

Report from Raymond James, Bo Commercial Secondary School, dated 2nd March 1995 (but postmarked May and received May 25) and letter of thanks for the £1000 .

Rebel War in Sierra Leone- Background situation

The Civil Strife in Liberia launched by Charles Taylor and his National Patriotic Front in Liberia started in 1990, and had had an off-shoot effect on Sierra Leone. This resulted because the country became a base for the West African Peace-Keeping Force (ECOMOG); a sub-regional institution. On March 23, 1991, The National Patriotic Front of Liberia(NPFL) attacked Sierra Leone from Kailahun DistrictPujehun District in April 20, 1991 in the Southern Province was invaded from the Soro-Gbema Chiefdom end....[It was later liberated by combined forces of government, Liberian and Guinean troops. The A.P.C. government was ousted by young military officers on April 29, 1991.]

After the military take-over, the whole of the Pujehun District again fell in the hands of the rebels in January 20, 1993. At the same time, the government troops were able to recapture the whole of the Kailahun district....Over 1,500,000 have been dislodged and 40,000 killed. Others have sought refuge into neighbouring Guinea and Liberia.

The military government has chosen both the military and political options to bring this senseless war to an end. Amnesty has been extended to the rebels on many occasions but to no avail....

Effects of the war on the Economy - The industrial, agricultural and commercial sectors of the economy have been adversely affected.

The diamond mining areas are changing hands with rebels and government troops. In this light, all mining activities have been marginalised which is going to create some future social; problems. The foreign exchange which the diamond industry should have earned is not visible to be achieved so easily....

Agricultural inputs like tools and seeds cannot be procured by the displaced since they are marginalised and disadvantaged. In addition, agricultural viable areas are no havens for citizens to carry out income-generating activities. These displaced people therefore rely heavily on relief food items from Aid Agencies....

Highways leading to major towns have become highly vulnerable to frequent road attack; thereby creating commercial transactions very difficult. Shortage of foodstuffs and scarce money in circulation have created additional hardship on civilians affected directly and indirectly by the on-going war.

People - Government at the moment is implementing the IMF/ World Bank Structural Adjustment program due to a decline in the economy. 50,000 people have been terminated from the workforce. Daily household meals are available through providence. Some displaced persons sleep in make-shift place; while others are in camps at Gondoma - Bo, Rural Training

Institute - Kenema, Taiama and Gbo Two -Makeni. Most Aid and Humanitarian agencies have limited their activities to the capital, Freetown, thereby creating starvation, unemployment and outbreak of endemic disease.

Bo-Owl Committee Reports - Most of OWL Bo Committee members are affected directly or indirectly by the on-going war and therefore they cannot cope with the provision of shelter and food for their compatriots.

The Committee was involved in humanitarian relief programme; including distribution of drugs and old clothing made available from Leamington Spa. With the escalation of the war meetings are difficult to be conveyed [sic] and in addition there are no relief items available for distribution.

We are, however, grateful to register our profound thanks and appreciation for receiving £1,000.00, which is very timely and will be used for it's intended purpose.

Requests -

[The committee requested educational materials, as many of the displaced persons are of school age.]

....As a result of these attacks over 66,169 displaced have been forced to flee for a seemingly safe town which is Bo with basically nothing to wear, eat and medication.