

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY ACTIVITIES

Wednesday, April 22, 2015

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf attended the 35th Anniversary Memorial Service for former officials of the William Richard Tolbert government killed on April 22, 1980. The Memorial Service was held at the First Presbyterian Church on Broad and Johnson Streets in Monrovia.

William R. Tolbert, Jr., 20th President of Liberia from 1971 until 1980, was killed in a violent coup d'état in the early hours of April 12, 1980 by 17 non-commissioned officers and soldiers of the Armed Forces of Liberia led by Master Sergeant Samuel Doe.

By the end of the month, most of the cabinet ministers and senior officials of the administration had been put on trial and later sentenced to death. Many of them were publicly executed on April 22 at a beach near the Barclay Training Center. Only four of Tolbert's cabinet ministers survived the coup and its aftermath; including the Minister of Finance, future president Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.

The Memorial Service, held under the theme, "We Will Remember Them," was attended by several government officials, children, family members, friends, and loved ones of the deceased, religious (Christian and Moslem) leaders, among others.

The 13 officials murdered on April 22, 1980 included: Cyril A. Bright, Joseph J.F. Chesson, Sr., C. Cecil Dennis, Jr., Richard A. Henries, Sr., Charles D. B. King and D. Franklin Neal, Sr. Others were P. Clarence Parker III, James T. Philips, Jr., James A.A. Pierre, John W. F. Sherman, Frank J. Stewart, Sr., Frank E. Tolbert, Sr., and E. Reginald Townsend. Also honored were President William R. Tolbert, Jr., Ex-Commander Spurgeon Capehart, Major General Emmett W. Cooper, Commander Varney E. Dempster, Captain Gabriel Moore, General Charles E. Railey, Jr., H. Carey Thomas, A. Benedict Tolbert, and Lieutenant "Railroad" Vesseley.