

Chapter Six



Tactics and Fighting Factions during the Liberian Civil War

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COMBATANTS AND FIGHTING FORCES

Liberians who filled the ranks of combatants during the conflict came from many different tribal groups and were from different sectors in society. While some fighters were educated or wealthy (particularly those in leadership roles), many others were less privileged and illiterate.¹ Although most combatants were men or boys, rebel groups also contained women and girls who fought in the conflict.² Combatants ranged in age, from small children to middle-aged adults. This section presents a discussion of the combatants – who they were, why they fought, their lifestyle, and tactics.

Fighting forces during the Liberian conflict were known by their acronyms, and statement givers referred to them as such. These are the most commonly mentioned forces:

AFL – Armed Forces of Liberia
 INPFL – Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia
 LDF – Lofa Defense Force
 LPC – Liberia Peace Council
 LURD – Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy
 MODEL – Movement for Democracy in Liberia
 NPFL – National Patriotic Front of Liberia
 ULIMO – United Liberation Movement

Statement givers did not always clearly identify the groups to which combatants belonged. For example, many statements refer generally to fighters as “rebels,” referring to non-government fighting forces, or “soldiers,” referring to the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) or other government forces. The delineation between rebel and soldier is not always clear, and some statements referred to Doe and Taylor’s government soldiers and security forces as “rebels.” The attackers’ affiliation often was unclear for

a number of reasons, such as the lack of consistent identifiers or the surrounding chaos. In many cases, the witnesses did not know their attackers’ names. A statement giver summarized, “I would remember their faces, I had seen them before, but I do not know any of their names.”³ One victim’s statement aptly portrays the confusion over combatants’ identities:

I think he may have been killed by ULIMO or NPFL fighters, but am unsure. There were two pickup trucks full of fighters wearing bandanas. Some were wearing t-shirts and others were shirtless...I remember that they had big guns on their chests.⁴

Even combatants found it difficult to determine to which groups other combatants belonged. One ULIMO fighter observed that, although their goal was to fight the NPFL, “on the battlefield, things go different.”⁵ When fighting, he noted, it was difficult to identify with which group fighters were aligned.⁶ ULIMO combatants found themselves in armed confrontation with the government army, other armed forces, and civilians.⁷

Although the commission of certain abuses was reported to be more prevalent among specific factions,

all groups committed human rights violations. Where possible, this chapter identifies which armed groups statement givers identified as being responsible for the violations.

Reasons for Joining a Fighting Force

I was recruited into fighting in 1996...I decided not to hold [a] gun throughout my life, but because I was forced to do so by the Mandingo who was always attacking Bomi [and] killed all of my family: mother, father, sister and brother. My first battle...we were attacked by ULIMO-K, and they even killed one of my best friends by the name of V. In that battle it was my first time to kill a human being, and from there on I became a killer...I killed a lot of people/soldiers which up to today I regret. The only reason is that I was forced and under the influence of drugs. Money and holding a gun give[s] to you...the advantage...⁸

Combatants joined the conflict for many reasons. The potential to gain power and wealth may have motivated some warlords and faction leaders. Combatants of lower rank often joined for similar reasons: either to share in the power held by their faction leaders or to partake in the wealth to be gained from looting.⁹ One statement giver stated he believed soldiers fought because they were given promises of land.¹⁰ Some chose to join a faction out of loyalty to an ideology.¹¹

The grouping of factions along ethnic lines indicates some combatants were motivated, at least in part, by strong loyalty to their own tribes and hostility against the tribes identified with enemy factions. Such hostility, in turn, may have been based on a desire for revenge for past wrongs, either on a national scale, such as the targeting of Krahn in retaliation for the abuses Samuel Doe committed, or on a more personal level. Most Liberians sustained losses of family, friends, property, or personal well-being during the conflict. Some combatants appear to have joined the fighting forces for power and retribution against those who had harmed them.¹²

The practices of the Doe government particularly fomented resentment among those persecuted. One statement giver stated that Doe's "scorched earth" response to the attempted 1985 coup and subsequent rebel incursions in Nimba County displaced and incensed many civilians. He explained:

As the wave of refugees grew, they saw their family members being tied up and burned; the anger was so high, they were ripe for recruitment. This is how [Taylor] built his base from Nimba and eventually overran the government.¹³

Others may have joined or remained in the conflict to obtain drugs, which some faction commanders

reportedly distributed to their troops freely.¹⁴ The drugs made them dependent on their commanders and had the effect of making them feel invulnerable on the battlefield. One combatant stated that Charles Taylor provided regular shipments of cocaine to NPFL fighters on the battlefield.¹⁵ The statement giver said the drugs were his “food.”¹⁶ He said if he went into battle scared he would not survive, but if he was on cocaine and a bullet hit him he would not feel it.¹⁷ He said after smoking one or two grams of cocaine he was “unstoppable.”¹⁸

For some combatants, joining a fighting force was not a voluntary decision. Many were abducted, detained, and forced to participate.¹⁹ One such combatant told a story that reflects the experience of many other fighters. He stated he was abducted by the rebel commander who had killed his parents, and he was forced to fight for the NPFL for 11 years.²⁰ The General forced him to take up a gun and asked him “to choose between life and death.” He felt he had no other option.²¹ Another combatant described how the INPFL forcibly recruited him:

I met up with INPFL, and I was conscripted and taken to Caldwell Base. Conscripted – put in a car, thought I would be killed; forced to fight and loot.²²

Many combatants viewed joining the conflict as a means of survival. Food was scarce, and civilians without weapons were victimized by all sides. Joining a rebel group was seen by some as the only path to self-defense or to obtain basic necessities.²³

A former combatant who gave his statement explained he had joined a fighting force after both of his parents were killed and their murderers abducted him. He had no family left to support him, so he began following the orders of his commander. He stated that he would see his fellow combatants “doing things and knew they could do it to me. So I had to protect myself. So I had to do the same things so they knew...I did what I had to do to survive.”²⁴



Child soldiers were heavily used in the Liberian conflict.²⁵ There were a variety of reasons for child soldiers’ association with warring factions.²⁶ Many were forcibly conscripted. Some child soldiers lacked family or friends to care for them, leading them to become involved in a

faction for companionship and protection.²⁷ Some had families too poor to feed them.²⁸ Some lived in places beset by warring factions and became involved to protect their families.²⁹ Others came from families that had experienced factional violence and participated to seek revenge.³⁰

Uniforms, Costumes and Body Markings

Combatants from the various factions wore a wide range of traditional and informal uniforms and used them for apparently different purposes. As is the case in most military conflicts, uniforms helped identify combatants to the public and each other as members of one or another organized faction. For example, military fatigues and boots frequently identified the wearer with the government and denoted membership in Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) or the AFL.³¹

The use of uniforms was not exclusive to the government, however, and Prince Johnson's men also were reported to have worn uniforms to appear more legitimate.³² This use of uniforms at times led others to mistake INPFL rebels for Doe's troops.³³ Many statement givers associated combatants wearing jeans, red T-shirts, and red head-bands with the NPFL.³⁴ One statement giver said he was attacked by NPFL fighters "wearing uniforms of black overalls."³⁵ Others identified their attackers as wearing blue or black T-shirts, or white T-shirts with pictures of Charles Taylor, skulls, or scorpions on them.³⁶

Also, certain factions identified themselves by markings or tattoos on their skin. Such symbols enabled them to prove membership in a particular group if ever questioned by another combatant on the same side. For example, members of Prince Johnson's INPFL were reported to have scorpion tattoos on their arms.³⁷

Sometimes combatants used costumes to conceal their identity or instill them with magical protections. Some statement givers said rebels wore camouflage paint or wigs during attacks.³⁸ Others stated they were attacked by perpetrators wearing traditional masks.³⁹ Because masks in traditional Liberian religions carry with them great spiritual power, the use of masks served both to frighten the victims and to prevent them from later identifying their attackers.

Other costumes worn by combatants may have been used either to convey power or to frighten and subdue people. For example, scorpions, symbolizing poison, could be found on t-shirts of fighters.⁴⁰ One statement giver reported he saw rebels wearing necklaces made of bones.⁴¹ Other male fighters wore dresses, women's hair ornaments, leaves on their heads, women's underwear, or pajamas.⁴² One statement giver witnessed INPFL rebels wearing ladies' hair ornaments and chains with bones around their necks.⁴³ Another statement giver said Liberia Peace Council (LPC) fighters attacked his village wearing wigs or dreadlocks and "[o]ne ear removed."⁴⁴ Fighters in Joshua Blahyi's Butt Naked Brigade

went into battle wearing nothing at all.⁴⁵

Monikers

The monikers adopted by some combatants played a prominent role in the Liberian conflict. The many striking war names combatants gave themselves include General Red,⁴⁶ General Mosquito,⁴⁷ Rebel King,⁴⁸ Gio Devil,⁴⁹ Deadbody Trouble,⁵⁰ Commander Tiger,⁵¹ Jack the Rebel,⁵² General Death, General Kill-The-Bitch, General Peanut Butter,⁵³ Super Killer,⁵⁴ General Eat Your Heart Out,⁵⁵ and General Butt Naked.⁵⁶ Some monikers, including “General Rambo”⁵⁷ and “Chuck Norris,” reflect the strong influence on combatants of violence in Hollywood movies.⁵⁸

Some monikers’ negative and violent connotations suggest combatants adopted them in part to convey power and strength to their enemies and to create fear in the civilian population. Monikers also appear to have denoted rank within rebel factions, with group leaders using the term “Colonel” and high-ranking officers using the term “General.” Monikers may have functioned as an initiation. By designating new members with special monikers, group leaders communicated acceptance into the group and established a wedge between initiates and their former identities as non-combatants. The use of monikers also makes it difficult to identify combatants. For example, statement givers indicated that more than one commander used the name “General Rambo” and that many child soldiers were called “Small Soldier.”⁵⁹ A civilian attacked by a rebel known only as “General Rambo” or “Small Soldier” would have more difficulty identifying the perpetrator of the crimes against him.

Reasons for Perpetrating Atrocities

Upon joining a group of fighters, combatants were indoctrinated into a culture of violence. Statements show that various reasons motivated combatants to commit human rights violations, including material gain, strategy, peer pressure, and revenge. Other times, the reason was simply that the civilian population served as the battleground. The extreme climate of violence also caused some fighters to turn on their own families. One statement giver reported that a relative who had joined the NPFL shot and killed his mother when she tried to talk him out of working with Charles Taylor.⁶⁰

The range of training proffers another potential explanation for the commission of atrocities. Some child soldiers described being handed guns and sent to the front lines with little to no training at all.⁶¹ Other accounts indicate that at least some combatants received extensive formal training. One former INPFL combatant described his training to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC):

Under the command of [Commander P.], I was in a group of 16-17. We were taught how to attack, how to kill, how to fight, retreat and advance; taught how to dismantle, assemble and shoot guns.⁶²

Statement givers noted the rewards of using violence against civilians. A former NPFL combatant said combatants were rewarded with food, cars, and drugs based on the amount of killing they did.⁶³ Another NPFL combatant explained that he killed anyone who refused to let him take their things: “If I saw you with anything and I wanted it, and you refused to give it to me, you would die. I would kill you.”⁶⁴

Statements show that violence against civilians occurred for tactical reasons. A former NPFL combatant stated he felt compelled to kill any civilians he may have mistreated during combat, to prevent them from joining the enemy. For this reason, he said he would “[n]ever wound anybody and let them go.”⁶⁵ He also stated:

Sometimes when civilians were killed on the line it was because we know what they can do to us. They can give the location of the soldiers...If a baby is crying, you have to kill the baby...If the baby cries, the enemy will hear you.⁶⁶

Pressure from others to appear strong or climb the ranks served as another incentive to commit abuses. For example, one NPFL combatant said he took things from civilians only because he did not want to be perceived by other combatants as “a weak person.”⁶⁷ Another former NPFL combatant stated:

The first thing I learned in my whole life was to press the trigger...The more you press the trigger [the more] they promote you...The more you killed, Taylor would give you more food, a car...He gave you free drugs, cocaine.⁶⁸

Revenge motivated many atrocities, according to both perpetrators and victims. Many statement givers gave accounts of their families being targeted by combatants for personal reasons that had little to do with the conflict itself.⁶⁹ They said the combatants sought revenge because of pre-conflict disputes over lost employment,⁷⁰ land ownership,⁷¹ a failed lawsuit,⁷² or even romantic rejection.⁷³ Many civilians were targeted in retaliation for acts perpetrated by their relatives. A former NPFL combatant said in his statement, “[i]f I watched you kill my brother I have to kill your brother too. You see we can never be friends.”⁷⁴

Although numerous accounts exist of faction leaders and commanders purposefully targeting civilian groups, the killing of civilians was not always promoted or even tolerated. Some statements mentioned disciplinary action taken by superiors for the commission of atrocities. In those instances where leaders took disciplinary action against their troops, their response often matched the brutality of the behavior being punished. Statements indicate the line between discipline and brutal punishment was indistinct for both Prince Johnson and Charles Taylor. One statement giver stated Prince Johnson

would sometimes execute his own soldiers as punishment for killing innocent civilians.⁷⁵ The same statement giver disclosed witnessing Prince Johnson kill an INPFL soldier in charge of distributing rice to civilians where the soldier sought to exchange rice for information. He said that Prince Johnson heard the soldier was selling the rice for profit, so he reportedly shot him.⁷⁶ Prince Johnson also reportedly killed his own soldiers for “wasting his ammunition” on civilians.⁷⁷ Statements reveal that Taylor was similarly harsh in meting out punishments. A former NPFL combatant alleged that Taylor



would intentionally send fighters to the front to be killed if he wanted to get rid of them.⁷⁸ Another statement giver described a group of NPFL fighters who ripped fetuses out of pregnant women’s bellies and “killed anyone they saw.”⁷⁹ Because these rebels were particularly out of control, Taylor ordered his other men to kill them.⁸⁰

Some statement givers attributed their survival to the kindness of combatants who helped them.⁸¹

Several statement givers stated they were spared torture or execution by rebels who recognized them and convinced their comrades not to harm them.⁸² Others managed to escape conflict zones only because combatants carried them to safety.⁸³ There are also several accounts of combatants releasing civilians from unwarranted detention in their own compounds.⁸⁴ One statement giver described being rescued by a combatant who secured his release by pretending to kill him:

[T]he boy told me to get up and came and took me to the bush where he fire[d] his gun two times at an object and told me to run from there and not to let them catch me again. “You are too good, I cannot kill you, so go.” That’s how I escaped then and decided to come to exile.⁸⁵

Many times, victims were spared or helped because of a previous connection to one of the combatants. Just as familial connections could precipitate violent acts of revenge, such connections could also save one’s life. These connections, however, often depended on random luck as to who was on duty, where, and when. One statement giver described how rebels stuck an AK-47 in her son’s mouth.⁸⁶ Before they could pull the trigger, a female soldier ordered, “[D]o not touch him.”⁸⁷ The statement giver had formerly taught the female soldier typewriting.⁸⁸ Another statement giver described how a ULIMO-K combatant saved her because he knew the woman accompanying her:

We were on the road and some rebels stopped us. These were Alhaji Kromah's men [ULIMO-K]. One of the men killed the woman. Another ULIMO[-K] man yelled, "Why did you kill her!?" He said she was a good woman he knew because she used to sell in his community. He asked me if I was her daughter, and I said yes. He helped put me on the road to a village.⁸⁹

Another statement giver described how an NPFL rebel helped her. He brought rice for her and the others staying at the compound after she told him they had no food.⁹⁰ He gained their trust and helped the statement giver and her brother flee Monrovia:

[H]e was going to come back one more time, but after that the fighting would get bad and he wouldn't be able to help me find my mother. He went back to Kakata and when he came back, he brought me something that belonged to my mother. So I agreed that my brother and I would go with him out of Monrovia. We made it all the way to Kakata, where we were stopped at a "very bad" NPFL checkpoint. The big man at the checkpoint said to the [fighter], "You're frisky." He responded, "I'm doing business. I'm supposed to carry these kids." The [fighter] wouldn't pay any money, so we were seized.⁹¹

Later that night, the fighter returned with more high-level rebels to demand their release.⁹² He then took the statement giver and her brother to their mother.⁹³ The combatants who engaged in such acts of kindness often did so at great personal risk. Combatants who returned to their factions after rescuing people risked punishment if their actions were discovered. In some cases, combatants were tortured and killed by their own commanders as punishment for helping others.⁹⁴

COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION GATHERING

Fighting forces' methods of gathering intelligence and controlling the flow of information played an important role in the conflict. Some of the tactics combatants used to control communications plainly and directly violated international humanitarian law. Such tactics include the torturing of civilians for confessions or information,⁹⁵ holding family members hostage to force people to come out of hiding,⁹⁶ and killing people to prevent them from sharing intelligence.⁹⁷

Interrogations, accompanied by violence and humiliation, were frequently reported in statements. One statement giver summarized how NPFL rebels arrested and questioned him about his family, who were Krahn's associated with the Doe government:

I was forced to strip down to my underpants and was tortured because I

would not give information about my family. The rebels made me walk around while hitting [me] in the head with the butts of their guns. Next, they put me in a car and started driving on the highway before I was pushed from the car wearing only my underpants.⁹⁸

Some statement givers described the use of spies and informants embedded with the opposition.⁹⁹ There are numerous reports of “blacklists” being used among rebel groups to communicate the identity of targets.¹⁰⁰ Many people were specifically targeted by combatants based on their past affiliations or old disputes. Some faction leaders reportedly named these individuals on lists that were circulated throughout the country.¹⁰¹ Blacklisted people would be pulled out of line if identified at a checkpoint or hunted by combatants using other information-gathering techniques.



Liberia’s small size and the interconnectedness of Liberian society meant that blacklisted individuals ran a substantial risk of recognition. Perpetrators and their victims often knew each other as old schoolmates, neighbors, or co-workers. As one statement giver said, “[p]eople who had grown up together were suddenly turning on each other and it was hard to believe.”¹⁰² Thus, perpetrators often could find their targets through simple word-of-mouth, by talking to the targets’ neighbors, co-workers, and associates, or by going door-to-door to find them.¹⁰³

Some perpetrators used deceptive communications to find their targets. Statement givers reported that combatants sometimes tricked people into coming out of hiding by sending other civilians to tell them the combatants wanted to meet peacefully or give out rations. One statement giver summarized how rebels deceived people in his town in 1990:

The rebels arrested some people in the town and let some of them go to bring more people back into the town from the bush. The rebels said they were going to hold a meeting, in an attempt to draw everyone back into town. When people came, the rebels tied everyone up. After it was all over, the rebels killed at least 50 of the town people.¹⁰⁴

Combatants used other methods to communicate with each other. One statement giver reported that, after a firefight between the NPFL and ULIMO-J in his Monrovia neighborhood, he returned to find all the homes marked with flags from one faction or the other, indicating that a faction claimed control over the civilians' homes they had marked.¹⁰⁵ Another statement giver stated that, after rebels had raided his village, they put red marks on all the homes they had looted so that other rebels could see they had already been there.¹⁰⁶ A third statement giver explained that ULIMO-K used white cloths to communicate. He stated, “[i]f they tied a white cloth on your door, it meant purity.”¹⁰⁷

Faction leaders and combatants also used a variety of communication tactics to frighten and to control the civilian population. Statement givers reported that rebel groups would sometimes chant or sing violent songs. The singing communicated messages of fear to anyone within earshot and also may have helped identify troops from the same faction to each other.¹⁰⁸ One statement giver spoke of how his family awoke one morning to the distant sound of singing by NPFL rebels:

In the morning in our house, my mother, father, and sister and 2-month-old baby and my brother heard people singing. My father woke us up and said, “Listen. Something is going on.” Our dog was barking. We heard this: “Anyone who says No More Taylor, we treat you like dogs.” The singing came closer. My father went to his room. We heard a loud pop, and the dog stopped barking. We heard footsteps around the house. They knocked on the door and said, “Open the damn door,” and used profane language. They burst into the house...¹⁰⁹

The rebels killed the family dog, then invaded the home, and slaughtered the statement giver's family.¹¹⁰ Only the statement giver and his brother escaped.¹¹¹

Other perpetrators used communication to intimidate people from afar. Rebel groups reportedly sent civilian messengers ahead of them to warn villagers of their approach. Sometimes such messengers were charged with telling villagers that a rebel faction would arrive at a particular day and time to collect all of their money, animals, and food. One statement giver summarized how NPFL rebels forced him to pass a message to his village:

[T]hey gave me a message to transmit to the town. I was to tell all the townspeople that the rebels would arrive on a certain day and hour – the townspeople were to collect up all their animals, money, and food so that it could be given to the rebels. They told me to deliver the message or they would hunt me down and kill me.¹¹²

On the exact date and time in the message, the rebels arrived in his town.¹¹³ In this fashion, combatants

could intimidate entire communities without even being present.

MANIPULATION OF THE MEDIA

Faction commanders and other forces used the media as a means of influencing the population and gaining power in the conflict. Scholars have explained that various factions vying for control of Liberia targeted the international media because they understood that “the international media [was] a tool that they could use to benefit their aims.”¹¹⁴ One scholar, William Reno, has noted, however, that “the effect of the international media’s reporting was probably minimal enough that it [did not] fundamentally change events in the course of the war.”¹¹⁵

There were reports of ECOMOG restricting freedom of the press and censorship throughout the first civil war.¹¹⁶ The peacekeeping force included a Military Public Information Officer, who was responsible for determining what information the press was allowed to relay and which politically or militarily sensitive events the media was permitted to report on.¹¹⁷ According to an interviewee and a statement giver, journalists who did not report in a way ECOMOG deemed appropriate were often arrested or beaten.¹¹⁸

A journalist who gave his statement told the TRC that Prince Johnson had forcibly conscripted him to write a propaganda-laced newspaper called the “Scorpion.” He described how, after he had printed an article about several killings in which Prince Johnson was said to have participated, Johnson tried to suppress the story by burning all of the newspapers. When the story leaked out anyway, Johnson came looking for the statement giver at his office, but he had already fled.¹¹⁹

Charles Taylor reportedly was particularly adept at controlling the media and using it as a means of gaining public approval. Elizabeth Blunt, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) West Africa correspondent from 1986 to 1990 and in 1997, explained that “Taylor was by far the most media savvy person around in the country [in about 1990].”¹²⁰ Early in the conflict, “[n]one of [the other factions was] very actively using the media. [Reporters] had to go to them and some [factions] would talk more freely than others, but the one person who came to us was Taylor.”¹²¹

Liberian journalists who gave statements commented that Taylor used the media as a means of spreading propaganda.¹²² One Liberian journalist told the TRC that Taylor had used the BBC’s “Focus on Africa” to advertise AFL retribution against civilians after the December 1989 invasion.¹²³ Civilians angered by the reports responded by joining Taylor’s ranks in large numbers.¹²⁴ Taylor reportedly also used the BBC “to regularly blast the international airwaves with stories of overwhelming NPFL battlefield success...Taylor’s regular BBC interviews helped to accelerate the AFL’s demoralization and intensify public panic.”¹²⁵ Robin White, editor of the BBC’s popular *Focus on Africa* segment, contests the assertion that the BBC was used as a tool of war by Taylor. White told the TRC that the

BBC was careful not to broadcast direct threats by the warring factions. “We did not let anybody on air who would issue a threat. We would not let that go out. You know people would come along and say ‘let me advise the people of Monrovia to flee because we are coming right there tomorrow and going to kill them all.’ You know we would not put that on under any circumstances.”¹²⁶

The media coverage boosted the notoriety of the NPFL and, according to one scholar, the resulting increase in popularity translated into large recruiting gains during Taylor’s campaign through the hinterland towards Monrovia.¹²⁷ In addition, a statement giver described how Taylor’s forces exploited radio broadcasts by leaking false stories about planned NPFL attacks on villages. Upon hearing the broadcast, the villagers would flee, allowing Taylor’s forces to enter empty villages unopposed.¹²⁸ According to journalist statement givers, Taylor also used radio interviews to expand the reach of his propaganda to areas that he could not reach on transmitters under his control.¹²⁹ Additionally, one statement giver suggested that Taylor planted coded instructions for his troops into material sent to the BBC for his soldiers.¹³⁰

Notes

- 1 STEPHEN ELLIS, *THE MASK OF ANARCHY: THE DESTRUCTION OF LIBERIA AND THE RELIGIOUS DIMENSION OF AN AFRICAN CIVIL WAR* 127-28 (1999).
- 2 *See, e.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 116 (describing a woman who was forced to fight in the conflict to save her father's life) and 1347 (describing a girl who killed 20 people at a checkpoint because they were Krahn).
- 3 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1126.
- 4 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 811.
- 5 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1652.
- 6 *Id.*
- 7 *Id.*
- 8 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1562.
- 9 *See, e.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 519, 536, 590, and 1440, all describing looting.
- 10 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1369.
- 11 James Pugel, *Deciphering the Dimensions of Reintegration in Post-Conflict Liberia* 6 (2007) (unpublished manuscript available at http://jimpugel.googlepages.com/DecipheringDDR_pugel_july2007.pdf).
- 12 *See* TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1547 ("I killed a lot of people in revenge of my father and late mother.").
- 13 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1598.
- 14 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 97. *See also* TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 205 (stating that the greater the prevalence of cocaine among the rebels, the more the killings).
- 15 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 97.
- 16 *Id.*
- 17 *Id.*
- 18 *Id.*
- 19 *See, e.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1548. *See also* TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 869 (describing how secret society members, who he suspected were NPFL rebels, tried to force him to join them: When the war started in 1990, fighters from the Gbarnga Poro secret society came to my house to demand that I should join the society or else...I think the fighters were from the NPFL and there were seven of them. The son of K. from Gbarnga asked for me...They broke my door down. Then the son of K. said, "S.T., you say that you're a man (you say that you can defy us/refuse our command), now we've come. You will join the society today." The fighters broke a chair and made me sit on the broken arm. They beat me, hit me on the nose, and left a scar on my face and butt. They set my genitals on fire as well.)
- 20 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 402.
- 21 *Id.*
- 22 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 403.
- 23 *See, e.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1440.
- 24 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 97.
- 25 *See* Chapter 9 for more discussion of child soldiers during the Liberian civil wars.
- 26 Human Rights Watch, *How to Fight, How to Kill* 29, Feb. 1, 2004, <http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2004/02/01/how-fight-how-kill>.
- 27 Human Rights Watch, *Easy Prey: Child Soldiers in Liberia* 3, Sept. 8, 1994, <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1994/liberia2/>.
- 28 *Id.*
- 29 *Id.*
- 30 *Id.*
- 31 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1460.
- 32 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1440.
- 33 *Id.*
- 34 *See, e.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 1398, 1418, 1419, 1445, 1480.
- 35 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1333.
- 36 *E.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 478, 1739, 1521, 1112.
- 37 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1440.
- 38 *E.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 1470, 1524, 1525, 1526.
- 39 *E.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 1422, 1470, 1003.
- 40 TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 742 and 1445.
- 41 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1521; *see also* TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1534 (stating that some rebels wore necklaces made of sheep horns).

- 42 See TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 1422, 1470, 1524, 1526.
- 43 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 325.
- 44 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 134.
- 45 *E.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 1417 and 1048.
- 46 *E.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 15.
- 47 *E.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 63.
- 48 *E.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 176.
- 49 *E.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 163.
- 50 *E.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 527.
- 51 *E.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 804.
- 52 *E.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 817.
- 53 *E.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1473.
- 54 *E.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1423.
- 55 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1362.
- 56 *E.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1455.
- 57 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 389.
- 58 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1708.
- 59 *E.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 1375 and 1406.
- 60 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1477.
- 61 TRC Diaspora Recs. 187 and 413; ELLIS, *supra* note 1, at 111.
- 62 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 403.
- 63 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 97.
- 64 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1392.
- 65 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 97.
- 66 *Id.*
- 67 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1593.
- 68 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 97.
- 69 *E.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 64, 205, 142, 226, 343.
- 70 *E.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 287, 474, 566, 642, 683.
- 71 *E.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 129, 52, 73, 268, 294, 296.
- 72 TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 1183 and 1180.
- 73 *E.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 701, 756, 1284, 1352, 1580.
- 74 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 97.
- 75 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 42. See also TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 39 which describes the killing of a soldier who was threatening to kill people. When the soldier fired his gun into the air, the bullet landed on a pregnant woman and killed her. Prince Johnson then killed the soldier for his actions.
- 76 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 42.
- 77 *Id.*
- 78 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 97.
- 79 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1302.
- 80 *Id.*
- 81 See Chapter 10's section on Women as Combatants and Saviors for additional discussion.
- 82 See, *e.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 122, 1104, 1408, 1424, 1551.
- 83 See, *e.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 114, 703, 1406, 1512, 1560.
- 84 See TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 406, 773, 1011.
- 85 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1384.
- 86 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 44.
- 87 *Id.*
- 88 *Id.*
- 89 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1603.
- 90 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1646.
- 91 *Id.*
- 92 *Id.*
- 93 *Id.*
- 94 TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 26, 63, 1452.
- 95 *E.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 1292 and 1637. The intentional infliction of severe physical or mental pain or suffering for purposes of obtaining information or a confession, or to coerce or intimidate constitutes torture and is prohibited by international law. Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment art. 1(1), G.A. Res. 39/46, U.N. Doc. A/39/51 (Dec. 10, 1984). A state of war does not constitute an exception to this prohibition. *Id.* art. 2(2).
- 96 Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions and the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions prohibit the taking of hostages in conflicts not of an international character. Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War art. 3(1)(b), *entered into force* Oct. 21, 1950, 75 U.N.T.S. 287; Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions

- of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II) art. 4(2)(c), *entered into force* Dec. 7, 1978, 1125 U.N.T.S. 609.
- 97 *See, e.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1522.
- 98 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1115.
- 99 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 156.
- 100 *See, e.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 180, 1396, 1407.
- 101 *See, e.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 1353, 1354.
- 102 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1011.
- 103 *See, e.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 196; *see also* TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 116 (“People who had not worked for the government were pointing out other people’s government connections to the rebels.”), 1637 (“A man from the neighborhood who knew the rebels led the rebels to the house.”) and 1527 (“The people in Greenville told the rebels who the Krahn people in the town were.”).
- 104 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 655.
- 105 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1203.
- 106 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1034.
- 107 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1355 (describing how ULIMO-K soldiers came to the statement giver’s home, demanded that everyone come outside, and then accused her brother of being a rebel enemy; white cloth signified the residents were not ULIMO-K enemies).
- 108 *See also* TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1524 (noting that the rebels “sang songs about Charles Taylor while they attacked the people”).
- 109 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 316.
- 110 *Id.*
- 111 *Id.*
- 112 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 15.
- 113 *Id.*
- 114 Telephone Interview by Sutherland Asbill & Brennan LLP with Prof. William Reno (Mar. 10, 2008).
- 115 *Id.*
- 116 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 902.
- 117 *Id.*
- 118 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 903.
- 119 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 28.
- 120 Telephone Interview by Sutherland Asbill & Brennan LLP with Elizabeth Blunt, BBC West Africa Correspondent (Mar. 12, 2008).
- 121 *Id.*
- 122 TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 903 and 904.
- 123 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 904. Using satellite phones to call the BBC, Taylor could report AFL killings, which the BBC reportedly broadcast across Liberia. *Id.*
- 124 *Id.*
- 125 GABRIEL I. H. WILLIAMS, *LIBERIA: THE HEART OF DARKNESS* 90 (2002).
- 126 Telephone Interview by Sutherland Asbill & Brennan LLP with Robin White, BBC *Focus on Africa* editor (Mar. 24, 2008).
- 127 Jonathan Temin, *Considering the Role of the BBC in African Conflict*, 30 *REV. AFR. POLITICAL ECON.* 98, 656 (2003).
- 128 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 903.
- 129 *Id.*
- 130 *Id.*

