



Director of  
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LIBERIA

The new government has not yet consolidated its control following the coup on Saturday that resulted in the assassination of President Tolbert. The security situation in Monrovia appears to be deteriorating. [redacted]

The coup that toppled the ruling True Whig Party government, although poorly organized, apparently met almost no resistance from Army or police forces. Coup leader Sgt. Samuel Doe reportedly is making all decisions, but he does not appear to have full control over and support from military and police forces. He and his closest advisers seem to be overwhelmed by the task of restoring order and organizing a functioning government. Although the chances of a countercoup from forces loyal to the old regime now appear remote, Doe could face a challenge from more experienced elements in the military. [redacted]

Unruly troops continued to roam the city last night, and several serious incidents of robberies of US citizens and business facilities have been reported. [redacted]

Arrests appear to be increasing, as well as reports of mistreatment of prisoners. Although the new government had announced that only those involved in "rampant corruption" would be arrested and tried, most former high-level officials as well as their wives have been arrested. Apparently there is a growing desire among the indigenous enlisted ranks for revenge on the minority elite Americo-Liberian population and anyone associated with the Tolbert family. [redacted]

This is an ominous development in view of the military tribunal scheduled to begin trials today. The growing emotionalism may create an atmosphere in which only guilty verdicts will suffice. [redacted]

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The situation is complicated by reports that the country's supply of rice--a staple food--will be exhausted within the next 10 days, with the possibility that a new shipment will not arrive soon. At this stage it is probable that the new government has not focused on such matters as food imports. A severe rice shortage would put tremendous strains on the new regime and the potential for additional violence may increase. [redacted]

The new leaders have expressed a desire to maintain close relations with the US, but held out the prospect that they may have to turn elsewhere--in an apparent reference to the Soviets--if expectations of US support are not met. The new leaders assured US officials that they would respect all contracts and agreements between Liberia and the US [redacted]

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