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Painful History of an Experiment

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

1847 Liberia founded with American-style constitution.

1944 William V. S. Tubman elected president.

1980 President William R. Tolbert Jr. assassinated in a coup led by Master Sgt. Samuel K. Doe.

1989 National Patriotic Front of Liberia, led by Charles G. Taylor, begins an uprising.

1990 Mr. Doe executed by a faction of the rebels.

1997 Mr. Taylor elected president.

2000 Liberian forces begin an offensive against rebels in the north.

2002 More than 50,000 Liberia and Sierra Leone refugees flee the civil war.

2003 A new rebel group, the Movement for Democracy in Liberia, gains in the southeast.

JUNE 4, 2003 Mr. Taylor indicted for war crimes in the Sierra Leone civil war.

JUNE 17 Mr. Taylor says he will step down under a cease-fire agreement, then announces he will serve to January 2004, the end of his term.

JUNE 27 Mr. Taylor's forces claim to have driven rebels out of Liberia's capital after a four-day artillery battle that killed hundreds.

JUNE 28 U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan asks the Security Council for an international peace force.

JUNE 30 West African leaders ask for 2,000 American troops to head a predominantly African peacekeeping force.