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Case Study Series

**Liberia:**  
**Religious Leaders,**  
**Peacemaking, and the**  
**First Liberian**  
**Civil War**

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## Abstract

This case study examines the ultimately unsuccessful attempt of Liberian religious leaders to intervene in their country's First Civil War (1989-1996) between the government and the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) with the goal of establishing peace. The core text of the case study explores four essential questions: What are the causes of conflict in Liberia? How did domestic religious leaders promote peace? How important were international religious and political forces? What factors explain the failure of religion-inspired peacebuilding? Complementing the core text are a timeline of key events, a guide to relevant religious organizations, and a helpful list of further readings.

## About this Case Study

This case study was crafted by George Kieh under the editorial direction of Eric Patterson, visiting assistant professor in the Department of Government and associate director of the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs at Georgetown University.

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# INTRODUCTION

On December 24, 1989, a group of rebels operating under the umbrella of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), under the leadership of Charles Taylor, entered Liberia through Cote d'Ivoire. The group consisted of an amalgam of individuals spanning Liberia's broad ethnic spectrum. Their primary objective was to establish themselves as Liberia's new rulers. Characteristically, the incumbent Doe regime responded to the threat with maximum force, sending thousands of troops to the Liberian-Ivorian border to halt the incursion. This set into motion a bloody civil war that lasted for eight years. The Liberian Council of Churches (a Christian organization) and then subsequently the Religious Leaders of Liberia (both Christian and Islamic clerics)

decided to intervene in the war as peacemakers through a strategy of mediation and negotiation. The religious leaders were hopeful that, given their traditional influence in Liberian politics, the warring parties would be amenable to their intervention and ultimately accept their proposals for ending the war. However, the religious leaders lacked the capacity to compel the Taylor-led NPFL. That is, the religious leaders did not have the requisite resources to carry out an effective "carrot and stick" strategy. Ultimately, therefore, the religious communities' intervention in the First Liberian Civil War was unsuccessful. However, religiously-inspired actors were to play a significant role later in the Second Liberian Civil War.



*Map of Liberia*

# HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A lengthier version of this case study was first published by George Kieh in the *Journal of Religion, Conflict, and Peace* (2009).

On April 12, 1980, a class-based society was replaced by a military dictatorship when the Liberian military ousted the ruling class and brought Sergeant Samuel Doe to power. Initially, the coup d'état received widespread support from the Liberian masses and the various groups that were part of the pro-democracy movement because it was assumed that the military would transform the architecture of governance by laying the groundwork for the building of a new democratic society. Unfortunately, the Doe regime recreated the old system based on political repression, economic inequality, injustice, mismanagement, and social decay. Unsurprisingly, there was mass dissent against the Doe regime.

Using the legitimate grievances of the Liberian masses as a facade, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) decided to dislodge Doe from power and began a military insurgency. This insurgency was originally launched from Cote d'Ivoire on December 24, 1989 when NPFL forces invaded Nimba County. The Doe regime reacted aggressively and the national army attacked the whole region, killing many civilians. This fuelled increased resistance to Doe forces, and the NPFL rapidly expanded. However, at the same time, Prince Johnson, a former NPFL fighter, split from the main force and formed his own militia named the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL).

By the middle of 1990, a full-scale civil war was in

progress. Within the year, Taylor's NPFL forces were in control of the majority of Liberia, and Johnson's INPFL forces controlled significant portions of the nation's capital, Monrovia. There were numerous attempts made to broker a peace deal (as described below) but these were all unsuccessful. On September 9, 1990, Doe was captured, tortured, and killed by Johnson's forces. However, this did not bring an end to the war. Ultimately the Economic Community of West Africa (ECOWAS), led by Nigeria, intervened. ECOWAS' armed monitoring group (ECOMOG) tried to mediate the conflict and organize an Interim Government of National Unity, led by Amos Sawyer. However, Taylor attacked Monrovia in 1992, and subsequent agreements were consistently breached by one side or the other. In particular Taylor's forces were known for failing to adhere to the terms of the treaties their leader had signed.

In July 1997, the First Liberian Civil War officially ended under the terms of the Abuja II Peace Accord. Thereafter, an election was hastily organized, primarily by ECOWAS. It was poorly handled, as were other critical transitional activities.<sup>1</sup> With the electoral playing field tilted in his favor, Charles Taylor won the presidential election in a landslide with more than 75 percent of the vote; many believe he won because of fear among the population that there would be more violence if he lost. Also, the Taylor-led National Patriotic Party was allotted 21 of the 26 seats in the Senate, and 49 of the 64 seats in the House of Representatives, based on the proportional representation system that was used for the legislature. Thus, Taylor and his political party had complete control of the government.

# DOMESTIC FACTORS

From the genesis of the repatriation project in the 1820s—through which free African-Americans settled in Liberia—Christianity has been, and remains a mainstay of the Liberian political landscape for a number of reasons. First, both the functionaries of the American Colonization Society—the driving force behind repatriation and the establishment of Liberia—and the repatriated African-Americans brought Christianity with them to the “Pepper Coast” of what would become Liberia. Second, major Christian churches based in the United States organized branches in Liberia. These included the Baptist, Episcopal, Methodist Episcopal, Presbyterian, African Methodist, and Lutheran Churches.<sup>2</sup> Subsequently, these Christian sects established schools throughout the country. Significantly, through the various Christian churches and schools, thousands of Liberians were converted to Christianity. Third, there was a fusion between the church and the state at various levels from the colonial period in 1822 to the coup d’état in 1980. At the administrative level, for example, during the early days of the Liberian colony, the government was administered by Protestant ministers.<sup>3</sup> Also, since the founding of the Liberian state, the government has required the observance of the Christian Sabbath and all major Christian events as national holidays. For example, on Sundays, Easter, and Christmas, government offices and businesses are closed in observance of the Christian day of worship.

Importantly, the dominant role of Christianity in Liberian polity has led to the development of the popular belief among Liberians that the country is a Christian state. However, the data shows that, despite the prominent place of Christianity, traditional African religions

collectively had the largest number of adherents for much of the country’s history, though Christianity predominates today. In 1986, for example, nearly 45 percent of the Liberian population belonged to various traditional African religious groups compared to around 40 percent for Christian groups.<sup>4</sup> Thus, the ubiquity and enormous influence of Christianity in Liberia are attributable to historical, social, and political factors rather than to the number of its adherents.

On the other hand, despite steady growth in terms of the number of adherents (in 1978, Muslims constituted 15 percent of the population, and 19 percent in 1980), Islam had negligible influence on Liberian politics until the ascendancy of Samuel Doe to the Liberian presidency.<sup>5</sup> Unlike Christianity, which was a fundamental part of the repatriation project that culminated in the establishment of the Liberian state, Islam penetrated the Liberian landscape conterminously with the spread of commercial activities undertaken by Muslim traders.<sup>6</sup> However, Islam’s political fortunes in the Liberian polity changed with Samuel Doe’s ascendancy to the presidency of Liberia.

Faced with criticisms from progressive Christians for the horrendous performance of his regime, including its horrific human rights record, and detached from the traditionally government-supportive segment of the church, President Doe made the determination that Islam could serve as a countervailing religious force. Accordingly, President Doe cultivated an opportunistic relationship with some of the unprincipled leaders of Liberian Islam, akin to what previous regimes did with a similar group of Christian clergy—known as

the pro-status quo wing of Liberian Christianity. The pro-status quo Islamic clerics served as a bulwark for the Doe regime against the criticisms emanating from progressive Christian leaders, and as a vehicle for legitimating the regime. Based on the partnership, the Doe regime, among other things, appointed several Muslims to various positions of authority, especially in the executive branch.

Faced with the rapidly rising costs of the First Liberian Civil War, the religious communities in Liberia decided that they needed to intervene in order to prevent more bloodshed. The religious leaders of Liberia employed two interrelated models of peacemaking—mediation and negotiation—as the frameworks for trying to end the First Liberian Civil War. On January 20, 1990, Christian clergy, under the banner of the Liberian Council of Churches (LCC), issued a statement expressing their concern about the military situation and the killings in Monrovia. The LCC appealed to both the Doe regime and the NPFL to resolve their differences peacefully. However, the two warring factions rejected the clergy's appeal. Several factors accounted for the belligerents' rejection of this appeal. For its part, the Doe regime, which had been distrustful of the church, especially its progressive wing, saw the LCC as a partisan body that was using peacemaking in an effort to weaken and eventually topple the regime. Another reason was the Doe regime's belief that it could win a military victory against the NPFL. On the other hand, the Taylor-led NPFL rejected the LCC's appeal because it made the determination, given the dynamics of the civil war at the time, it could defeat and oust the Doe regime militarily; hence, it saw the LCC's peacemaking efforts as an impediment to the removal of the Doe regime.

Despite the rejection of its initial peacemaking efforts, the LCC decided to continue its intervention. Accordingly, on May 30, 1990, the LCC issued another appeal to the disputants to bring the escalating violence and bloodletting to an end and to peacefully resolve their differences. Specifically, the statement emphatically declared that “the church [was] ready to mediate.”<sup>7</sup> Interestingly, this time the appeal was accepted by the traditionally intransigent Doe government, but

was rejected by Taylor's NPFL. The former accepted the LCC's appeal for two major reasons: based on the mass support for the insurgency at that juncture of the civil war, the Doe regime finally became convinced that its legitimacy was now virtually nonexistent; secondly, the Doe regime was experiencing incessant defeats on various fronts in the war, and thus, by accepting the clergy's request to mediate the conflict, the Doe junta was hopeful that the consequent peace agreement would enable President Doe to remain in power for the duration of his term of office, which was to end in January 1992.

Conversely, the Taylor-led NPFL rejected the clergy's appeal for two major interrelated reasons. First, the peaceful resolution of the conflict was antithetical to its primary goal of seizing control of the state machinery. Furthermore, Taylor and his compatriots calculated that the peace talks would open the proverbial Pandora's box by bringing in other parties. The result would be the establishment of an interim government that would include the various political parties and interest groups in the country, thus diluting Taylor's power and influence. Second, the NPFL saw negotiations as a conduit that would facilitate President's Doe's departure from the country, without giving them the opportunity to investigate his regime and personally subject him to retribution.

Amidst the impasse in the peacemaking process, the LCC decided that, given the scope and magnitude of the conflict, the Christian clergy could not serve as the sole mediator. Also, given the harmonious relationship between the Doe regime and some Muslim clerics, Christian leaders hoped that the latter could influence the former, especially in light of the fact that the peacemaking process would clearly involve difficult choices for the Doe regime and the NPFL. Based on these realities, the LCC initiated talks with the Muslim Council of Liberia (MCL), the national umbrella organization of Islamic clerics, regarding the need for both Christian and Islamic religious leaders to collaborate in shepherding the peacemaking process. The Islamic clerics accepted and a new organization, the Religious Leaders of Liberia (RLL), was formed as the mediatory successor to the Christian-based LCC.

On June 5, 1990, the clergy, under the RLL, unveiled its peace plan. The plan covered a broad range of issues, including the imperative of establishing a ceasefire, the need for the intervention of a neutral peacekeeping force to, among other things, monitor compliance with the ceasefire, and the urgency of a peace conference. In order to concretize its peace initiative, the RLL established an Inter-Religious Mediation Committee. The RLL's Mediation Committee presented the organization's peace plan to both the Doe government and the NPFL. The Doe regime accepted the peace plan and its attendant call for a peace conference as, at this stage in the war, it looked certain that they would eventually lose on the battlefield. However, the Taylor-led NPFL rejected the peace plan, as it failed to call for the decisive removal of Doe. However, after several consultations and appeals made by the RLL, Taylor, as head of the NPFL, agreed to attend the peace conference.

The peace conference commenced on June 12, 1990, in Freetown, Sierra Leone. The Mediation Committee of the RLL served as the mediator. The RLL's peacemaking strategy consisted of two major phases. The first phase involved separate meetings between the RLL's Mediation Committee on the one hand, and each of the warring parties on the other. The second phase was framed as direct negotiation between the representatives of the belligerents. The RLL's intent was to provide both parties the opportunity to discuss the peace plan and to offer counterpositions or new elements for consideration by the RLL and the opposing party.

After four days of intense and serious discussions, the conference failed to make significant breakthroughs. On the one hand, the Doe regime argued that it should stay in power until the scheduled national elections were held in October 1991. On the other hand, the NPFL insisted that the sine qua non for ending the war was anchored in "the immediate resignation of Mr. Doe and his regime, and the consequent handing of power over to the National Patriotic Front of Liberia."<sup>8</sup> Amidst the emergent impasse, the conference adjourned with the agreement to reconvene in two weeks, after the various delegations had consulted with their respective leaders. As part of the consultation process,

the Inter-Faith Mediation Committee met with both President Doe and Charles Taylor. Both leaders agreed to continue their participation in the peace conference; however, Taylor emphatically told the committee that the only way there could be a ceasefire was for President Doe to resign immediately.

After the two-week interregnum, the peace conference was slated to resume on July 1, 1990. However, characteristically, the Taylor-led NPFL issued a statement indicating that it would no longer participate in the peace conference, hours before its scheduled resumption. From the perspective of Taylor and his militia, the peace talks posed a hindrance to the NPFL's goal of using military might to dislodge the Doe regime and install itself as the new government of Liberia. Taylor explicitly articulated this position during his meeting with the members of the Inter-Faith Mediation Committee. As Charles Taylor noted, "It was only a matter of hours for him to take Monrovia, and overthrow Mr. Doe... He would take Monrovia even while the peace talks were still taking place."<sup>9</sup>

Three major reasons accounted for the failure of the RLL to negotiate a peaceful outcome to the war. First, both parties had irreconcilable agendas. Second, the RLL did not have the proverbial carrots and sticks that were crucial to inducing compliance, especially from the NPFL. In other words, despite the esteem in which it was held by the Liberian people, the RLL did not have the power to punish defection and reward cooperation. Third, the RLL took Taylor's promises at face value. That is, the religious leaders believed that Taylor could be convinced to accept their peace plan because he appeared to be a reasonable person. Thus, the religious leaders failed to take cognizance of the various signals they got from Taylor that demonstrated he was not interested in a negotiated termination of the civil war.

As has been discussed, the failure of the RLL to terminate the war removed the modicum of constraint that helped moderate the activities of the government and NPFL forces. Without such constraint, the level of violence increased precipitously as the NPFL attempted to oust the Doe regime from power.

# SOCIOECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

The root causes of the First Liberian Civil War transcend the horrendous performance of the Doe regime. Rather, they are couched in the dynamics of the development of the Liberian state over the last century and a half. In other words, several major historical junctures need to be examined in order to understand the roots of the civil war. First, when the American Colonization Society (ACS) set up the foundations of the modern Liberian state in the early 1800s, it established a political, economic, and social architecture based on the confluence of skin pigmentation and class. That is, during the settler state phase (1822-1926), “white,” “light-skinned,” and “dark-skinned” were the categories of skin pigmentation, and “ruling,” “intermediate,” and “subaltern” constituted the class categories. Crucially, there was a direct link between skin pigmentation and class status.

Second, with the advent of foreign investment in the mid-1920s, the underpinnings of the architecture of governance changed from ethnicity to class. That is, class became the major determinant of an individual’s status in the power pyramid. This development fueled the integration of the indigenous population into the body politic, albeit along class lines. The various groups of settlers formed alliances with their indigenous counterparts on the basis of shared economic interests. Accordingly, three major class clusters emerged. The ruling class consisted of the indigenous managers of the state, local entrepreneurs, and foreign owners of multinational corporations and other businesses that operated in Liberia, such as the Bong Mining Company and LAMCO. This class controlled both state power and the economic life of the country and tended to be Christian.

The class of intelligentsia comprised artists, doctors, en-

gineers, university professors and other teachers, and the broad gamut of people with technical and other skills. This class did not own or control the major means of production. Instead, the major source of livelihood for its members was derived from the sale of their skills and talents to the members of the ruling class. Traditionally, some of the members of the class aligned themselves with the lower classes in the struggle for democracy in Liberia; others joined with and graduated to the ruling class, and thus worked to maintain the status quo.

The subaltern classes consisted of workers, farmers, and the unemployed. The workers were a small, dispersed, and unorganized class, in part due to state repression. The farmers constituted a much larger segment. Their major terrain was the rural area inhabited by over 70 percent of the population, and their major source of livelihood was subsistence agriculture. They were also unorganized, politically uninformed, and marginalized. Again, one of the major reasons for this was state-sponsored harassment and intimidation. Finally, the unemployed constituted another sizeable, disorganized group. Criminal activities were one important source of income, particularly the sale of illegal drugs and robbery.

In order to ensure the domination of the ruling class, a bureaucratic-authoritarian state based on repression, injustice, and other violations of human rights was established. The elite also entrenched an economic system based on gross inequalities in income and wealth. For example, in 1980, the ruling class, constituting four percent of the population, owned and controlled more than 60 percent of the national wealth. Every Liberian government—from Charles D. B. King to Samuel Doe—maintained this exploitive, oppressive, and repressive system.

# INTERNATIONAL FACTORS

When the First Liberian Civil War began, the attention of the international community was focused on two major conflict spots: the civil war in Somalia, and the gathering storm that eventually led to the Gulf War. On balance, these two conflicts were considered more important to the national interests of the United States and the other major powers than the Liberian Civil War. The United States, Liberia's traditional neocolonial patron, publicly declared that it had no plans to help end the Liberian Civil War because it no longer had any vital interest in Liberia. The failure of the international community to intervene earlier in the First Liberian Civil War left a void. This situation was particularly critical given the complete breakdown of law and order and the enabling environment this provided for the Doe regime and the NPFL to engage in both the targeted and indiscriminate killing of civilians.

In the mid-1990s, ECOWAS intervened in the war through a combination of peacemaking and peacekeeping efforts. In the case of the former, 15 peace accords were brokered. This surprising number of agreements followed the failure of the Taylor-led NPFL to honor the peace accords. That is, each time a peace agreement was brokered and signed, including by the Taylor-led NPFL, Taylor reneged. This created a vicious cycle that began with a brokered peace agreement, followed by repudiation by the NPFL, ending with a new round of peacemaking talks.

In the case of the peacekeeping force, ECOWAS succeeded in some measure in reducing the level of violence by, among other things, establishing security corridors, especially in the capital city region. How-

ever, given the limited size of the peacekeeping force in relation to Liberia's territorial expanse, it was not possible to establish security corridors throughout the country. Hence, thousands of civilians, especially those who lived in the rural areas, remained vulnerable to attacks by the various warring factions. By the time the civil war ended in 1997, more than 200,000 people had been killed, and another million were displaced in refugee camps in neighboring countries.<sup>10</sup> Liberia's population at the time was just over three million, thus nearly one-third of its inhabitants found their lives upended by the civil war.

Two major factors accounted for the termination of the war. First, suffering from "intervention-fatigue," ECOWAS made the determination that it needed to find a graceful exit from Liberia. Leaders of ECOWAS pledged they could induce compliance from the Taylor-led NPFL by assuring Taylor that steps would be taken to ensure he would win the ensuing presidential election.<sup>11</sup> Second, the peace accord stipulated that those factional leaders who did not cooperate in the termination of the war would be tried for war crimes.

Accordingly, an election was hastily organized by ECOWAS. It was poorly handled, as were other critical transitional activities.<sup>12</sup> For example, the disarmament and demobilization efforts were done in an incomplete manner.<sup>13</sup> One of the major effects was that Taylor's NPFL militia remained effectively intact.<sup>14</sup> Also, Taylor had a distinct advantage in terms of financial and material resources. Having plundered and pillaged the country's natural resources for eight years, Taylor was able to accumulate millions of dollars,<sup>15</sup> and his party

had more resources than all the other political parties combined. Additionally, given his faction's comparative military superiority vis-à-vis its competitors, Taylor threatened to restart the war if he was not elected the president of Liberia.<sup>16</sup>

Thus, the international community as a whole largely ignored the First Liberian Civil War. Although ECOWAS did intervene, its intervention was ultimately half-hearted and left a situation where Taylor was elected the leader of a clearly corrupt state. Moreover, Taylor was left with his substantial militia still intact.

In conclusion, the First Liberian Civil War resulted in the loss of tens of thousands of lives and traumatized millions of people, not only in Liberia, but also in

neighboring Sierra Leone and across West Africa. The root causes of the war lay in historic socioeconomic differences that tended to fall along existing rural-urban, ethnic, and north-south cleavages—historically a product of the differentiation between Americo-Liberians and indigenous Liberians. As Liberia has a highly religious populace and religious authorities have a significant voice in Liberian society, those actors attempted to engage both sides for peace, but failed. Unfortunately, spiritual inducements and calls for reconciliation proved insufficient to compel belligerents fighting over control of diamonds and other resources. Ultimately, Charles Taylor's forces proved able to set the agenda for national elections and ultimately take over the government. However, this outcome was to prove unstable, resulting in a second civil war a few years later.



*Downtown Monrovia ©David Sasaki's Flickr Photostream*

# KEY EVENTS



*Secretary of Defense Weinberger hosts Samuel Kanyon Doe at the Pentagon.*

**1821-1822** The modern Liberian state is established by the American Colonization Society and colonized by freed American slaves.

**1822-1926** Liberia embarks on the “settler stage phase” in which skin pigmentation and social class become interrelated and institutionalized in governance.

**Mid-1920s** Foreign investment helps shift society’s governance structure away from ethnicity and instead toward class, which developed more from economic circumstances than skin pigmentation.

**1980** By this time, four percent of the population controls more than 60 percent of the national wealth. Class society is replaced by a military dictatorship when the Liberian military ousts the ruling class and brings Sergeant Doe to the presidency.

**1989** The National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) moves through Liberia to remove President Samuel Doe from power and establish itself as Liberia’s ruler, thus sparking an eight-year bloody civil war.

**1990** The Liberian Council of Churches repeatedly appeals to the Doe regime and the NPFL to resolve their differences peacefully. The clergy also unveils its peace plan. A peace conference is called in Freetown, but peace negotiations soon break down.

**1997** The First Liberian Civil War officially ends under the terms of the Abuja II Peace Accord. Soon after, Taylor wins the presidency in national elections.

# RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

## **Liberian Council of Churches**

The Liberian Council of Churches (LCC) was formed in 1982 to serve as a fellowship of all organized bodies of Christians within the Republic of Liberia. Currently, the council has 19 member churches and 10 member organizations, totaling 29 members. The council seeks to, among other things, discuss religious and national issues and make relevant recommendations to the government, offer prayers for the survival of the nation, and mobilize resources to support the needy and church programs. Since its establishment, the council has been active in the resolution of national issues for peace consolidation and development in Liberia. In the process, it has collaborated with various governments in West Africa as well as with the international community. The LCC has been an active participant in all peace negotiations or settlements of Liberian civil conflicts, both national and international as well as the most recent Accra Peace Conference on Liberia at which the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was formulated, endorsed, and signed.

## **Muslim Council of Liberia**

The Muslim Council of Liberia serves as the central organization of all Muslims in Liberia. The organization seeks to support and strengthen its followers, as well as provide recommendations to the government

regarding religious and national issues. The group played an active role in appealing for peace following the violent civil wars that engulfed the country.

## **Religious Leaders of Liberia**

The Religious Leaders of Liberia formed as a partnership between the Liberian Council of Churches and the Muslim Council of Liberia in order to seek peace. The group transcended religious divisions to show the necessity of ending the violence and bloodshed that was tormenting the lives of Liberian citizens..

## **Women in Peacebuilding Network**

*<http://wanep.org/wanep/programs-our-programs/wipnet.html>*

The Women in Peacebuilding Network examines avenues through which West African women can play more effective roles in peacebuilding. The program seeks to outline the roles of women at different stages of conflicts. A core objective of this program is to enable women to transform the negative image of “helpless victimhood” that is often ascribed to them in violent conflict situations to a positive and more assertive image of stakeholders and active participants in the pursuit of just peace in their communities.

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# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are the causes of the conflict in Liberia?
2. How did domestic religious leaders promote peace?
3. How important are international religious and political forces?
4. What factors explain the failure of religion-inspired peacebuilding?

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<sup>1</sup>Terence Lyons, *Voting for Peace: Post-Conflict Elections in Liberia*, (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1999), 1.

<sup>2</sup>Amos Beyan, "The American Colonization Society and the Socio-Religious Characterization of Liberia: A Historical Survey, 1822-1900," *Liberian Studies Journal* vol. 10, no. 2 (1984/1985), 2.

<sup>3</sup>David Barrett, ed., *World Christian Encyclopedia, A.D. 1900-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 457.

<sup>4</sup>Nya Kwawon Taryor, "Religions in Liberia," *Liberia Forum* vol. 5, no. 8 (1989), 3.

<sup>5</sup>For statistics on the number of Muslims in Liberia, see Religion by Location Index, "Liberia," [http://adherents.com/adhloc/Wh\\_184.html#448](http://adherents.com/adhloc/Wh_184.html#448)  
The data for 1978 and 1980 were extrapolated from these statistics.

<sup>6</sup>For a comprehensive discussion of the role of commerce as a conduit for the spread of Islam in Liberia, see Augustine Konneh, *Religion, Commerce and the Integration of the Mandingo in Liberia*, (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1996).

<sup>7</sup>Liberian Council of Churches, *The Rebel Incursion and the Present Status of Chaos and Anarchy and the Lack of Objective Information in Liberia*, (Monrovia, Liberia: Liberian Council of Churches, 1990), 1.

<sup>8</sup>Archbishop Michael Francis, “Statement to Liberians in Sierra Leone,” October 7, 1990.

<sup>9</sup>Archbishop Michael Francis, “Statement to Liberians in Sierra Leone,” October 7, 1990.

<sup>10</sup>Global Security, “Liberia - First Civil War - 1989-1996,” <http://globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/liberia-1989.htm>

<sup>11</sup>Based on interviews I conducted with former leaders of the warring factions and political parties, there was a uniform assertion that ECOWAS had decided that the ensuing presidential election had to culminate in a victory for Charles Taylor and the National Patriotic Party (NPP) as the quid pro quo for getting Taylor to accept the termination of the war.

<sup>12</sup>Terence Lyons, *Voting for Peace: Post-Conflict Elections in Liberia*, (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1999), 1.

<sup>13</sup>Lasana Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa: The RUF and the Destruction of Sierra Leone*, (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005).

<sup>14</sup>Lasana Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa: The RUF and the Destruction of Sierra Leone*, (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005).

<sup>15</sup>For an interesting discussion of the war-time accumulation of wealth by Taylor and others, see William Reno, “The Business of War in Liberia,” *Current History* vol. 96, no. 601, 211-215.

<sup>16</sup>Lasana Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa: The RUF and the Destruction of Sierra Leone*, (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005).