: -- or just told to -- or you were just told -- simply told to move or you were forcibly taken from there?

THE WITNESS: It were, if weren't for the fact that when we got there, they are already bust the door open.

COMMISSIONER JOHN STEWART: Who had bust the doors open?

THE WITNESS: The soldiers. They have soldiers all around, and people were saying, "You gotta go, you gotta go," and the soldiers are there. Why are you standing around for? You're there for your sister; you have to run for your life. So it was kind of, in a way, disruptive because the demonstrations was started from -- they had demonstrators coming from everywhere, but we were started from part of this to go and march towards the marchers, but we didn't have opportunity. It was already disrupted.

COMMISSIONER JOHN STEWART: Now, you left Liberia and came to the U.S., and you currently
serve as a community leader in the Chicago area?

THE WITNESS: Yes.

COMMISSIONER JOHN STEWART: You highlighted a number of problems. What would you say the major problems confronting Liberian community in the area, and to what extent, our young women, particularly, what are the main challenges, the main problems? You talk about the kids wearing their pants hanging down to the ground, but do you see the same kind of attitudes reflected in our young women? What are the major kind of problems do they have? Are they -- is there a problem of teenage pregnancy? Is it common among them drug use and --

THE WITNESS: Oh, yes, it's very hard. A week ago at the (unintelligible) Western University, you see the girls there; you do not want them to be your sister. They wear the very short, short skirt, wearing long T-shirt up to their knees, only T-shirt. There's no pants under it, okay? I mean people wear long T-shirt, they wear the pants under it, but each -- they wear the long T-shirt was their only clothes, and, I mean, sleeve-level clothes on somebody, and so there's no difference between the boys and the girls, but sometime you can talk to the boys before the fact they will listen. But when the kids come over,
especially -- excuse me -- you try to talk to them and say, "Oh, are you interested in that?" I mean, you try to help them to better their self. They have opportunity, for the fact that we have seen the first woman president of Africa, and we saw the race in America here, Clinton, the first female to go to that extent. I mean, these are something they have to look at and say, well, I can do it. I have the opportunity, especially in America.

They beg go to school, huh? We tell them in Africa we have problem going to school or getting in school for here you have all opportunity. You come in the country with green card. Why don't you take advantage of it? If you have a green card, you can get a student loan, and you do not pay student loan until after graduation. After graduation you can -- after forbearance, forbearance, forbearance, you can't have the forbearance no more. Forbearance is a station of loan payment. They are not taking advantage of that. I mean, we are trying our best and talk to them.

When working people came to talk to us, said you need to do this, you need to do that, but the kids these day, they have the opportunity and they are not taking advantage of that.

COMMISSIONER JOHN STEWART: What kind
of family structures are these kids basically coming from? Are they from single parent homes, broken homes, and things like that, and lower income earning?

THE WITNESS: The fact that very few of them came with a family, a mother and father. The rest of them were scattered during the war. Most of them lived in refugees' camp in Ivory Coast, Ghana and other places, and some of them could not locate -- their relatives might have got lucky to get on the program, even though that kin were relative or do that kin with co-signer or what they call it, and they are coming as American citizen, you have the father, you would take care of them.

When they come, after the month or two, they are gone. Komozaba (ph), my youngest brother, he came through the refugee's program and because I were here, he didn't have to go live with anybody. So when he came, I pick him up, and after the month, we found a job for him because he had a work permit. He found a job, he start finding friends, and one day at work, he called and told me that the refugee people found a place for him. I said, "Ah, you live with your brother. Why should they find a place for you to go and pay rent and share rent with somebody?" Later on I learned that he was in New Jersey with some relative
that did not help him when he were in the African
country.

   So, it is difficult. Our own relative, when
they come here, they are through with us. They just
want to come to America, and after a certain time, they
are through with you. Now, he's in New Jersey.
They're having problem. I mean, what can I do? He's a
full-grown man. He made -- he may adjust. He made a
bed, so he's lying in the bed. What else can you do,
you know? He's not a kid no more.

   COMMISSIONER JOHN STEWART: Is this a
concern among the elders in the community and is it a
concerted approach by older Liberians, I mean such as
yourself and others, to come to grips with this kind of
problem?

   THE WITNESS: Yeah. It is a concern,
older go talk to them, we talk to them -- we might be
about 10, 15 years older than them, but they still call
us Pa-Pei. I mean, we try to talk to the kids, the
older people, so now we have events that will invite
older people to come and talk to them. I mean, they do
not come deliver there about 1:00, 2:00 in the night.
By then, the older people are gone. When they come
1:00, 2:00, they stay till 7:00 in the morning, and at
that time, we have to go and prepare ourself for work.
It is very difficult talking to the kids, but the only thing I think can be done is when they come as a refugee, as soon they get here that you have a plan for them already, have the institution to send them to. As soon they get off that airplane, you pick them up, put they in the car or whatever, and send them to the institution for the -- to deprogram them, or else if they are all there, they meet a lot of friends telling them that you don't have to do this, you don't have to listen to anybody. I mean, after a certain time, I mean, they are not going to listen to you, but either it -- just as soon they get here, that program need to start, if there is a program.

COMMISSIONER JOHN STEWART: You talk as though you feel a sense of frustration. Do you feel any sense of helplessness?

THE WITNESS: No. As a leader in the community, they say, "What are you doing for us?" I say, "What can we do for you? We give you advice; we give you help." I mean, we have lot of immigration forum, and you have 20 immigration lawyers, ten Liberians show up, how do that look to you? You are embarrassed. You brought the people to help them and they do not show up. I mean, you cannot go to their house and pick them up, you see? If you have 20
immigration lawyers, you want to see two or 300 Liberians there begging for help. These people are given free legal services, and they are not taking it, and we get frustrated, but what can we do? We gonna do what we have to do and keep on talking to them, you know? It is very difficult. What that got to do what you doing for us? I say, "You need to come around."

When you see at a social event, then they can they want to talk politic. We say no, you need to come to the meeting and let us discuss this subject. You see the mayor at a party, drinking; then you want to talk politic? No, he's drunk already. Whatever he say might not be no suitable to you. So when we schedule a meeting, we want them to come and show up and be part of it, learn from us. They don't want to do that.

COMMISSIONER JOHN STEWART: Thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER MASSA WASHINGTON: Mr. Blacktom, thank you very much for coming again. Back to the Rice Riot, if you don't mind. You mentioned that you were at a meeting of the P-A-L, of PAL, prior to the demonstration that day, the next day. Were you a member of PAL? Were you a member of this executive wing or were you just a passerby who was
curious?

THE WITNESS: When one the friend invited me, I went one or two time, and at that time were close to the demonstration, and they invited us to it. I mean, they want a number. They didn't want two, three people demonstrating. I say number is strange, so if you see the immigration issue, when you look, you see 50,000 Mexican. People want to see number, but when they talk about Africa, you see five African, and we all have the problem, but they do not want to show up.

COMMISSIONER MASSA WASHINGTON: No, I asked about the Rice Riot.

THE WITNESS: Yeah, that's what I'm saying --

COMMISSIONER MASSA WASHINGTON: So you were not a member of PAL; you just show up that day for the demonstration?

THE WITNESS: I went to two meetings before the demonstration, and then we were encouraged to come and support PAL.

COMMISSIONER MASSA WASHINGTON: Okay. It is being rumored that the late Baccus Matthews, the head of PAL at the time, in preparing for the demonstration also secretly armed some of his men, some
of the demonstrators, and had them out in the streets that they demonstrating, and the intent was to provoke the government by going into an exchange because he knew that the government was back up against the wall. Do you know anything about that?

THE WITNESS: I have no knowledge of that.

COMMISSIONER MASSA WASHINGTON: Since you migrated to the United States in 1984, since the Rice Riot at that time, have you met or seen anybody who was part of the meetings or who was also a part of that riot, and did you guys discuss the aftermath of the riot and its effect on the country?

THE WITNESS: No, I haven't seen any one of them.

COMMISSIONER MASSA WASHINGTON: You just -- it's my last question to you, hope it's a question, you stated to my colleague earlier that -- Commissioner Syllah, that at the time of the riot, someone like you didn't know better, that you were acting based upon information you received from the planners of the riot?

THE WITNESS: Uh-huh.

COMMISSIONER MASSA WASHINGTON: That rice was going to go up to $30, and Mr. Matthews and
others had said go bring rice in for $10, but from
where you are now, you couldn't have been part of such
a demonstration, looking back now. Is that a sign of
regret?

THE WITNESS: Yeah, well, it is sort
of a disappointment for the fact that we did not get
the correct information on there, saying okay, I can
sell rice for $10 and not written on that, he couldn't
have done that, but during that time, we did not know
better what was going on.

COMMISSIONER MASSA WASHINGTON: So, in
other words, Mr. Matthews and his -- and his
organization misled the Liberian people?

THE WITNESS: Yeah, you can say so.

COMMISSIONER MASSA WASHINGTON: Okay.

Thank you.

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: Thank
you for coming. I want to add to the question
surrounding the coup -- the Rice Riot. I would like to
know what was your age at that time.

THE WITNESS: That was in what, in '79?
I was born in 1960, 17 years old, and in Liberia,
17 years old, you are not mature like the 17-year old
in America this day. Most of the time, 17-years old in
high school.
VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: You mean 19 years? You were 19?

THE WITNESS: Okay, 19 years old, okay, sorry about that --

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: Yeah, 19 years old.


During that time, so I'm 19 years old. I just got into high school.

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: But what was your educational level?

THE WITNESS: I was in high school.

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: Which grade?

THE WITNESS: I was in high school. It would be ninth or tenth grade. I just graduated from, I think, junior high.

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: Okay.

Was it your first time that year at a meeting or had you gone to --

THE WITNESS: I went to two meeting prior to the demonstration.

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: You say you were invited?

THE WITNESS: Uh-huh.
VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: What was your group?

THE WITNESS: Well, it just by a friend from school and told me about what was going on about PAL, in the progressive alliance, trying to make bring changes to the government. There were a lot of corruption and the rival going on, so they wanted to make sure that there were change. So, I were interested in it, so I --

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: Did you see --

THE WITNESS: -- went to listen.

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: Did you see corruption going on?

THE WITNESS: In Liberia?

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: Yes.

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: You did say there were a whole lot of corruption. Did you see it? What kind of corruption you saw going on that you wanted to correct? What was some of them?

THE WITNESS: Corruption, they were taking things, I mean, giving relatives job, have them on the payroll that did not work, and they had a lot of student that they call the kid there that did not even
go to the offices after school but they were still on the payroll, so you call that corruption: the person is not performing that task, but they are getting paid for it. People had to go to work. They go to work 8:00 and signed up, they leave and go home, it's corruption. You have to -- and leaving eight-hour job and get paid. Most of the time people don't go to work; they just come and sign and leave and go to their private job. That is corruption.

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: And so you wanted to correct it?

THE WITNESS: Yeah. I'd rather be part of that movement, and I recommend move by going there.

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: Okay.

You said when you got to the office, you met the door open?

THE WITNESS: Yeah, when we got to the office, the door was broken.

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: And you met soldiers there?

THE WITNESS: Yeah, they have soldiers around, and we couldn't even reach through that door, and so we're just running away. I say, "Oh, the door is broken already." So they tried to scatter for their life.
VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: So you went towards Broad Street?

THE WITNESS: Yes, I went down --

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: Were you running or did you walk to go down --

THE WITNESS: I walked there.

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: Okay. And then you say that when you got to Broad Street, or somewhere around there, there was a store?

THE WITNESS: Gurley and Broad Street towards Chase Manhattan Bank, (unintelligible) but one of two stores, jewelry store, (unintelligible) to Chase Manhattan Bank.

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: And you met this door broken?

THE WITNESS: Yes, door broken, and people were taking stuff, and I took a watch there. The soldier asked for it; I give it to him. He told me to go back and take one for myself. I took it and ran.

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: Okay. So my train of thought is this is someone who went to be a part of correcting a system that he felt was bad. The (unintelligible), they employ people in jobs that were not coming to work and were being paid and everything, but the first opportunity you had, you went
and took something. How can you reconcile that aspect of what happened to the change that you wanted to bring?

THE WITNESS: During that time, I was not thinking right. I did what I saw to had an opportunity. They were taking stuff, so I took one. During that time I didn't know better, I say, you know?

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: So we can say that at that time if you had an opportunity to succeed in bringing about a change and you were given a position, if you saw an opportunity to take, you were going to take it?

THE WITNESS: Can you repeat that? Can you repeat that?

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: I was saying that --

THE WITNESS: Okay.

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: -- you say you were not thinking well --

THE WITNESS: Okay.

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: -- at that time, and so at your age, you were advocating for change --

THE WITNESS: Okay.
VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: -- at your age. Even though you were not thinking right, you were advocating for change, and so if that change had actually taken place and you had an opportunity to occupy a position and the opportunity presents itself that you will take something at that time, would you have taken that thing?

THE WITNESS: At that time, 19 years old, what type of position will you be given in government at age 19? What type of position would we be given? To be messenger? That's all, right, I mean?

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: You said Baccus say he came to bring about change and wanted them also to bring rice for $10?

THE WITNESS: Yes.

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: We saw after the riot, he was arrested, put into jail, and then we had a coup, and after that coup, he occupy a position, I don't remember which position, am I right?


VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: The PAL, were you still in Liberia at that time?

THE WITNESS: Yeah, I was still in Liberia until 1984.
VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: So were you still a part of the PPP?

THE WITNESS: No.

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: The PAL, were you still part of it?

THE WITNESS: No, I have relocated to Mount Barclay, so I didn't have opportunity to be coming to attend meeting.

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: And at that time, he had an opportunity now to bring the rice to us at $10; he never did. What were your truths at that time because I know you were much older at that time.

THE WITNESS: I guess to my self-interest, I guess he wanted something for his self, and when he got it, he didn't care for nobody else. I guess they were in a position, and somebody then did that for (unintelligible) in that position and the uprising and things like that, cause most of the time when people criticize government, government bring them, in, and when they come in, they shut up.

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: I know. With your experience now, will you advocate another way of resolving issues, especially the (unintelligible) three that I need? When you see president having too
much power, nepotism, and then this class thing, what
can you recommend as the best way to resolve this kind
of issues when you see instead of going towards that
path?

THE WITNESS: I think we have to take
the process. I mean, go through the senate or
legislation, those that operate the system, and let
them know that. I mean, you cannot allow president to
have so much power, cause if they have that power, it's
very difficult to take power away from the hungry lion.
See, you have to minimize the power. I mean, the
constitution does not give them all the power, but the
people give them the power because, again, they are
afraid to say something to the president. But, I mean,
you have to -- I mean, people come in and say all of
this stuff. When they go back to Liberia, they sweep
it under the rug. They say this is what the people
were doing.

You know, you do not have to do that. You
can work with people to say listen, this is killing the
government. Mr. President, you cannot do this,
Mr. President. I mean, even happen here where
President Clinton, I know he had advisor in the office
that tell him, Mr. President, you cannot have the girls
be coming into the office, but he did not listen to
them. When people have power, they do not listen to
nobody. At the end, I mean, they mostly want to stay
in office until they are killed because what they doing
over there, they do not want it to be exposed. I
guess -- I think that is one of the reason why they do
not want to leave power.

VICE CHAIRPERSON DEDE DOLOPEI: Okay.

Thank you so much.

COMMISSIONER GERALD COLEMAN: Thank you
for your presentation. Your discussions with my
colleagues and your presentation has brought to mind a
very critical issue that, as a nation, we need to deal
with, so I will give you again two scenarios and let
you tell me something, what you think about that.

On one end is the failure of the revolution.
The revolutionaries got together thinking that the
previous corruption of government and power was the
problem and they wanted to change leadership, but when
they sat in the seat, they realized it wasn't the
people, it was the seat. Power corrupts. Absolute
power corrupts absolutely, so they began acting the
same way. And then those who left Liberia, the
diaspora experience, many Liberians are here now in a
country where they don't have to accuse themselves of
power problem, but is there opportunity for those
Liberians here? That's one part of my question. And if there is, why do we find this high crime rate amongst the youth, the lack of sincerity and interest amongst Liberians who are living here in the diaspora, about their own nation, the issue of tribal diversity?

It has been told to us that if you call a meeting for Liberia, very few will come, but if you call a meeting for Bassa or Kpelle, many will come. And the lack of family values. So, I know it's a heavy load I'm putting on you, but as your -- from your position as a leader, where do we go forward? Forget the past. We all made the mistakes now, but what's next? Where's the hope.

THE WITNESS: I mean, there is hope. We address the issue all the time, but, I mean, when it come to national government, they take it for granted, but when it come to tribal group, I mean, they are not proprietary. I mean, they are only proprietary to local or tribal -- or tribal government. I mean, take, for example, I have a lot of Krahn friends, but when we call meeting, we have very few that have been -- the ex-leader of the community, they're the ones that show up, but when you go to the Krahn committee meeting, you see two, 300 of our people.

Recently we have the Mandingo group formed
an organization in the city of Illinois, and before
then we knew one Mandingo man that used to attend all
of our meetings, so when I was called to make a
statement, I say where -- I asked for all the Mandingo
in Chicago to put their hand up, they are over 50. I
said, "Why? We only know Mohammed to be the only
Mandingo man in Chicago. Where are you people coming
from? You need to be part of the system."

We need to work together because when
something happen to the Mandingo group, they say where
is the Liberian people? But the fact that we know only
one Mandingo man, but truly, but now they are willing
to come around. The leader is willing to talk to them.
I think we start with the leader, the leader of the
ethnic group, cause if he go and talk to a person and
say, listen, you are part of the Liberian community,
you need to help work together, but you cannot bypass
the leader. You have to go through the leader in order
for you to get the people to help.

COMMISSIONER GERALD COLEMAN: Thank you
for that one (unintelligible).

COMMISSIONER PEARL BROWN BULL:
Mr. Witness, thank you for coming to tell your story to
the TROC. The TROC Act says that the Commission should
provide an environment, a forum where victims and
alleged perpetrators can come together to give a clear picture of what happened in the past in order that we will see whether it was a systematic pattern of violations or whether they were isolated. Today you have given us, as an eye witness, truth session in telling the truth. You did not have to come, but your coming here today really, after 29 years, the late Dr. Edward Casali (ph), who was then in Tolbert's government, I think as a cabinet minister, who went to jail, even to Belle Yalla, and became chairman of the constitutional advisory assembly for the 1986 constitution, frequently used to say that in the fullness of time, things will solve itself up.

You have come today after 29 years and have said that you were a participant, and at least you acknowledged the past. That's very commendable. You were able to say you were there, and you show a clear picture that there were lots of sympathizers that were PAL, but you, like other sympathizers, invited you to come, and you went there. You also show us that there was soldiers around, lots of people were around, and your age group, your age, 19 years, and there were many like you even lower or higher.

One thing that -- two things I got out of this, that at looting that went on, you said so there
were people who were in the crowd, who even were participants who did the looting, and no one condemning you because this what we supposed to do, get a clear picture of what happened to now confront our difficult past to see how we can go forward. You showed that a participant took something, and even the soldiers took something, so now we get a clear picture to know who did the looting. It were done on both sides.

You find yourself, after 29 years, almost in the position of the leader, leadership you talk here. You lament of your frustration as a leader who want many changes, who want many things to come together for the good of your country, your fellow man, but you find it difficult are the people you really want to help, and who you have the leadership for, not contributing the way you want to and not participating the way you want to. So, you have given us a clear picture of what happened 29 years ago with your age group and what happened now that you -- I think how old, almost -- your age now, 40 years or 30? It just --

THE WITNESS: Forty-eight.

COMMISSIONER PEARL BROWN BULL: If you 50, you look still good.

THE WITNESS: I shouldn't have to tell my age.
COMMISSIONER PEARL BROWN BULL: No, we crowd, we crowd is same age almost, still just all a little bit, but you've shown that you're at the age now where some of those people were who had the same vision for Liberia, like you have now, and the difficulty and challenges that you had to encounter. Those were lesson, things done then and now these are lesson that we can learn from there.

Thanks for participating in history then and in participating in history now. We can learn from both times and know that Liberia is for all of us, and no matter what stage we are, we, too, can contribute. You may not have contributed, participated in the war, but we all suffer from the war, but we all have the opportunity now to participate in the peace process and for lasting peace and development for this country. Thank you very much and continue to do just your best. Thank you.

THE WITNESS: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:

Mr. Witness, thank you very much for your testimony. Do I understand you to have said that you attended two meetings of PAL --

THE WITNESS: Yeah.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:
-- was it prior to the demonstration --

THE WITNESS: Yeah.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:

-- or after the demonstration?

THE WITNESS: To the demonstration.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:

And who addressed you people in the two meetings?

THE WITNESS: Baccus Matthews, he was the chief.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH: He himself was the one who talked to you?

THE WITNESS: No, Baccus Matthews.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:

What was the content of his message?

THE WITNESS: They were planning for the demonstration, but the issue that's going in the country, and they were to demonstrate to let their voices be heard and let whatever ill that is going in the country to be known to the government.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:

Now, what are some of the (unintelligible) that you talk about?

THE WITNESS: I mean, corruption, nepotism, and all of that. I mean, the price of commodity. I mean, the -- when we heard that they were
going to increase the price of rice and the people were devastated, you know, so those were issue that he had to confront, saying I can lower the price of rice. Why you want to increase the price of rice?

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:
You said when you went on Broad Street, you saw a store broken into?

THE WITNESS: Yes.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:
And people were looting?

THE WITNESS: Yes.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:
And you went there, you took your share (unintelligible)?

THE WITNESS: Yeah, uh-huh.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:
And a soldier took from you?

THE WITNESS: Yeah.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:
And he told you go and get your own?

THE WITNESS: Right, and take mine, uh-huh.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH: So you did it?

THE WITNESS: Yes, I did.
COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:
But within these stores where the looting were going on, did you see any soldiers in the -- looting buildings?

THE WITNESS: They use their gun to break the windows and stuff, and they stood there.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:
Were you physically present?

THE WITNESS: Yes.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH: So you saw soldier breaking into --

THE WITNESS: Yes, I saw soldiers shooting the window glasses, soldier, and people just ran in there.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:
Was it part of the discussion of the planned meeting?

THE WITNESS: No.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:
What motivate it, the lootings, when it was not part of your plan?

THE WITNESS: You know, when there's no law and order, people do what they want to do, anywhere in the world. If there's no law and order, people shoot people, people kill people, and there's no government to arrest them. Because there's during that
demonstration there were no law and order, people did what they want to do, even after the coup.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:
Violating the law is one thing and the absence of law and order is another thing. Before the demonstration there were court system, there were police, there was army. You understand that?

THE WITNESS: I understand that.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:
Okay, so there were law and order, but when you people decided to approach your rights violently, you understand?

THE WITNESS: Yeah.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:
Government is not automatic, it's not God, that when it said be, it becomes, so you -- were you told that if you are not permitted to demonstrate, you should take the law into your own hand?

THE WITNESS: No.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:
Under whose command now you get on the street and start busting people stores?

THE WITNESS: I did not say that I went busting store. I said after we left PAL headquarter and running around, we saw stores busting open. No, I
did not say that I was given the permission to go in there. I did not say that.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:

Yeah, but you did not bust store?

THE WITNESS: Okay.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:

Somebody bust store?

THE WITNESS: Okay.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:

And you know, even though you said you were small at the time --

THE WITNESS: Uh-huh.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:

-- you know properties' right. You know the shame that you wore that day is for you.

THE WITNESS: Okay.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH: If somebody come and force out of you, you would believe that your right has been denied.

THE WITNESS: Okay.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:

You know that that store does not belong to government.

THE WITNESS: Okay.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:

It's a private property, and you saw people engaged in
violation of law, and you got in there.

THE WITNESS: Okay.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:

So, what is the different between you and the person who bust the door and you who went in and took, give some to the soldier and then got your own again? What is the difference?

THE WITNESS: I was told -- I mean, there was looting all over. I mean, nobody was thinking should I do this, should I not do this? I mean, it happened and it's over.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH: It happened; it's over?

THE WITNESS: It's over.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:

And now that it is over --

THE WITNESS: Okay.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:

-- and you have discovered that you were misled --

THE WITNESS: Uh-huh.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:

-- what have you have to do to repair the wrong that was done at that time?

THE WITNESS: If I was in the country now, I mean, I would try to advise the government on
whatever I see wrong that is going on. If there's
crime against humanity, I mean, I will speak about it.
I mean, that's why we are here, to give recommendation
so that you can take it to the government, you know.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH: In
your statement you said you did this act because you
were so young an age; you did not know better at the
time. Now that you have known better --

THE WITNESS: Uh-huh.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:
-- what advice can you give to our children because
what you are saying here will be heard in Liberia?
What is your advice?

THE WITNESS: We advise kids to do what
is right, do not follow the wrong crowd, do what you
think is good for you, prepare yourself for the future,
do not follow people if you do not know where they are
going or what they intend to do because we have
instances that -- I mean, kids like Robin and Ryan,
they called a friend, they had a plan already, and they
called their friend and they got into the car, and
look, where you commit a crime, you cannot tell the
police officer you do not know about it. So long you
were in that car there, you are part of it. So, we
tell kids that: do not follow your friend if you do not
know what they plan to do or what they are doing because when you are caught, you cannot say you are not part of it, we tell them all the time, and we see all the time. So, that's the advice that we have to the kids: try and be yourself, do not be somebody, do not follow other people.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:

What about political activists, what advice have you got for them?

THE WITNESS: Tell the issue, know what is where to find a peaceful solution. You know, they have stated a way of resolving conflict, follow it step by step until you cannot take anymore, but you have to follow those stages. You can't just go -- after the first attempt, you start to fight. You have to, you know, follow stages and get other people involved. If somebody is not listening to you, they may be able to listen to somebody else, or you can also go through somebody that you think they're going to listen to.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KARUMBA KONNEH:

Thank you very much for your statement. It was short but very precise, concise, and exposed some of the denials that have been clear out throughout since 1979. Now you, as an active participant, you are not only eye witness but as an accomplice. After your testimony
tend to suggest that those who denied, they were just going in barefoot. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN JEROME VERDIER: Mr. Witness,
I want to thank you very much for being forthright in your testimony.

THE WITNESS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN JEROME VERDIER: And your recommendations and perspective of what transpired in 1979. You may think what you have said here today has had minimal contribution, but for us at the TROC who are conducting inquiry into events into time past, we appreciate it because each testimony tends to corroborate of filling the gap that we have in the process. I want to ask very pointed questions, and even if you respond pointedly, I will appreciate it.

Realistically speaking, was there a demonstration on April 14, 1979?

THE WITNESS: That demonstration started, but when we got there, it was dispersed already. People did not have a chance to do what they planned to do because when we got to the PAL headquarters, people was all over, so I don't know how you call it -- how you call that -- people were all over the city, Camp Johnson Road, Broad Street, and all of that. They have soldier and police officer trying
to stop the demonstration, but it was not fully carried out. It's started, but it was not -- it was interrupted, I would call it that.

CHAIRPERSON JEROME VERDIER: You want to say it was aborted?

THE WITNESS: Yeah, in a way, in a negative way, for the fact that it turned to violence.

CHAIRPERSON JEROME VERDIER: So were people assembling for a demonstration and they didn't have the opportunity to assemble and demonstrate as to their plan?

THE WITNESS: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON JEROME VERDIER: Because before they had assembled, the students and police were already in the streets --

THE WITNESS: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON JEROME VERDIER: -- and prevented the assembly?

You made mention of looting at a store. Was there massive looting?

THE WITNESS: Yeah, there were massive looting all over the country.

CHAIRPERSON JEROME VERDIER: All around?

THE WITNESS: All around.
CHAIRPERSON JEROME VERDIER: Do you think that was part of the plan of the demonstrators --

THE WITNESS: No.

CHAIRPERSON JEROME VERDIER: -- or the dispersement of something in light of the looting?

THE WITNESS: It was not a plan, but people saw an opportunity to do whatever they could do at that time, but it was never the plan.

CHAIRPERSON JEROME VERDIER: Was the opportunity real or they took advantage of the situation and find other ways --

THE WITNESS: Opportunity, and they took advantage of the situation.

CHAIRPERSON JEROME VERDIER: That there was chaos from the dispersement?

THE WITNESS: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON JEROME VERDIER: Was there shooting?

THE WITNESS: Yeah. We heard a shooting. We heard shots in the air.

CHAIRMAN JEROME VERDIER: Were there casualties?

THE WITNESS: Yes, I saw it. I did not see the dead person, but I saw people being injured on the arm, on the leg, and all of that.
CHAIRMAN JEROME VERDIER: So one person?

THE WITNESS: I did not witness no death.

CHAIRMAN JEROME VERDIER: You saw one person injured, two persons, three persons?

THE WITNESS: Yes, a lot. Between my attendance in the -- at the university, you had people running all over, you know, bleeding all over.

CHAIRMAN JEROME VERDIER: So a lot of people were injured?

THE WITNESS: Yes.

CHAIRMAN JEROME VERDIER: Besides Baccus Matthew, do you know the names of any of the organizers, others who addressed the rally or the meetings, prior to April 14, 1979?

THE WITNESS: Yeah, we have Garven Tomaha (ph). My cousin there, I forget his last name, he was arrested with Baccus Matthew then. Anthony Kesselly, Fonda Uli (ph), and all of that, Larry Togba, and all of them, they were all part of PAL.

CHAIRMAN JEROME VERDIER: Did you say Marcus?

THE WITNESS: Baccus, I forget his last name. He wouldn't have told (unintelligible) when the
-- Doe arrested those guys, he would follow that. Doe put out Doe pardon. He was part -- I forgot his whole name, but Larry Togba and Anthony Kesselly, they were all Pa-Pa (ph); they PAL.

CHAIRMAN JEROME VERDIER: Okay. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KARUMBA KONNEH: Mr. Witness, please make this thing clear in when the chairman was asking you assembling at the PAL office was one thing, and the demonstration, according to your own statement, were carried out all over in the --

THE WITNESS: In the city.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH: -- Monrovia --

THE WITNESS: Uh-huh.

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH: -- so are you saying that because those people who were supposed to assemble at PAL headquarters did not get the chance to assemble, therefore the demonstration was aborted?

THE WITNESS: I mean --

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH: Because the demonstration were going on all over anyways?

THE WITNESS: It was all over, it was
all over, but I mean, we had intentions of starting at
the PAL headquarters, but before we got there, people
have already left, and it was all over. The
demonstration was all over, but --

COMMISSIONER SHEIKH KAFUMBA KONNEH:
So, the question of aborting the demonstration is not
real?

THE WITNESS: No, no, no, no. I mean, the demonstrations still went on because it was all
over the city.

CHAIRMAN JEROME VERDIER: Mr. Witness,
we want to thank you very much for coming and taking
your time to address the Commission. Is there anything
else you'd like to say, briefly, that you didn't have
the chance to say during the course of our interaction?

THE WITNESS: Sir, I think I said
almost everything. I mean, one of the strong
recommendation is the child soldier come in, they --
when they took those guns from them, I mean, their
frame of mind is of violence or taking things by force,
so they need assistance to detraumatize them. I mean,
make them to be a normal person. I mean, somebody has
psychological problem and do -- they just come in in a
country, we have a problem dealing with them. So, this
should be some of the issues. Taking the gun from
them, it is not over. They are losing their mind. The
drugs that they put in their system, they come and they
follow or get into drug and follow the system in order
to be -- to be normal in society, or else one of these
days when they -- when they want something, they're
going to get it the hard way. So, if you restricting
the mind and get the evil and the drugs away out of the
mind, they will know how to go about doing what is
right.

CHAIRMAN JEROME VERDIER: Thank you
very much. And you have our permission to leave now.

THE WITNESS: Okay. Thank you very
much.

CHAIRMAN JEROME VERDIER: Ladies and
gentleman, we beg to bring to this session to a close.
There is another witness but who prefers to be heard
in-camera, so we'll retire behind closed doors for a
continuation of this session. Following that, we'll
resume tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. Thank you very much. As
always, we appreciate your support and patience. Good
night.
REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, Holly Nordahl, a Registered Reporter, do certify that the foregoing pages of typewritten material constitute an accurate verbatim stenographic record taken by me of the proceedings aforementioned before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia, on the 11th day of June 2008, at the time and place specified.

DATED: July 30, 2008.

/s/___________________________
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