Zaire - General

1991
Zaire invites UN to attend trial

BRUSSELS — President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire has invited the United Nations Human Rights Commission to the trial of officials held responsible for a violent incident last May at Lubumbashi University, the state news agency Azap said yesterday.

"Zaire has nothing to hide," Mr Mobutu said according to Azap, which is monitored by the Belgian news agency Belga.

"Whatever the political trauma and moral harm suffered by Zaire, the public authorities have insisted on restoring the whole truth, and nothing but the truth concerning this painful dossier," Mr Mobutu was quoted as saying.

A Zairese parliamentary commission last week said only one student was killed in violence on the campus at Lubumbashi, the Shaba capital, on the night of May 11.

However, Zairese opposition groups have claimed up to 150 students were butchered by elite troops flown in from Kinshasa to punish anti-Mobutu demonstrators.

Mr Mobutu last week ordered the trial of Koyagialo Ngbaye Te Geregba, the former governor of Shaba province in the south-east of Zaire. Exact charges against Mr Koyagialo were not announced.

Mr Koyagialo, one of several local officials arrested during an international outcry over the reported massacre, has been held in Kinshasa's central prison since June and has been stripped of his functions.

Zaire has been at odds with its former colonial ruler Belgium since the violence at Lubumbashi.

Accused

It suspended co-operation agreements with Belgium after Brussels had accused it of a cover-up.

Belgium then froze loans and insisted an international commission should be allowed into Zaire to investigate the incident. — Sapa-Reuter.
AN independent Zairean newspaper has revealed the existence of a secret network set up to keep alive the political party and ideas of President Mobutu Sese Seko "for ever, even at the price of blood and human sacrifice".

A report by the Zairean newspaper Umboja was quoted by the Belgian daily Le Peuple this week as saying the secret network aimed to "guarantee the durability of Mobutuism" and the future of everything linked to the president-founder of the MPR (People's Revolutionary Movement).

According to Umboja, the network, named Prima Curia, was responsible for the disappearance of many Zaireans whose only mistake was trying to put up a fight of opinion understood by Prima Curia as a threat to its own existence.

Sese Seko, who has ruled Zaire since a coup 25 years ago, said last April he was ending single-party rule and would hold a general election this year. But he has faced increasingly bold opposition since announcing the introduction of multi-party politics and several people were killed in last month's food riots.

Umboja also published a list of leading officials invited to join the network in 1985, and its goals, which included "saving the MPR from ideological and/or political mistakes" and "watching day and night over the security of party and state bodies".

Saps
Reuter
Dodging bandits on Africa’s hell run

THE taxi driver in Ndola guns his motor through an acute left-hand bend and we almost land up in a maize field.

The driver, Adam, has good reason to be apprehensive about what might lie ahead. He also has good reason not to be taking me along this particular road, although he was the only taxi man in town prepared to.

On this bend, at nine in the morning three months ago, Adam encountered a gang of bandits with AK-47s. They fired a burst through the rear window as he sped away, annihilating his dashboard and almost removing his left arm.

The bandits, Zaireans from across the border with Zambia, were after the taxi. Not this one, but another of two more Adam plies around the streets of Ndola.

Misumud Road, which runs north from the Copperbelt city to the closest point of access to Zaire, is less than 10 km long. But a kilometre for kilometre it must be one of the most hazardous stretches in Africa.

Adam claims to know that many of the bandits are actually members of Mobutu Sese Seko’s army, underpaid and underfed because of the erosion of Zairian finances.

That certainly is possible, although automatic weapons are freely available in southern Zaire. Hundreds found their way there, via Zambia, after the Rhodesian war. Banditry is rife along all routes linking the two countries, but not as monstrous as in this isolated area.

A kilometre short of the border, we come in sight of an army roadblock. Adam will go no further. He explains that the soldiers may think the taxi is a stolen vehicle and subject us to long and tedious questioning.

With dusk falling, we head back to Ndola. The road is deserted now, the people barricaded in their houses for the night. This is the time death stalks most of all.

Vehicles are not the only target of plunder along Misumud Road. The bandits also go for foodstuffs like mealie meal, sugar and cooking oil — all of which are in short supply in Zaire. And, of course, foreign currency.

Many Zambian farmers around the Copperbelt try to smuggle their produce across the border because they can get a higher price from Zaireans than the state co-operatives offer — and they get paid more promptly.

Fewer trucks, however, use Misumud Road these days. Most farmers would rather go the longer way around through Muhiliria or Chingola, linking up with conveyos on more secure routes.

Similar smuggling happens along the eastern border with Malawi, siphoning off a significant proportion of Zambia’s agricultural output.

But Zairean involvement in the Zambian economy has taken an even more destructive form in the past.

In 1980, a Lusaka bank teller was sorting through a pile of notes when he came upon two with the same serial number. On further inspection, he found several more duplicates.

A national audit of all bank stocks was ordered and revealed that Zambia had almost three times more kwachas in circulation than had officially been printed. The only possible explanation was that the additional notes had been introduced through Zaire, as payment for smuggled or illegally consigned goods. Hong Kong or Singapore were thought to be the most likely points of forgery.

Immediately, the government closed Zambia’s border and began withdrawing all the old kwachas. In the process of printing new currency, it decided to introduce a new denomination — a 100 kwacha note. Previously, the biggest had been 50 kwachas.

Some weeks later, an Indian shopkeeper in downtown Lusaka was tendered a 100 kwacha note, the first he had seen. He accepted it, then had second thoughts and took it to the bank.

It too was bogus, though obviously forged from stolen plates. Zambia’s 100 kwacha notes had been printed by then but not is.
Mobutu to mediate Rwandan ceasefire

DAR ES SALAAM: Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko was appointed by five eastern and central African countries this week to mediate a formal ceasefire in Rwanda between government troops and Rwandan Patriotic Front rebels.

A communiqué by leaders of Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Tanzania and Zaire after a one-day meeting in Dar es Salaam said they were confident a ceasefire could be achieved within two weeks.

Mobutu would be backed by staff of the secretary-general of the Organisation of African Unity, Salim Ahmed Salim, who also attended the meeting along with Sergio Vieira de Mello, an official of the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The two organisations were also asked to draw up a plan to ease the plight of refugees from the Rwandan conflict, which erupted last October 1 when Rwandan refugees invaded from neighbouring Uganda.

The meeting was attended by the presidents of Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda — Juvenal Habyarimana, Pierre Buyoya, and Yoweri Museveni respectively — and by Zairean Prime Minister Lunda Buluwa.

Meanwhile, the guns fell silent in northern Rwanda after Rwanda's Habyarimana declared a ceasefire on Monday. Residents on the Ugandan side of the common border at Kamba and Cymiki said the last gunfire, believed to be either mortars or artillery, was heard on Sunday night in areas around Byumba.

The ceasefire was agreed upon Sunday when the presidents of Rwanda and Uganda, Habyarimana and Museveni, met on the Tanzanian island of Zanzibar, with the Tanzanian president acting as a mediator.

Bukuje was unable to say whether the rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front had formally accepted the ceasefire.
Run the Gauntlet of Death Road

The border between Zambia's copperbelt and neighboring Angola was a dangerous area, with frequent armed clashes and border disputes.

Border patrol at the Zambian-Angolan border.

Despite the dangers, many people were forced to cross the border illegally to escape poverty and political instability.

The road was notorious for its many accidents and fatalities, due to poor road conditions and frequent roadblocks set up by local factions.

Border guards and smugglers often coordinated to facilitate the passage of goods and people, adding to the lawlessness of the area.

The region was a hub for smuggling and black market activity, with contraband goods such as ivory, rhino horn, and drugs being transported across the border.

The border issues continued to escalate, with tensions rising and the risk of violence increasing.

In response, the Zambian government increased security measures along the border, including the deployment of additional border guards and the construction of new checkpoints.

These efforts were aimed at curbing smuggling and drug trafficking, as well as reducing the number of illegal border crossings.

The border road remained a dangerous and unpredictable route for those who ventured there, with many facing serious risks and challenges.
PARIS — A French AIDS researcher faces charges of using Zairean children as human guinea pigs for his antidote.

The Ministry of Health yesterday ordered an inquiry into allegations that a leading French doctor experimented on his unproved AIDS antidote on patients here.

He is Professor Daniel Zaguri, of the Pierre et Marie Curie University in Paris, who made headlines in November 1986 when he claimed to have inoculated himself with his anti-AIDS serum.

Professor Zaguri later modified his claims of finding a complete cure to AIDS, saying that it worked only under certain specific conditions.

Medical circles here have also criticised his experiments in Kinshasa, capital of Zaire, where reports say he carried out tests on local children there to "perfect" his anti-AIDS antidote.
Rwandans agree to ceasefire

KINSHASA - Rebels of the Rwandan Popular Front have signed a ceasefire with the Rwandan government in a peace move brokered by Zaire, official sources said in Kinshasa on Monday.

The accord was signed in the Zaire capital on Sunday by representatives of both sides in the five-and-a-half-month old conflict.

The truce is to be followed by a general amnesty and direct negotiations between rebels and President Juvenal Habyarimana's government in Kigali.

Zaire President Mobutu Sese Seko has been a prime mediator in the fighting which began last October when mainly Tutsi rebels invaded the tiny central African country from Uganda.

Landlocked Rwanda, one of the most crowded countries in the world, has two main ethnic groups - the majority Hutu, 85 percent, and the Tutsi.

Tribal warfare in 1959 sent tens of thousands of Tutsi into exile. Even more fled after a new outbreak in 1963.

At last count in 1989, there were 79,000 living as refugees in Uganda and tens of thousands in Zaire, Tanzania and Burundi.

Major General Habyarimana ousted Rwanda's first president, Gregoire Kayibanda, in a bloodless coup in 1973 and founded the Revolutionary Movement for National Development.

This became the country's sole political party under a new constitution in 1978 and Habyarimana was confirmed as president in single-candidate elections in 1978, 1983 and 1988. - Sapa-Reuters
Premier looks at Zaire deal

By CURT VON KEYSERLINGCK

PREMIER GROUP subsidiary Premier International is negotiating the purchase of a food company owned by the government of Zaire.

As far as is known, this is the first time a black government has approved the sale of one of its undertakings to a South African company.

Zairean Prime Minister Mobutu Sese Seko has announced the acquisition, but a Premier spokesman says Professor Lokofi is jump- ing the gun.

“We are having talks and investigating the possibilities,” he says.

“We have not settled on a price and do not know the staff numbers involved.”

The deal involves Gecamines Development, the food division of Gecamines, a government mining concern.

Gecamines Development is a large producer of staple food in Zaire, but apparently operates at poor standards.

The negotiations have been welcomed by William Grua, the World Bank’s representa- tive to Zaire. He describes such a deal as a step to re- storing confidence in Zaire and confirming SA’s role in Africa.

Premier would bring in management expertise to bring Gecamines’ maize mills to SA standards. It would build silos and add more value to products.

Premier would also prob- ably become involved in nutrition practices and health services in the Shaba province and other aspects of the infrastructure.

The World Bank has been pressing Zaire to privatise Gecamines. It has criticised the way in which its assistance of $110-million for rehabilitation has been used.

A deal with Premier is seen as a first step in this direction.

The Gecamines copper mine in Shaba province is one of the world’s biggest.

Premier International operates in many black countries and has been active in Zaire for some time.
Banque Commerciale Zairoise, a Zairean bank with a Belgian parent, has opened a representative office in SA. Its main objective, says representative Willy du Bois, is to act as facilitator for SA businessmen wanting to make investments in the rest of Africa. He adds that this is the first time an African bank from outside SA has opened here.

Banque Commerciale Zairoise is registered in Kinshasa and has a network throughout Zaire. Its shareholders include Belgian bank Belgolais (25%), the government of Zaire (25%) and the public (50%). Belgolais in turn is a 53.4% subsidiary of Belgium’s largest bank, Generale de Banque. Du Bois says that through Generale and its subsidiaries Banque Commerciale Zairoise has access to more than 30 countries.

Belgolais concentrates on financing trade between Europe, SA and central Africa. Its strategy is to extend into other countries in Africa. It has subsidiaries in Burundi, Rwanda and Nigeria with European offices in Brussels, Antwerp and London. It has opened a representative office in SA because, according to Du Bois, substantial business is already transacted between Zaire, SA and Europe. “We chose SA above other African countries because of the size of the economy and because it is the financial centre of the continent,” he says.

As a representative office, Banque Commerciale Zairoise will not be able to do direct transactions with clients nor take deposits.
Now Air Zaire operating in SA

By John Millar

Air Zaire has become the latest airline to begin operating in South Africa and is one of several to introduce a regular service to this country.

The Air Zaire DC10 arrives every Friday afternoon at Jan Smuts and will return to Kinshasa one hour later.

This service follows the signing of a bilateral agreement between the two countries in March 1989 and South African Airways's decision to use Kinshasa as a refuelling stop on route to the Ivory Coast.

"Other airlines which will shortly begin scheduled services to South Africa include Cathay Pacific with its weekly non-stop flight between Hong Kong and Jan Smuts; Austrian Airlines with its non-stop flight between Vienna and Johannesburg and Air Seychelles.

At present 23 international airlines operate into South Africa with the figure expected to increase once the remaining apartheid legislation is dropped and overseas countries lift sanctions and trade restrictions.

Since the normalisation process began last year, South African Airways has managed to gradually increase its presence in Africa with several new destinations been added to its list.

These include Nairobi, Kinshasa, Abidjan, Madagascar and most recently a stop over in Casablanca.

Commenting on the additional competition SAA's Zelda Roux said the airline did not see this as a threat but as a challenge.

"We will obviously be looking at ways to improve our service which is part of our ongoing research and strategy," she said."
Zairean diamond facility contract goes to SA firm

MINING engineering company Van Eck & Lurie has won a multimillion-rand contract to replace the main treatment plant facilities at Zaire's main diamond mine at Mbuji-Mayi.

Operations manager Ivor Whitefield said yesterday the deal was concluded directly with Societe Miniere de Bakwanga (Miba), the state-controlled diamond mining company.

He would not say how much the contract was worth, but said Van Eck & Lurie had been active in Zaire for many years and had supplied Miba with diamond and other mineral processing equipment on a regular basis in the last 20 years.

Van Eck & Lurie director Robert Atabe said in a statement yesterday that the company would supply Miba with modular heavy media separation plants in two phases, equipment which would prove more cost-effective than initial proposals Miba investigated, involving the installation of new plant similar to that currently in operation.

The first phase of the contract was well under way and would be completed by January 1991. The second phase would start soon after. All equipment would be manufactured in SA and taken by road to Zaire.

Miba is Zaire's largest diamond producer, responsible for almost half of the country's official production in 1988 — 7.5-million carats out of a total 18.3-million carats worth about R7.26bn. Mbuji-Mayi is in the south-eastern Kasai province, the main diamond producing area. Production is normally at 85% of total Zairean operations although the amount of rough produced from Kimberlites varies as increasing.
Power to the people – a problem of perspectives

One of the problems with finding a new energy source in South Africa is that coal-fired electricity is so cheap.

This emerged at last week's inaugural conference of the Southern African Institute of Energy at Megawatt Park.

There is so much excess electricity supply at the moment that research into conserving energy or developing other forms seems hardly worthwhile.

South Africa's coal resources are expected to run out towards the middle of the next century.

Cheaply

The Government is contributing very little money for energy research and this week wound up the National Energy Council, (NEC), slowing down energy research even more.

But, it emerged, Eskom – with its vast resources – has at least been investigating hydro-electricity under the guidance of its principal hydrological engineer, Fanie du Plessis.

He waxed lyrical at the conference on the potential of the Zaire River.

That river alone can easily supply more than 100,000 MW relatively cheaply.

Present total consumption in Africa is 60,000 MW and in South Africa the record peak demand is 21,683 MW.

Eskom spokesman Anna Zoppa said the Zaire River, if turbines were installed at Inga and PioKa, could supply 150,000 MW – enough to meet Africa's needs, even with huge industrial growth, well into the next century.

Mr du Plessis said the Zaire scheme would require only small damming facilities to supply 100,000 MW because of the river's strong and constant flow.

For 150,000 MW, a bigger dam would be needed.

The problems would come in financing such a huge project and the subcontinent would first have to be politically stabilised.

Mr du Plessis assured some dubious delegates that sabotage problems such as those experienced in the Cahora Bassa scheme could be avoided by involving the community in the Cahora Bassa scheme this was not done.

Mini-hydro schemes, supplying power to a small community or industry, were also easy to install in isolated areas.

A United Nations document recently confirmed that all large-scale electrical energy generation projects, hydro-electricity does the least environment damage.

But because of small rivers and low rainfall, South Africa has a low potential for more hydro power.

On the issue of smokeless fuels, the general manager of Sasol Research and development and deputy general manager of Sasol, Dr Arie Geertsema, said the technology was there but clients were not prepared to pay for it.

While driving past smoky Sebokeng, he told delegates, his well-educated driver said blacks would not buy smokeless fuel "because it wouldn't clean the house".

Dr Geertsema said in thatched huts woodsmoke was a disinfectant and blacks perceived smoke in general as such.

"So it's not just a matter of making the brickettes. We wouldn't have the clients."

The deputy chairman of the Coal Division of Rand Mines, Allen Cook, said they were unable to sell cleaner burning coal or anthracite in the townships as "the mafia there won't let anyone into their business".

Dr G P Venter, group executive of the NEC, said clean coal technology should be developed. This entails taking the sulphur from coal before it is burned, eliminating the incidence of sulphur dioxide emission in coal-burning.

This is still too expensive to be viable.

Dr Venter warned that unless South Africa developed quickly to First World standards, it could become trapped in a retrogressive process that would degrade the environment drastically.

He recommended using a wider spectrum of the available resources – nuclear power, natural gas and "renewables" such as hydro-electricity, wind and solar power.

But the director of the Atomic Energy Corporation (AEC), Dr J W de Villiers, said renewables could never supply more than five to seven percent of the total output of the AEC, and vast amounts of capital and rapid political stability were needed for a sub-Saharan hydro-electricity scheme.

This was unlikely for some time, he said.

Coal resources would run out by the middle of the next century, so atomic power was the most feasible, as there was enough uranium to satisfy the country's needs well into the 22nd century.

This is where the vast amount of South Africa's energy research money is spent – on atomic energy.

Feasible

While talking of alternative energy, the director of the Energy Research Institute at Cape Town, Professor R K Duiker, said the Eskom policy for electricity for all was feasible – but could we really afford to provide electricity for 20 million people? Even developing countries did not have electricity in every home, he said.

In remote areas such as Transkei, women walk about 10 hours a week looking for wood. It might be more feasible to plant fuel wood, said Professor Duiker.

Reinhold Vijoen of the NEC pointed out 12 million people in the country chopped down about 10 million to 12 million indigenous trees a year to cook their meals.

JULIENNE DU TOT
Zaire’s ‘warrior’ may face defeat

KINSHASA - What does Marshal Mobutu Sese Seko, symbol of authoritarian one-man rule in Africa, have in common with Britain’s Queen Elizabeth or King Baudouin of the Belgians? Not a great deal, if the much-criticised record of Zaire’s president for the past 26 years is compared with that of the two figurehead monarchs.

But people who hope or believe that Mobutu can stay in power, defying the swelling ranks of those who want him to quit, say his salvation can only be as a head of state who reigns but does not govern.

Is such a change possible for a man whose name means “the warrior who knows no defeat”? Are the days of Zaire’s “national guide” numbered, whatever strategy he and his supporters adopt?

**Survival**

“I don’t think so,” replied Mr Kengo wa Dondo, Mobutu’s closest shadow for 20 years and a central player in moves to save the president.

“Man is an animal who adapts to all situations. For his political survival, the president will also have to adapt,” Kengo said in an interview in his luxurious Kinshasa home.

Western diplomats, whose governments relied on Mobutu for two decades to maintain stability in central Africa, are divided on the question.

“I don’t know if he will survive but it is clear he can never be president in the same way again,” said one.

“Who or what do you put in his place?” asked another. “He still has control of the military - at least those with bullets in their guns - and Zaire’s security services are very efficient.”

But many ordinary Zairians can no longer make ends meet.

Health, education, communications and public transport services have collapsed. Inflation is running at about 1 000 percent, average salaries are around 500 a month and public sector workers are perpetually on strike.

“This is 25 years of Mobutism,” said Marie-Pauline, looking up grimly at the giant cobwebs festooning the magnificent hall of Kinshasa’s colonial-built central post office.

**Pressure**

But Mobutu is moving fast to cope with the pro-democracy pressure which has already led to several bloody clashes between opposition supporters and the army.

Since April last year, he has accepted multiparty democracy - there are now 145 political parties - and conceded some executive power to new prime minister Mr Mulumba Lukoji.

After resisting stiffly, Mobutu agreed to convene a national conference to discuss Zaire’s political future. But the forum is way behind schedule because the main opposition parties insist that it be sovereign and not, as Mobutu wants, merely advisory.

**Congo**

“Zaire existed before him and it will exist after him.”

Zaire was called Congo before Mobutu introduced “authenticity” in the 1970s, ordering his people to abandon Christian names. Women were told to stop wearing wigs and miniskirts and men donned a hybrid type of suit called “abas-cost”.

Today short skirts are back in plenty and the Portuguese tailor who fitted the elite with their silk and mohair “abas-costa” has more conventional attire in his shop window.

Mobutism, as the cult was known, has run out of steam.

He has finished, he’s preparing his exile somewhere,” Tshikedzi said in an interview while Mobutu was away in the south of France, resting at his luxurious villa.

Some diplomats, and many well-heeled Zairians, think that Mobutu will rely on Kengo and his entourage of wealthy businessmen in the UDI (Union of Independent Democrats) party.

Kengo, who was born Leon Lubizic and is the son of a Polish Jewish doctor and a Rwandan mother, cannot be president according to a 1984 law restricting the office to full-blooded Zairians.

Tshikedzi, a co-chairman of the UPDS (Union for Democracy and Social Progress), dismisses talk that Kengo or an acolyte could head a transitional government with Mobutu as head of state.

“These are all lies. Those who advocate the Kengo solution forget there is a decisive new factor in Zaire - the people.”

-Sapa-Reuters.
Zaire rush to set up formal SA ties

KINSHASA. — Zaire is establishing diplomatic ties with South Africa and has appointed an army general as ambassador to SA, diplomatic sources here said yesterday.

And South African diplomatic sources told the Cape Times that SA was hoping to establish full diplomatic ties at embassy level with Kenya, Nigeria, Ivory Coast and Egypt by the end of this year.

Such a move would dovetail with Pretoria's proposal for an integrated regional development strategy for the alliling continent as the countries are among the economic "powerhouses" in their regions.

Kinshasa diplomats, who requested anonymity, identified the ambassador only as General Bolosi. They said he was close to President Mobutu Sese Seke and until now had charge of military security in the Zairean capital.

The SA Department of Foreign Affairs said yesterday that it was "making inquiries" about the report from Zaire.

A spokesman said the department had not been officially contacted with regard to establishing diplomatic ties.

The Department of Foreign Affairs has an office in Kinshasa, but it does not have diplomatic status.

The office has existed for about a year, but there has been no Zairean representation in SA.

If diplomatic links are established at ambassadorial level, it will be only the second African country in which South Africa has an ambassador.

Foreign Affairs officials feel it is more likely that the normal route will be followed and that a trade mission will be established first.

Zaire has long traded openly with SA despite a ban it agreed to with other members of the 51-nation OAU.

* Nigeria is moving cautiously on South Africa — partly because of volatile public opinion in both countries — although it does not rule out a possible visit to Lagos by President F W de Klerk, official sources in Lagos said yesterday. — Political Correspondent, Sapa-AP
SA checks reports of Zairean envoy

The Foreign Affairs Department said yesterday it was "making inquiries" about a report that Zaire was establishing diplomatic relations with SA and had appointed an army general as ambassador.

A spokesman said the department had not been contacted officially and inquiries were being made.

Sapa-AP reported yesterday from Kinshasa that although no official announcement had been made, diplomats had identified the new ambassador as a Gen Bolazi.

Foreign Affairs has had an office in Kinshasa for about a year. It has no diplomatic standing. Zaire is not represented in SA. If links are established at ambassadorial level, it will be only the second African country in which SA has an ambassador.

Foreign Affairs officials feel it is more likely that a trade mission will be established first. SA has offices in 17 other countries in Africa.

Zaire has long traded openly with SA despite an OAU ban and President Murtuza Sese Seko was the first African leader to receive President FW de Klerk.

At the OAU summit this month moderates called for economic sanctions to be lifted. They were outvoted by a majority who said sanctions should be retained, but the door should be left open to ease them if De Klerk continued with reforms.

Moderates, including Kenya and Madagascar, said they planned to trade openly and build diplomatic ties and air links.
Zaire may be marching to Pretoria.

KINSHASA. — Zaire is establishing diplomatic ties with South Africa and has appointed an army general as ambassador to Pretoria, say diplomatic sources in Kinshasa.

There was no official announcement. A Foreign Affairs spokesman in Pretoria said they had had no official notification.

Diplomats in Zaire identified the new ambassador only as General Boloz. — Sapa-AP.
Eskom, Zaire in power deal

By IAN ROBINSON

Eskom has signed an agreement with Zaire's Societe Nationale d'Electricite (SNEL) in Kinshasa to conduct feasibility studies for the construction of a power link between SA and a hydro-electric scheme on Zaire's Lualaba River.

Eskom would not only be the major user of power from the project, but would be involved in financing and the construction of lines from this site to other African countries.

Potential

It is believed that Eskom's participation will add credibility to the project and facilitate access to further capital through the World Bank and other international sources.

The project is planned to be undertaken in stages.

Power will be generated through diverting water at different points along the river and creating waterfalls rather than through the construction of a large dam.

SA has an excess electricity generating capacity of 40%. But Eskom forecasts that new capacity will be needed in about 10 years.

Present capacity is 35 000MW and it is estimated that an extra 4 400mW will be needed by the year 2004. Only 1 300mW will be forthcoming from Cahora Bassa, which means that more than 2 000mW will still be required.

SA's potential off-take in 2004 would represent only a fraction of the total potential capacity of the project, estimated at 100 000MW.
Zaire's papers now roars

KINSHASA - The Press of Zaire, once tame, even by African standards, now roars with rage at economic ruin and President Mobutu Sese Seko's failure to hold free elections as promised.

"Everything May Explode!" a banner headline on the Beowow said in May. In an accompanying cartoon, a weeping man asked: "Father, Father, why have you abandoned me?"

A full-page cartoon on the back page showed Mobutu watching riots in Kinshasa through binoculars and asking: "My God, is it the beginning of the end?"

L'Humanite, a leading independent paper, said in a front-page editorial: "The direct connection of the present misery of the people of Zaire and the present of Marshal Mobutu as head of state of this country has been incontestably established."

Only in the past year has Mobutu permitted criticism in the media.

-Sapi-AP
Violence Reigns in Beira Corridor

From the above, it is clear that violence is a significant issue in the Beira Corridor. The local community is struggling to maintain peace and order, and the government is taking steps to address the situation. However, more needs to be done, and international support is necessary to help the region recover.
**Zaireans in UK dole fraud**

LONDON — British government investigators have begun a major inquiry into an allegedly widespread fraud involving political asylum applicants from Zaire and Angola.

Official statistics show that about 4,000 people have arrived from the African republic, formerly the Belgian Congo, in the past three years to claim asylum in Britain — and there has been a sudden increase in Angolans arriving.

Many came through other European countries and the Zaireans alone have made around 15,000 claims, amounting to millions of pounds, for social security payments.

More than 2,500 Zaireans applied for asylum in the first four months of this year alone and the figure appears to be rising on a steep curve.

The fraud investigation is still at an early stage but six people have so far been prosecuted for making bogus supplementary benefit claims in up to nine false identities.

The fraud was first identified by clerical staff at the Immigration Service public inquiry office in Croydon, near London, where applicants for political asylum who are already in Britain go to register their claim.

Once they have registered, which they can do without conclusive proof of identity, they are given a certificate saying their application is under Home Office consideration and the certificate may be taken to any social security office as proof of entitlement to supplementary benefit.

Clerical officers at the public inquiry office became increasingly suspicious as they recognised the same faces making claims in different names and began to keep photographs of previous applicants.

Social security investigators were brought in and it was found that there were many more social security claims being made than numbers of Zaireans claiming refugee status. — Daily Telegraph.
R10m Zairean order for Busaf

DORBYL's bus manufacturing subsidiary Busaf had been awarded a R10m export order for semi-trailer buses from Zairean passenger transport company City Train, a statement released yesterday said, 10/7/91.

Busaf has been pursuing export markets in Africa in a bid to offset depressed local bus sales.

Dorbyl Transport Products executive director Ray Karshagen said the first four buses of the R10m order had already been shipped to Zaire from Busaf's manufacturing plant in Port Elizabeth.

Karshagen said the specialised design of semi-trailer buses and commitment to after sales service in Zaire were the main factors that earned Busaf the contract above other international suppliers.

He said Busaf's technical staff worked extremely closely with City Train representatives on the project. "The prospect of developing a long-term relationship with City Train is, indeed, an exciting one."
KINSHASA.—Two Zairian government ministers beat a hasty retreat after one was injured by opposition protesters who broke up a pro-government rally, journalists who witnessed the incident said yesterday.

The incident took place in eastern Zaire at the town of Bakavu, a stronghold of the opposition DCF (Federalist Christian Democracy), whose leaders had called on local people to chase the ruling party out of the region. Opposition parties are threatening to boycott a national political conference due to start on July 31 unless the government drops plans to submit its decisions to a referendum. — Sapa-Reuters
great embarrassment for security chiefs who recently introduced new measures to stop intelligence leaks to Protestant extremists.

**Zairean Ministers attacked**

KINSHASA — The Zairean Ministers of mines and information beat a hasty retreat after one was injured by a stone thrown at his face by angry opposition supporters who broke up a pro-government rally. Journalists reported yesterday from Bukavu, a town in eastern Zaire.

13 killed in Java bus crash
Doctor tests Aids vaccine for monkeys on children

CHICAGO — A French researcher injected an experimental Aids vaccine into 22 children in Zaire, a newspaper reported yesterday.

However, the researcher said he did it "in full accordance with French and Zairean ethical regulations".

The experiments were outlined in a report — obtained by the Chicago Tribune — by the US National Institute of Health (NIH), which summarised a 10-month investigation into efforts to develop an Aids vaccine.

In July 1986, Dr Daniel Zagury of Paris obtained from NIH researcher Bernard Moss a recombinant virus developed for preliminary tests involving animals but never before used on humans, the newspaper said.

Mr Moss gave Dr Zagury the virus only after being assured it would be used for tests on monkeys. Dr Zagury used the vaccine on 22 children in November and December of 1986, the newspaper said.

The NIH report said the agency was trying through diplomatic channels "to provide for independent review of medical and research records that may establish the nature and degree of any harm experienced by human subjects in this research".

"It is true that we immunised children," Dr Zagury said. "This was done at the request of their parents, who signed informed declarations of consent in full accordance with French and Zairean ethical regulations."

Dr Zagury said none of the children had developed complications and all remained in good health. — Sapa-AP.
Zambian

team to ask
for money

Star Africa Service

LUSAKA — A high-powered Zambian delegation will visit Paris this week to plead with international donors to reduce their pressure on Kenneth Kaunda's government to reduce the country's huge debts. The delegation, headed by Finance Minister Rabson Chongwe, will also try to persuade the Paris Club meeting to release to Zambia the first instalment of the $650 million (about £1.8 billion) it pledged in aid last year.

The Africa News Organisation reports the money is being withheld because the Zambian government has not met all the conditions laid down in the pledge. Six months ago, Zambia's International debt stood at $5.4 billion (about £1.8 billion).

Last month, the Kaunda government rejected donor demands to raise the price of maize meal.

In a letter to donors in May, President Kaunda said if he raised the maize price his United National Independence Party could easily lose elections scheduled for October.
Mobutu appoints top critic as Zaire PM

KINSHASA - President Mobutu Sese Seko has divided his political opponents and stunned Zaire by appointing his main critic as prime minister of the central African state.

Some rival Zairean opposition leaders angrily rejected Mobutu's dramatic move in naming Etienne Tshisekedi wa Mulumba to lead the government, indicating that the fragile opposition coalition was falling apart.

"Mobutu is just trying to distract the people from the country's problems," said Ngoua Karl-Bond, a former prime minister who heads the opposition Union of Federalists and Independent Republicans.

Leo Songo Amba, a leader of the Democratic and Social-Chrétian Party, said mainstream opposition parties had signed a pact of united opposition to Mobutu.

Tshisekedi, a 58-year-old lawyer who served as minister in Mobutu's early governments but later became a "staunch critic," did not immediately comment on his appointment.

Jailed in the early 1980s for treason but later released, Tshisekedi last year said Zaire's deep economic and political problems could only be solved by Mobutu's departure.

The mineral-rich country's economy is in a tailspin and dozens of people have been killed in food riots in the capital Kinshasa and provincial cities. - EPA-Reuters.
Mobutu's back is to the wall

VEN in Zaire's political change is on its way. Following the pattern of French-speaking Africa, President Mobutu Sese Seko has called a national conference to chart the road to multiparty elections. Its original date of July 31 has been put off to July 31 for "technical reasons"; but the president is shifting.

Most Zaireans were born after Mr Mobutu took power in 1965, since when it has been widely agreed, both by his foreign allies and perhaps by most Zaireans, that nobody else could hold that vast country together. His propaganda, including an almost devotional film preceding the nightly television news, used to impress even the cynical.

But the magic has faded. Over the past year the French-inspired turn towards democracy in Africa has challenged the President's statecraft. In April 1990 he announced the dawn of a multiparty era, seeming to anticipate demands and so turn them to his advantage.

Yet Mr Mobutu's frequent changes of tack encourage the opposition. At first he stood down as head of what used to be Zaire's single party, now renamed the People's Renewal Movement, to place himself above politics. This fiction was dropped in April 1991, when the party faithful "persuaded" him to reclaim the reins.

More than 180 groups have been registered as opposition parties. The leaders of the more credible ones see that the reluctant statecraft is vulnerable.

They declined to join a proposed constitutional conference in March, which was quickly abandoned. They similarly stand aloof from the proposed national conference, although the latest prime minister, Mulumba Lukoji, promises that it will be "sovereign".

In the capital, Kinshasa, people watch the television from Brazzaville, across the river in Congo. Daily, from February through to May, they witnessed the humiliation at a sovereign national conference of President Denis Sassou-Nguesso, who seems likely to be defeated, at Congo's multiparty elections to be held next year. Zaire's opposition would like to inflict a similar humiliation on President Mobutu.

But people do not yet really believe in the opposition. Several times it has been called for strikes and proksats, and been ignored. The three main opposition figures, Nguza Karl Bond, Tshisekedi wa Mulumba and Iléo Ndongo Ambe, have all been prominent in the Mobutu circle. (Mr Nguza was prime minister, and twice foreign minister, with intervening periods in jail and exile). Yet time favours Mr Mobutu's opponents.

The non-government press makes ever bigger demands and criticisms. Strikes have grown common and are often successful; partly because of work stoppages, the "mining company Geaminex declared force majeure on copper deliveries in May. If Mr Mobutu cannot get minerals to his foreign customers, they will walk away.

The opposition leaders, now welcome in Brussels, Washington and Paris, have helped to undermine Mr Mobutu's role as a defender of Western interests. Belgian aid has been frozen, and France no longer provides officer and training for the elite parachute brigade.

The new head of America's mission in Kinshasa is Melissa Wells, who in her previous post in Mozambique, persistently criticized both that country's one-party government and its ruthless opponents. Unlike her predecessors, she has no obvious intelligence pedigree, and declares that she will monitor human rights in Zaire.
The SA Defence Force has confirmed it trained units of the Zairean army earlier this year.

In a statement yesterday, the SADF said it had been involved in training an infantry company of the Zairean army in basic infantry tasks.

Fifteen army instructors were training the infantry company between May 6 and June 21 this year.

A limited quantity of equipment and personal gear was supplied, the statement said.

"This assistance follows help given to the Zairean navy last year and is supportive of the South African effort to establish and extend diplomatic relations with its neighbours in Africa."

However, no SADF personnel were presently in Zaire.

According to a report in The Guardian newspaper in London, the SADF was at the military base of Kitoma. Kinshasa newspapers have claimed the SADF, with an Israeli group, were involved in the establishment of a crack Zairean army unit, the Hiboux, which has been accused of supporting a campaign against opponents of President Mobutu Sese Seko.
into a killer, says CCB man

According to former Military Intelligence operative Nico Basson, Van der Merwe was called up and reported for national service in 1988. In April 1989 after the implementation of Resolution 435 he joined Military Intelligence in Namibia. There was no official training; however Van der Merwe’s tasks included spreading disinformation about Swapo and its members, and an involvement with CCB hit squads.

Basson said Van der Merwe’s involvement in CCB hit squad activity was most intense from April 1989 to November of the same year. During this time he eliminated three Swapo activists and one DTA organiser in an attempt to minX Swapo’s credibility.

Basson said the sinister plot behind the activities of the CCB was a gruesome form of mind control used to indoctrinate and discipline members of the organisation.

Van der Merwe’s experiences confirm this. He and other CCB members were introduced to a witchdoctor, known only as Ali, by Kleynhans. The witchdoctor travelled on a Tanzanian passport and was brought into Namibia by military intelligence.

Basson said Ali was based in Windhoek and CCB members were told by Kleynhans that the witchdoctor would protect them both spiritually and emotionally. He would also give them “protection” when they went out on an assignment. The members were under orders to attend sessions with Ali and no agent could execute his duty without consulting the witchdoctor first.

Kleynhans was totally convinced of Ali’s power, Basson said. The witchdoctor did a series of tests on each cell member to determine his luck and other criteria which concerned him.

According to Van der Merwe, Ali brought cell members into contact with evil spirits who communicated through Ali’s “temple” via a pot known as a “kalbas”. The witchdoctor was also responsible for specifying the manner in which the assassination was to be carried out and the weapon which was to be used.

Van der Merwe had to pay “the spirit” for this service and the money would be provided by Kleynhans who would pay it out of Comops secret funds, according to Basson.
Sangoma's muti turned me

A DISSIDENT member of the Civil Co-operation Bureau claims to have been "trapped" into CCB activities, including murders, by bizarre rituals administered by a Zairean sangoma, according to the authoritative Swiss journal Journal de Genève.

Jacques van der Merwe, a 28-year-old member of the CCB, claims in two lengthy interviews with Journal de Genève's Southern Africa correspondent, Kim Gordon-Bates, to have assassinated four people in Namibia.

The murders he confessed to included the killing (with a Makarov pistol) to make it appear a Swaipo murder) of a Democratic Turnhalle Alliance official and three members of Swaipo's military wing, Plan.

"I was doing my military service when I was approached by people from Military Intelligence who first recruited me into the Comtop (Communications Operations), then the CCB," Van der Merwe told the paper.

"We were led to believe that with the blacks in power there would be massacres — the end of everything and the end of all civilization — and we had to do everything to stop Swaipo from coming to power."

Gordon-Bates wrote that the strategy used to turn Van der Merwe into a killing machine was black magic.

"One day my colonel took me by the arm and said that he was going to introduce me to someone who could protect me."

This is how Van der Merwe met the sangoma, "a Zairean who spoke fluent French and English but not Afrikaans. He first thing he did was to put an envelope containing a black powder on to my torso. I felt the envelope heat up, then catch fire, all by itself. The sangoma said that this was the way to get rid of evil spirits."

Van der Merwe gradually fell under the spell of the sangoma, until he was seeing him every day. "He gave me amulets that I had to wear, oils that I put in my bath, and he gave me demonstrations that convinced me that he had supernatural powers."

Gordon-Bates wrote that Van der Merwe showed him the black bag with which he communicated with spirits — a flask containing little flecks of gold floating in a liquid that looked like glycerine.

Van der Merwe and his sangoma never talked politics; they just talked about powers and occult protection, wrote Gordon-Bates.

"Every time I had to go off on a mission, I went to see him, whether it was to distribute tracts or to kill someone."

In the latter case, the sangoma "led me into a cemetery, towards a tomb protected by bars.

"I knelt down, back towards the tomb and prayed while he called, six times, 'Allo Allo Senekela Paredeki To Magique' ... I felt a hand on my head while the sangoma was far away from me, and I heard a voice talk to me in Afrikaans."

Afterwards, the sangoma "advised me which weapon and which road to take."

Van der Merwe said that the supernat-
Zaire trade: SAA ‘spanner in the works’

Business Editor

NOW that Africa is opening up to SA business people SAA is making it almost impossible for them to continue a lucrative trade with Zaire, accuses Paul dos Santos, MD of Sopex Importers and Exporters (Pty).

He said four flights a week between Johannesburg and Kinshasa, which other national airlines used to provide, had been replaced by only one by SAA and one by Air Zaire.

Appealing to other Cape Town business people to help him put pressure on SAA to provide more frequent flights, Dos Santos said Air Zaire was "unreliable," with frequent cancellations.

If the situation did not improve he would close down his SA operation through which he had been able to trade with other African countries throughout the sanctions era and carry on export and import business with Zaire from a European base.

"You can fly to Europe from Kinshasa throughout the week. "But if you are going from Johannesburg by SAA you have to fly out one day and back the next, which is too short a time."

The chairman of the Cape Chamber of Industries Foreign Trade Committee, William Storey, agreed that it was now more difficult to do business with Zaire than when Sabena provided two flights a week and TAP and UTA one each.

Storey said that on his last trip to Kinshasa he was stranded for 24 hours when Air Zaire cancelled his flight without warning.

"They said there 'might be another plane tomorrow', without saying what time."

"And unlike professional, First World, airlines Air Zaire does not provide accommodation for passengers who are stranded by the cancellation of a flight."

Dos Santos said there was a lot of business to be done in Zaire, where he was a director of companies with interests ranging from diamonds to coffee and timber.

He had heard that foreign airlines were willing to form a pool and Zairian authorities were willing, but SAA had objected.

"Zaire kept its door open to SA in spite of sanctions. "Now they are being lifted, SAA is hampering trade between the two countries."

A spokesman for SAA said that it had exercised its right to fly the route together with Air Zaire under a reciprocal agreement, excluding other carriers.

"We are continually looking at all parts of our service and trying to improve them — particularly in-flight service."
The West should do the right thing in Zaire, says the Financial Times

Mobutu's friends must become his enemies

AFTER 26 years of corruption, mismanagement and abuse of human rights, the reign of President Mobutu Sese Seko in Zaire is drawing to a close. Should the country's national conference on democracy, now trying to get under way in Kinshasa, succeed in its efforts to negotiate constitutional reform, Zaire could realise its enormous potential; failure risks the country's disintegration, with potentially serious consequences for the surrounding states.

That prospect alone should be reason enough for Western concern, but there is a further reason. As in Angola and Ethiopia, both erstwhile proteges of the Soviet Union, the end of the Cold War helped to knock away the props of an African dictator.

This time, however, the dictator's patron is Washington, not Moscow. Insofar as Mr Mobutu owes his survival to the backing of the US, France and Belgium, these states have a heavy responsibility for Zaire's plight today.

Zaire was one of the African states least prepared for independence. It has had a history of secession movements. Mr Mobutu's seizure of power in 1965, with US support, seemed to promise a restoration of order and an economic revival. In his early years an economy based on copper, cobalt, diamonds, coffee, palm and timber grew around 7 percent annually in real terms.

With the encouragement of Western institutions, however, there was also heavy borrowing and increasing debt. A policy of nationalisation did not help, nor did the fall in copper prices and rise in fuel prices in the early 1970s. The economy began a catastrophic decline.

Throughout this process Mr Mobutu consolidated his power and grew wealthy. To ensure the protection of the West, he played on fears of the regional consequences should he turn to Moscow instead.

Twice the US, France and Belgium intervened to help save him from rebel uprisings, while a succession of debt reschedulings and loans have been approved for geo-political rather than economic reasons.

In return, Mr Mobutu has been Washington's loyal regional ally, allowing Zaire to be used as a base for operations by the UNITA guerrillas in neighbouring Angola.

The events now unfolding in Zaire, coupled with the recent Angolan settlement, provide an opportunity to end this unhealthy relationship. This month's devaluation may be an important step towards economic reform, but there have been too many previous false starts to take that on trust, unless there is political reform as well.

The country's opposition parties deserve encouragement. Human rights in Zaire should be closely monitored, and future aid should be conditional on a successful outcome to the Kinshasa conference.

--- Financial Times News Service
Police in Zaire shot protesters, say witnesses

ABIDJAN — Police in Zaire shot and killed several people during clashes with pro-democracy protesters on Monday, according to reports which reached the Ivory Coast yesterday.

Agence France Presse quoted witnesses as saying at least three people were shot dead in the capital, Kinshasa. It said thousands of people were involved in the protest. Cars were burnt and shops were looted.

The opposition coalition Union for Democracy and Social Progress claimed police killed dozens of demonstrators in Kinshasa and other towns.

"We are in possession of a list of 20 names of people shot down by bullets," Omer N'Kamba, an opposition leader told the La Libre Belgique newspaper.

Zaire's ambassador to Bel- gium, Kimbuhu Moyanso, denied there were any deaths, saying it was impossible to confirm the reports.

The Central African nation could not be reached by telephone or telex yesterday.

Zaire's state-controlled radio and news agency reported "violent scenes", but said they were cost-of-living protests.

Opposition leaders last week urged people to take to the streets on Monday to demand a national conference to appoint an interim government and organise the country's first free elections since independence from Belgium in 1960.

President Mobutu promised in April last year to hand over power to a democratically elected government within a year but has failed to do so.

He also agreed to a conference with limited powers. Opposition leaders claim Mr. Mobutu has loaded the meeting with his supporters. They are boycotting the conference, which officials said would resume today.

Sapa-AP.
Zairean police accused of killing demonstrators

KINSHASA — Three people were shot dead, shops were looted and cars were burned when armed Zairean police clashed with pro-democracy protesters, witnesses said.

The opposition coalition, the Union for Democracy and Social Progress, claimed police had shot dozens of demonstrators dead in the capital, Kinshasa, and other towns.

Zairean Ambassador to Belgium Kimbula Moyo said there had been any deaths. State radio reported "violent scenes", but said they were the result of protests against the soaring cost of living.

Last week, opposition leaders urged people to take to the streets on Monday to demand a national conference to appoint an interim government and organise the country's first free elections since independence from Belgium in 1960.

President Mobutu sese Seko has agreed to a conference with limited powers, but it stalled last month with opposition leaders alleging that their representatives were being kept out while Mobutu hosted the meeting with his supporters.

The opposition is boycotting the conference, which official sources said would resume today.

Opposition leaders have promised to keep up the pressure until they oust Mobutu, a soldier who took power 26 years ago. He is accused of gross corruption and brutal suppression of opponents.

Under pressure from strikes, protests and former Western supporters, Mobutu promised in April last year to hand over power to a democratically elected government within a year. But no elections have been scheduled and meetings of opposition meetings have been broken up by security forces.

Witnesses in Kinshasa said they had seen police shoot and kill three people on Monday, a woman and two men.

Thousands of people were involved in the protest, setting up barricades, burning cars and looting shops. It was not clear whether the violence started before or after police fired into the crowds.

"We are in possession of a list of 20 names of people shot down by bullets," opposition spokesman Omer N'Kamba was quoted as saying by the Brussels daily newspaper La Libre Belgique.

Another opposition spokesman in Brussels, Justine Kasavuba, told the BBC that paramilitary police had raided the coalition's Kinshasa office and shot at least 10 people dead.

N'Kamba said police had also killed protesters in the towns of Ngaga, Matete, N'Djili and Limete. He said his information came from coalition members who had telephoned from Zaire.

Belgium, France and the US have cut aid to Zaire because of alleged human rights violations. — Sapa-AP.
Zairean inflation is 3000%.

BRUSSELS. — A former prime minister of Zaire, Mr. Kengo wa Dondo, said yesterday that the central African country was on the verge of a social explosion with inflation running at a rate of some 3000%.

Mr Wa Dondo, who served as prime minister under Zaire's autocratic President Mobutu Sese Seko during the 1980s, was quoted by the Belgian news agency Belga as predicting that the explosion would involve not just the capital Kinshasa, but Lubumbashi in the mineral-rich southern Shaba province.

The price of manioc flour had quintupled since a devaluation of Zaire's currency — halving its value against the US dollar — a few days ago.

Mr Wa Dondo said he hoped a new government would emerge from the national conference which is supposed to plot a democratic future for the country.

Delay

The conference has met only sporadically since it opened last month because of disputes over accrediting delegates, and the government announced another delay on Saturday.

President Mobutu has ruled the country with an iron grip for more than 25 years. Most opposition groups want him to step down.

Lubumbashi, a city of one million, revolves around Gecamines, its copper output badly slashed by the caving in of one of its underground pits last year.

The city's lifeline is trade with South Africa, explaining why South Africans stay at the Sheraton Hotel, why there is a flight to Johannesburg once a week and you can buy Cape apples on the streets. All Gecamines heavy equipment is imported from down south, and has been for many years. — Sapa-Reuter, Daily Telegraph
Dust rises in run-up to Zambian elections

Argus Africa News Service

LUSAKA. - The ruling United National Independence Party (Unip) and its main rival, the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) have released their lists of candidates for the elections to be held on October 31.

While the Unip list raised some dust because of the inclusion of traditional chiefs, the MMD list also did not go down well because of claims that some unpopular candidates have been imposed on constituencies.

Members in some constituencies have complained that they have been ignored in preference for big-name candidates who have been brought in from outside. Some disgruntled members are threatening to stand as independent candidates.

One MMD personality, Mr. Baldwin Nkumbula, said the candidates had been imposed from the top instead of being chosen by the rank and file.

Meanwhile the Unip campaign is also unravelling, with one of the 12 chiefs named as candidates by President Kenneth Kaunda announcing that he was pulling out of the campaign.

The chief has apparently succumbed to pressure from his subjects who appealed to him not to involve the chieftainship in politics.

One of the political parties, Chaka, which stands for Sovereignty of Traditional Chiefs, has threatened to go to court to prevent chiefs from standing.

The role of the media in Zambia is becoming one of the main issues in the elections run-up and a clash between the government and journalists' organisations is looming following an ultimatum by the Press Association to the government to sack its "unprofessional" media heads or face a court injunction.

The Press Association of Zambia, Paza, says the performance of these government-appointed heads of the state-owned media is unethical, grossly unfair and biased in favour of President Kaunda's Unip.

The heads of radio and television and newspapers are appointed by President Kaunda and are mostly non-journalists but trusted members of the ruling party.
Cases a Day

300 new AIDS

Police Aids tests

not compulsory

If caller has unusual questions

...and others峡谷 the expression...
KINSHASA: Prime Minister Amos Latey left for Washington yesterday to discuss a funding cut-off after the IMF announced this week that Zaire was no longer eligible to borrow money because its overdue payments totalled $6.7 million ($255 million).
PARATROOPERS
mutiny in
BRAZZAVILLE

BRAZZAVILLE (Congo) — About 3,000 paratroopers mutinied yesterday, forcing the closure of Zaire’s main international airport and pillaging stores in the capital’s main commercial district.

Diplomatic sources in Kinshasa said the soldiers involved in the attacks were from the Diet Brigade who have not been paid for several months.

Zaire’s government is bankrupt, its currency virtually worthless, and Western donors have suspended most aid. Western governments have been pushing President Mobutu Sese Seko to install a democratically elected, multiparty government after 26 years of one-party rule in the former Belgian Congo.

But a national conference that was to name an interim government to rule until elections can be held remains blocked by disputes on who will attend. More than a month after it started.

National conferences have ousted long-reigning military leaders in Benin, Congo, Niger and Mali, and forced civilian President Omar Bongo of Gabon to hold multiparty elections that led to power-sharing with the opposition.

Strikes and violent protests for democracy have forced 18 of Africa’s 49 sub-Saharan nations to legalise political opposition in the past two years.

The Zaire soldiers first pillaged a supply depot at the airport, which is about 40 km from the city centre, the sources said.

The mutineers then drove into the city centre in military vehicles and sacked shops on the main street, July 30 Boulevard.

Firing was heard in two neighbourhoods, Mbinza and Gombe, home to the city’s wealthier residents and most expatriates, the diplomatic sources said.

The sources declined to be further identified.

Government-controlled Kinshasa Radio said government Ministers were meeting to find a way to persuade the soldiers to return to their barracks.

A foreign ministry spokesman in Brussels said: “We know there were incidents, involving elements of the military or other armed forces. The sources added Belgians have been warned to stay at home.

The scheduled flight of Sabena had to be rescheduled at the last minute to Brazzaville, the capital of neighbouring Congo, because “of the political situation in Zaire”, Belgium’s national carrier said in a statement.

“Shots were heard,” the foreign affairs ministry official said of the incidents, but she could not elaborate on whether people were injured or killed. — Sapa-Reuters.
**Zairean soldiers go on looting rampage**

BRUSSELS — Zairean soldiers went on a looting rampage in their capital, Kinshasa, yesterday, firing shots and sending civilians scurrying for cover.

Zaire's ambassador to Belgium, Kinshasa's mayor, said soldiers from several brigades pillaged shopping districts in Kinshasa as well as N'djili international airport.

Witnesses said the soldiers, apparently angry about low pay, ransacked most big shops in the city centre and other stores in the port area where some shopkeepers opened fire to ward them off.

In Pretoria, the SA Foreign Affairs Department advised prospective travellers to Zaire that Kinshasa's airport had been temporarily closed, and Zaire's normal business and tourism activities had come to a standstill.

Kimbula said the 81st Brigade based at Camp Ceta near the airport had started the trouble on Sunday night, but the situation was slowly returning to normal after the mediation of French military personnel and the French ambassador.

Zaire state radio, monitored in neighbouring Congo, said the government had opened negotiations with the soldiers to find a compromise on pay. Kimbula said President Mobutu Sese Seko wanted to resolve the situation through talks.

The ambassador's statement did not say how many soldiers took part in the disturbances, nor did it indicate whether there were casualties.

The main Zairean opposition party linked the disturbances to the breakdown of a much-postponed national conference which is supposed to chart a new political future for the state. — Saga-Reuters.
Mutiny in Zaire closes airport

BRAZZAVILLE. — About 3,000 paratroopers mutinied yesterday, pillaging stores in the capital's main commercial district and forcing the closure of Kinshasa airport.

Congolese diplomatic sources said the soldiers involved in the attacks were from the 31st Brigade and had not been paid for several months. Zaire's government is bankrupt and its currency virtually worthless.

A national conference that is to name an interim government until multi-party elections can be held remains blocked by disputes.
Mobutu losing his grip: France, Belgium rush troops to Zaire

INTERNATIONAL

A coalition of French and Belgian forces and UN troops captured the eastern Zairean city of Bukavu today, and (from reports) its government is considering the ouster of Mobutu Sese Seko, the ill-fated president of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The UN subcommission on the Congo, headed by a French diplomat, is meeting with local leaders to discuss a multi-party constitution.

The coalition's action comes amid a series of political developments that have raised questions about Mobutu's ability to maintain control. Recent opposition leaders in Zaire have called for the president's resignation, and there are reports of widespread protests against his government. The international community is also concerned about the ongoing conflict in the region.

The capture of Bukavu is a significant development, as it marks the first time that foreign forces have介入了 Congo's internal affairs. The UN subcommission's meeting with local leaders is expected to focus on the future political direction of the country, including the drafting of a new constitution.

The situation in Zaire continues to be volatile, with reports of violence and unrest in various parts of the country. The international community is closely monitoring the situation, and there are calls for a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

Background

According to reports, Mobutu has been in power for many years, having come to power through a military coup in 1965. He has faced numerous challenges to his rule, including internal opposition and international pressure. The recent developments in Zaire highlight the need for a democratic and inclusive political process in the country, which can provide stability and peace.

The international community has been involved in efforts to resolve the conflict in Zaire, including the deployment of peacekeeping troops and the provision of humanitarian assistance. The recent capture of Bukavu by the coalition forces is a step in the right direction, but ongoing efforts are needed to achieve a lasting resolution to the conflict.

Conclusion

The capture of Bukavu by the coalition forces is a significant development in the ongoing conflict in Zaire. The international community is closely monitoring the situation and calling for a peaceful resolution. The future political direction of the country will be discussed at the UN subcommission's meeting with local leaders, which is expected to focus on drafting a new constitution.
Kinhasa looks worse than Beirut - witness

Exodus gathers pace

Zaire
Belgians fleeing Zaire arrive in SA

HUNDREDS of Belgian nationals fleeing Zaire's civil unrest began arriving yesterday at Lanseria Airport, north of Johannesburg, and in Harare.

Several hundred people, mostly women and children, arrived yesterday and last night. Most are expected to fly direct to Belgium in the next few days.

At least another 65 refugees arrived in Harare and more, possibly hundreds, were expected to follow.

The Belgians have fled rioting and looting; mostly in the capital Kinshasa, in which 15 people had died by yesterday.

Some interviewed at Lanseria said they had fled Lubumbashi as a precaution when soldiers began looting in the small copper mining town. Some planned to wait in SA before returning to Zaire. Others said they were on their way back to Belgium.

A businessman said people had panicked after hearing a radio report on the rioting.

They had assembled at the airport where they boarded a charter flight on a firstcome-first-served basis. The refugees said they did not know why SA had been chosen as their destination.

A Belgian woman said after arriving in Harare, that although violence had not spread from Kinshasa to the southern

Belgians

Shaba region bordering Zambia, diplomats had urged families of Shaba’s estimated 4,000 expatriates to leave immediately.

The refugees declined to be identified, saying they feared for their husbands, whom they had left behind to staff copper mines, businesses and foreign assistance programme projects.

A Belgian embassy spokesman in Har-

are, Benoit Stardaert, said his country had an 11,000-strong expatriate community in Zaire.

An SA Foreign Affairs spokesman said all SA nationals in Zaire had been accounted for and were at the residence of the country’s representative in Kinshasa.


To Page 2
Troops deployed as 15 die in Zaire riots

BRUSSELS — About 15 people have died in two days of riots in Zaire's capital, Kinshasa, and demonstrators have set fire to President Mobutu Sese Seko's party headquarters, the official news agency AZAP said yesterday.

The agency, monitored in Brussels, said anti-government demonstrators had also looted the headquarters of the ruling Mouvement Populaire de la Revolution (MPR) in the second day of violence in the central African country.

The report quoted a local source as saying the dead included eight looters killed in an explosion in a chemical factory.

Drunken soldiers shot dead at least one amateur photographer and bodies were found in several districts of the capital, AZAP said. It reported that many others were injured.

French troops arrived in Zaire yesterday to protect foreign nationals during the riots, which were sparked by mutinous soldiers in the capital and were reported to have spread to the mining town of Kolwezi.

Belgium Prime Minister Wilfried Martens sent 500 troops in an operation coordinated with US and French authorities to protect 10,000 Belgian nationals and evacuate those who wished to leave.

Witnesses said they had seen the bodies of eight people killed in the worst rioting and looting in Kinshasa in 30 years. The city was almost deserted yesterday except for occasional military patrols.

The violence began on Monday when soldiers took to the streets to protest against a missed pay rise. French-trained Zairean paratroops also took over the airport and started breaking into nearby customs warehouses.

Regular troops have retaken the airport. The Okapi Hotel, one of Kinshasa's biggest, and a Belgian-owned supermarket were looted on Monday as were homes of Belgian and French nationals.

Looters also attacked the home of Isaac Kalonji Mutumbayi, president of Zaire's national conference, which has been trying to make democratic reforms after 26 years of Mobutu's strong-arm rule.

The main Zairean opposition parties have said the looting is linked to frustration over the slow pace of the conference, which has met for only a few days since it was convened on August 7.

The French Foreign Ministry said two companies of French troops flown in from bases in the Central African Republic and Chad took up positions at Kinshasa's international airport and also were protecting the French ambassador's residence. It said Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko had given his approval for the deployment.

A third company of French troops was on its way to Zaire and would arrive soon, the ministry said. The total strength of the units is estimated at about 400 men.

Chaos

Foreign residents took refuge in the luxury Intercontinental Hotel, ringed by an elite regiment of the Zairean presidential guard, after looters attacked expatriate homes.

State-run television was off the air and national radio broadcast only music punctuated with short news bulletins. The radio broadcast appeals for soldiers to return to their barracks.

Belgium and France last sent troops to Zaire in 1977 and 1978 to help put down revolts against Mobutu's pro-western government by former Katanganese gendarmes based in neighbouring Angola.

Zaire has been in a state of chaos since April 1990 when Mobutu announced a return to multi-party politics. The country's economy, based on copper and cobalt exports, collapsed shortly afterwards due to low world prices and plummeting production.

Inflation at about 3,000% a year has created severe food shortages and sparked riots in major cities. — Sapa-Reuters.
French troops enter Zaire

French troops intervened in Zaire yesterday to protect foreign residents as rioting by mutinous soldiers continued for a second day in Kinshasa.

At least 10 people were reported killed by yesterday, the foreign ministry said.

Two companies of French troops took up positions at Kinshasa-Ndjili international airport and around the French ambassador’s residence with the agreement of President Mobutu Sese Seko’s government to protect French and other foreign citizens, the ministry said.

“This intervention reflects our concern not to leave the French population isolated in the face of events that endanger their security,” it said in a statement.

The French statement said a third company of French troops was on its way to Zaire and would arrive soon. Military experts said the units dispatched totalled about 400 men.

“Members of other foreign communities may also come under this (French) protection,” the ministry said.

Belgian radio said Brussels was sending 2,500 paratroopers to protect its expatriate population in the former Belgian colony.

Witnesses in Kinshasa said at least 10 people were killed in an outbreak of rioting and looting.

Official sources said the French troops were flown overnight from bases in Chad and the Central African Republic to Brazzaville, Congo, just across the Zaire River from Kinshasa. — Sapa-Reuters.
JOHANNESBURG. — Hundreds of refugees fleeing Zaire's civil unrest began arriving yesterday at Lanseria Airport, north of here, and in Harare.

In Kinshasa, President Mobutu Sese Seko appeared to have lost control of the country and French marines and paratroopers took control of the Zairean capital's airport.

One paratrooper was killed by wild gunfire from mutinying Zairian troops during a river crossing from neighbouring Congo, where the troops were stationed.

France has about 4,000 nationals in Zaire, 3,500 of whom live in Kinshasa. Belgian has more than 10,000 nationals there.

Belgian refugees, mostly women and children, arrived in Johannesburg yesterday en route to Belgium in the next few days. At least another 85 refugees arrived in Harare and more, possibly hundreds, were expected to follow.

The Belgians fled rioting and looting, mostly in Kinshasa, in which 30 people had died by yesterday.

Some interviewed at Lanseria said they had fled Lubumbashi as a precaution when soldiers began looting in the small copper-mining town.

A businessman said people had panicked after hearing a radio report on the rioting. They had assembled at the airport where they boarded a charter flight on a first-come-first-served basis.

A Belgian woman said after arriving in Harare that although violence had not spread from Kinshasa to the southern Shaba region bordering Zambia, diplomats had urged families of Shaba's estimated 4,000 expatriates to leave immediately.

Late arrivals said there were reports of looting in Kolwezi, close to the Angolan and Zambian border with Zaire.

There were no indications that South African personnel and their families were in immediate danger, Foreign Affairs Minister Mr Pik Botha said last night.

However, he added that arrangements were being made to bring most of them back to South Africa.

France and Belgium flew hundreds of troops to Zaire yesterday.

In Paris, an official source said one French soldier was shot dead and another wounded when shooting broke out as French troops intervened to help round up some of the French residents in Kinshasa.

To page 2
Zaire

More than 1,000 people took refuge in the luxury Intercontinental Hotel in Kinshasa.

Officials said Mr. Seise Seko, who appeared to have lost control after 26 years of autocratic rule, would make a televised speech after two days of the worst rioting in Kinshasa since Zaire gained independence 30 years ago.

France sent in 300 troops and Belgium, the former colonial power, flew in 500 soldiers to protect their large expatriate populations in the city of three million people.

Portugal said it was making arrangements to evacuate thousands of Portuguese nationals from Zaire after several Portuguese-owned businesses in the city were looted.

There were scenes of wild terror as the commercial centre of Kinshasa, a city of stark contrasts between opulence and squalor, was stripped bare during two days of mob rule.

Opposition parties, legalised in the past year, blamed much of the unrest on the slow pace of democratic reforms at a national conference, bogged down for a month and a half.

Civilians, fed up with food shortages and inflation topping 1,000%, joined mutinous soldiers angered by a missed pay rise in looting and ransacking private homes, shops and a hotel.

France said its forces had taken up position at the N'Djili airport and the French ambassador's residence, near the Intercontinental Hotel.

France, which along with Belgium intervened in 1977-1978 to put down an uprising by Katangese separatists in the southern copper-mining region, coupled its intervention with a warning to Mr. Seise Seko to make democratic reforms.

Despite the arrival of foreign troops, Zairean soldiers could be seen late yesterday afternoon commandeering cars or walking through the city with stolen packages of meat or chicken.

The foreign intervention was not well received by some Zairean military.

"The French are wrong to think of this as conquered territory," said a lieutenant of the special presidential brigade guarding the Intercontinental Hotel.

Own Correspondent and Sapa-Reuters
How Mobutu’s pillars have collapsed...

KEN VERNON of The Argus Africa News Service focuses on embattled Zairean president Mobutu Sese Seko.

A LMOST 20 years of iron-handed rule by one-man has reduced Kinshasa — and by extension Zaire — to the plundered ruin it is today.

However this week’s outburst of looting and rioting by frustrated and unpaid soldiers may well prove to be the final chapter of the Mobutu era in Zairean politics.

While the looting and violence by the army may appear to have been motivated primarily by economic desperation, it is vital to note that the soldiers looting shops, offices and homes were at the head of mobs of civilians.

The soldiers were reported to be handing out goods and food in a Robin Hood-like manner, indicating a measure of solidarity previously lacking.

Just weeks ago those same soldiers were shooting civilian looters.

A major tactic of Zairean opposition politicians based abroad has for years been to call on the army to desert Mobutu, and it is possible that this week saw the first steps in that tactic bearing fruit.

But undoubtedly the deeper causes of this week’s spasm of violence lie fairly and squarely with the economical mismanagement and corruption that have typified the rule of Mobutu Sese Seko since he took over the reigns of power in a 1965 coup.

During that time Zaireans have grown steadily poorer — to the point where their country is listed as the fifth poorest in the world — while their president has grown steadily wealthier.

Mobutu’s personal worth is various guess-timated at between $15 billion and $100 billion. He has palatial villas dotted across Europe, in addition to a palace built with Versailles-like opulence — largely by South African companies — at Gbadolite, his birthplace in the north of the country.

During his dictatorial 26-year reign Mobutu has been supported by two main pillars. Firstly the army, which he has commanded for more than 20 years, and secondly, by Western powers such as the United States, France and Belgium, to whom he represented himself as the only viable bulwark against communism and chaos.

The world-wide collapse of communism in recent years has effectively removed one of those pillars and this week’s actions by unpaid army units may have finally knocked out the other pillar.

Just weeks ago that same army was shooting jobless citizen looters driven to violence by inflation rates of up to 3,000 percent that made basic survival a daily question.

For several years the country has been rocked by periodic food riots that left hundreds dead, but the pampered army always stood steadfastly between Mobutu and the mob.

The popular unrest, fed by the tide of democratic reform sweeping Africa, led Mobutu in April last year to announce grandly that Zaire was ready for multi-party democracy — but so far the promises have proved empty.

Opposition leaders say that many of the dozens of new parties that have sprung up in the aftermath of the legalising of opposition parties are in fact funded by Mobutu with the aim of confusing and dissipating opposition.

Widely praised national constitutional talks that began seven weeks ago quickly dissolved amid the chaos of accusations and counter-accusations of collusion with Mobutu.

While the spectre of a communist Zaire may have faded, that of a dismembered and fractious Zaire is still very real.

At 2.35 million square kilometres Zaire is the second largest country in sub-Saharan Africa, yet it is for the most part without the basic infrastructure and communications to tie the country into one unit.

In the months after Belgium granted it independence in 1960, the country fragmented for the first time, with the copper-rich Shaba province breaking away, followed by South Kasai shortly afterwards.

For years the country was a battlefield for UN troops, rebel factions, the national army and assorted mercenaries before central rule was reasserted. But twice since then, in 1977 and 1978, rebellion has again flared in the south-eastern provinces — more than 2,000 kilometres from the capital on the western border.

If, as anticipated by most observers, the present unrest does eventually result in the toppling of ‘Field Marshal’ Mobutu, the possibility of the country fragmenting once again is very real.

Zaire, in the heart of Africa, has more international borders than any other African country and the possibility of a civil war spreading into neighbouring countries is a worrying prospect for a continent on the verge of escaping from being the playground for super-power confrontation.

If Mobutu does topple, there seems to be no one with, his stature to keep the country together.

In the face of Mobutu’s oppression, opposition leaders have formed a united front that is unlikely to survive his passing.

The leading figures are Ngoua Kari 1 Bond, Tshisakula wa Mulumbu and Ileo Nkutiko Amba, all of who at one time or another have been closely associated with Mobutu and may lack the necessary credibility to appeal to a post-Mobutu Zaire.
Modbury may be Laure's anchor.
Court charters aircraft to fly South Africans out of Kinshasa
SA flight sent on rescue mission to Zaire

DURBAN — The government has dispatched a SA flight to Zaire in a bid to evacuate South Africans trapped in the rebel-held town of Kirkuk in the southern town of Zaire. The government has been under pressure to provide assistance to the estimated 10,000 South Africans living in the town.

Mr. Ralph Amon, the minister of foreign affairs, said that the government was unable to provide the assistance that the South Africans required. "We have been in contact with the South African government, and they have assured us that they will do everything in their power to assist the South Africans," Mr. Amon said.

The South African government has been under pressure to provide assistance to the South Africans in Zaire, and Mr. Amon's statement is a clear indication of the government's commitment to providing aid.

He said that the South African government was in contact with the Zairean government and was working to establish a safe passage for the South Africans. "We are working closely with the Zairean government to ensure the safety of the South Africans," Mr. Amon said.

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Some of the 7000 Belgians living in Kinshasa, the capital of Zaire, have been in contact with the South African government, and Mr. Amon said that the government was working closely with the Belgians to provide assistance.

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The South African government has been under pressure to provide assistance to the South Africans in Zaire, and Mr. Amon's statement is a clear indication of the government's commitment to providing aid.
Zaire riot & spread south

A PLANETLOAD of European nationals fleeing rioting Zaire arrived at Jan Smuts Airport last night with news that French paratroopers had invaded the southern town of Kolwezi in an attempt to restore order.

One passenger, Lubumbashi hotel worker Mr Ralph Amido, however, said military intervention at Kolwezi was too late. “Kolwezi has been destroyed.”

He said Lubumbashi, from where the flight left yesterday afternoon with about 90 Belgian, French, German, Portuguese and Greek refugees aboard, was the only town in Zaire not affected by the looting and rioting.

Another passenger said she had witnessed riotous mobs led by Zairian soldiers pillaging a commercial centre in the southern town of Likasi.

Likasi, Kolwezi and Lubumbashi are in the copper-rich southern Shaba province where at least 10 000 European expatriates live and work.

Most of those aboard last night’s flight were women and children. They said they had left their husbands to protect their homes and properties.

It was Shabair pilot Mr Johan Denaeghel’s sixth flight out of Zaire in two days to evacuate refugees.

He had carried between 400 and 500 of them across Zaire’s borders and another flight with about 90 passengers was due at Jan Smuts Airport later last night, he said.

Belgian Consul-General in Johannesburg, Mr Robert van Reusel, said two more flights carrying refugees to South Africa would arrive today.

Sapo-Reuter.
KINSHASA — Zairean troops wounded several antigovernment protesters yesterday as foreigners continued to stream out of the riot-torn country.

Belgian soldiers who saw troops open fire said the crowd was chanting for the resignation of President Mobutu Sesse Seko.

Government sources said the protesters were demanding the return of political exile Antoine Gizenga, leader of the leftist Lumumba United Party.

French and Belgian troops kept up a ferry evacuation, helping thousands flee across the Zaire River to neighboring Congo. South Africa flew out 130 foreigners from Kinshasa. The United States evacuated 219 people, including about 200 Americans.

The relief organization, Medecins Sans Frontieres, said that more than 100 people had died in the violence up to Wednesday and at least 1,500 injured.

Looters, led by President Mobutu's soldiers, have stripped Kinshasa bare. Not a single food store or pharmacy has survived.

The central arms depot was also ransacked. "It's going to start again. There's no food and a lot of weapons in the wrong hands," a European Community official said.

Sketchy reports from the interior of Africa's third biggest country said there was looting on Wednesday in several provincial cities, including the mining centers of Kolwezi and Lubumbashi in the south-eastern province of Shaba.

A night curfew was due to come into force in Kinshasa and other unspecified trouble spots last night.

Major South African business concerns operating in Zaire are still in the dark over the extent of damage done to their premises and equipment as a result of the conflict in the country.

"We have had no communication with Zaire at all," said Dudley Ruben, the financial director of Metro's Johannesburg head office. However, it is understood that a branch of Metro Cash and Carry wholesalers, had been looted.

Premier Milling, which runs a retail/wholesale operation selling basic foodstuffs in Lubumbashi, successfully airlifted scores of its staff from the town on Wednesday. — Sapa-Reuters.
Hope to explore the passing
domination and revolutionary phases
that have shaped the cornerstones of the
country. Our stories are powerful.
their stories are still being told.
and the stories are still being
written.

Focus

for Zaire collapse
Iron Rule to blame

A major role of Zaire's
government was to protect
the interests of a powerful
elite, often at the expense of
the population. The regime,
led by Mobutu Sese Seko,
ruled the country with an
iron fist, suppressing
opposition and limiting
freedom of speech. The
collapse of Zaire in the late
1990s was a result of these
authoritarian practices and
the economic hardships
that accompanied them.
SA evacuates its nationals from Zaire as trade comes to a standstill

KINSHASA — SA trade with Zaire has come to a halt, and SA evacuated the first batch of its nationals from the riot-torn country yesterday.

Officials said the South Africans, who included businessmen and 12 dependants of government officials, were flown in a government-chartered Safair Boeing 707 from Kinshasa Airport.

The airport is controlled by some of the 600 French troops sent to Zaire to protect foreigners after soldiers started an orgy of looting in several cities this week.

The aircraft also carried 53 Britons, 22 Taiwanese, 14 Greeks, four Americans and four Italians.

Patrick Bulger reports that the Zaire's African Trade Intelligence Organisation head Andrew Maggs said SA trade with the Zairean mining company Gecamines, which employs 100,000 people, was likely to be particularly hit. The company was a major consumer of SA goods, Maggs said.

However, a proposed Gold Fields mining venture announced earlier this week was unlikely to be affected, Gold Fields executive director of new business Bernard van Rooyen said. He said the proposed venture was situated 3,000km from Kinshasa in a relatively stable part of the country.

Yesterday, Zairian troops wounded several anti-government protesters in the capital. Belgian soldiers who saw troops open fire said the crowd was chanting for the resignation of strong-arm President Mobutu Sese Seko, who risks being toppled by the worst explosion of violence in the central African country since independence in 1960.

The protesters were demanding the return of political exile Antoine Gizenga, leader of the Lumumba United Party.

French and Belgian troops kept up a ferry evacuation, helping several thousand mainly European and Lebanese nationals flee across the Zaire River to neighbouring Congo.

The capital was mostly quiet but diplomats said they feared a fresh outbreak of the riots and looting which devastated the city and were still sweeping the provinces.

The relief organisation Medecins Sans Frontieres said in Brussels that more than 100 people had died in the violence up to Wednesday and at least 1,000 had been injured.

Hundreds of thousands of looters, led by Mobutu's soldiers, have literally stripped Kinshasa bare. The central arms depot was ransacked, putting hundreds of weapons into circulation.

A night curfew was due to come into force yesterday in Kinshasa and other unspecified trouble spots. The government also announced an emergency food plan, giving no details.

A senior government source said every soldier had been promised a cash sum by next weekend, with lowest ranks getting 1.5-million zaires — worth only $5 at the exchange rate before Monday's anarchy.

There was scepticism that a Western food airlift would be possible even if gov-

\[ From Page 1 \]

A French diplomat said key foreign embassies were in regular contact with Mobutu, but declined to say if they were urging him to resign. The 60-year-old president was on a yacht at Nsuele, about 50km out of Kinshasa near the airport.

The SA Red Cross Society said yesterday it was opening an information service operating from the number 011 973 3939 to provide information for people arriving in SA from Zaire. The object was to unite families that had been split during their evacuation and to collect offers of accommodation for arriving families.

— Sapa-Reuter.
ZAIRE CRISIS

Civilians stripped my house, then soldiers cleaned up anything left

On the run ... a Kinshasa street photographed by a refugee through the back window of a car en route to the airport for a flight to South Africa. Pictures: Omar Karbeilker

The pain of a country aflame

South African Tracey Ahldeff cried with relief when her feet touched home ground again last night. She is one of 128 refugees who fled the riot-torn city of Kinshasa, in Zaire, after troops devastated the country. More than 100 people have been killed and at least 1,500 injured.

Most refugees had spent since Monday night in embassies and told how people had rushed there for safety. They said some people left in such a hurry that they wore only nightclothes. Some men arrived at the British Embassy wearing only their underpants.

Expatiates and diplomats, including South Africans, British subjects, various other Europeans, Americans, mainland Chinese, Taiwanese and Greek nationals, boarded the Safair Boeing 707 at Kinshasa’s airport and arrived in Johannesburg last night.

Eighteen South African diplomats and their families returned on the flight yesterday, leaving eight South African diplomats in Kinshasa. Five diplomats from mainland China boarded the flight with Taiwan’s diplomats.

They were taken in convoy from the South African and other embassies to the airport where they boarded the flight, arranged by South Africa’s Department of Foreign Affairs and the South African mission in Kinshasa.

Mrs Ahldeff said it was impossible to imagine the extent of the damage in Kinshasa.

There is nothing left. Buildings were burnt down, explosives blew holes in walls, every fitting in the rooms was taken. I don’t know how or where they took so much stuff.

“Cars were stolen and driven till they ran out of petrol, then stripped bare on the side of the road.

“It’s absolutely devastating. It’s incredible. That country can never be repaired again,” she said.

The Ahldeffs arrived in Zaire two years ago with a container — but left with only a small suitcase and their 6-month-old baby.

In their underpants and nightclothes they fled from their homes to embassies and havens, escaping looting civilians and troops. Some of Zaire’s latest group of refugees spoke to MONICA OOSTERBROEK yesterday.

South African passengers said they had watched troops running around the city, firing shots randomly into the air. Shotgun and cheering civilians joined the carnage, breaking down doors, smashing windows and throwing goods around.

One woman hid under a blanket in her garden while she saw people ransacking her house. Within an hour, only the walls remained.

Businessman Rizwan Ravi showed scratches on his arms caused by soldiers who had beaten him up in his home. He escaped and hid up a tree.

“First, about 200 civilians burst into my house and stripped it, then soldiers arrived and cleaned up anything that had been left,” he said.

Valerie Dickins said she and her children had fled into the bush, where they spent two days, when their Kinshasa home was ransacked.

Passengers arrived in South Africa with pockets filled with cartridges — souvenirs of their last few days in Zaire. They said the situation in Kinshasa was still very tense and that shots were still ringing through the city. But no one seemed very clear about exactly what was happening.

The head of the South African mission in Zaire, Herman Hanekom, said the last reports he had heard at Kinshasa’s airport were that 30 Hutu women, who had been raped on Wednesday night and whose homes destroyed.

He said all services in Kinshasa had come to a halt and banks were not expected to reopen until Monday. A curfew was in force.

Wanton destruction ... a looted store in Kinshasa. Soldiers rampaged through the capital, rioting and looting.
Refugees tell of Zaire terror

JOHANNESBURG. — South Africa's rescue mission to strife-torn Zaire landed at Jan Smuts Airport last night and refugees told of the terror and anarchy they had left behind.

The Safair Boeing 707 picked up 128 people at Kinshasa airport, including Chinese diplomats whose seats were secured for them on the SA-bound flight by Taiwanese diplomats.

The refugees told how they had been robbed and their houses and businesses ransacked by unpaid Zairean soldiers and by thousands of civilians looters. The refugees took shelter at embassies and with friends.

More planes

Businessman Mr Rinwan Rawji landed the rescue mission and said more planes should be sent, as thousands of desperate people were awaiting evacuation.

The flight had been arranged by South Africa's Department of Foreign Affairs and the SA mission in Kinshasa.

The refugees included South Africans, Britons, Europeans, Americans, Chinese, Taiwanese and Greeks. They were taken in convoy from the SA and other embassies to the airport where they boarded the aircraft yesterday morning.

Mr Herman Hanekom, head of the SA mission, said at Kinshasa's airport latest reports were that three Portuguese women had been raped on Wednesday night and their homes razed.

Eighteen South African diplomats and their families returned on yesterday's flight, leaving eight still in Kinshasa with two weeks' supply of food and "a swimming pool full of potable water".

One of the refugees, Mrs Valerie Dickens, said she and her children had "fled into the bush", where they spent two days when their Kinshasa home was ransacked.

Meanwhile French and Belgian troops fanned out across Zaire yesterday, mounting airborne missions to far-flung provinces to protect foreign nationals, the French army said.

"A French force carried out a successful mission to evacuate French and other foreign nationals from Kisangani in the north of the country," an army spokesman said.

"A Franco-Belgian force successfully carried out a separate mission to Kolwezi in Shaba province in the south of the country while two solely Belgian units went to Lubumbashi and 'Bandaka in further separate missions," he said.

ARRESTED ... A man arrested for looting is shown an item he allegedly stole from a shop during Kinshasa riots.

In Brussels, Defence Minister Mr Guy Coeme said Belgian paratroops landed in Lubumbashi, the chief town of the copper-rich Shaba province, to establish a new evacuation bridgehead for foreigners fleeing the mounting chaos.

Mr Coeme told a news conference the 280 Belgian troops met little resistance when they landed in Lubumbashi yesterday morning.

He later told the Belgian National Defence Committee the situation was getting worse in several areas of Zaire, especially in Kasangati and Kisangani, and troops had staged a mutiny at the army base at Kokola.

Mr Coeme said a company of Belgian commandos had just arrived at Kasangati, with the aim of evacuating refugees to Brazzaville, the capital of neighbouring Congo.

The French army spokesman said the situation was now "more or less calm" in Kinshasa after reports of shooting earlier in the day.

The United States joined the evacuation operation for the first time yesterday when five US Air Force C-141 Starlifters transport planes began airlifting more French troops to Africa to be ready to reinforce colleagues deployed in Zaire.

The American jets took on board 200 men of the French Eighth Marine Infantry Parachute Regiment and their equipment for flights to Chad and the Central African Republic.

Mr Coeme said fresh Belgian reinforcements flew to central Africa yesterday afternoon, bringing the total Belgian contingent to about 500.

Fired on crowd

French Foreign Ministry spokesman Mr Maurice Gourdault-Montagne told reporters the French forces were in Zaire purely to protect foreign nationals and Paris was "continuing to press President Mobutu to take measures to accelerate the process towards democratisation".

Earlier yesterday in Kinshasa Zairian troops fired to disperse protesters. Government sources said several people were wounded. Belgian soldiers, who witnessed the incident, said the crowd scattered.

They said the troops fired on a crowd chanting for the resignation of Mr Mobutu.

The government sources said the protesters were demanding the return of political exile Mr Antoine Gizenga, leader of the Lumumba United Party.

Sapa-Reuters
Mobutu's not finished yet
Mobutu troops turn duty into looting

KINSHASA — Troops supposed to be enforcing the latest night of curfew in this ravaged capital went on a looting spree as Zaire teetered on the brink of chaos, security sources said last night.

Kinshasa had seemed calm during the previous night’s curfew, but security sources and state radio said that Zairean soldiers believed to be loyal to the Mobutu government had now started looting in parts of the city.

The radio disclosed that in earlier looting, rebel troops who rioted for pay took refrigerators from a laboratory containing samples of the virus which causes AIDS.

The broadcasts warned a country with one of the world’s highest incidences of AIDS that the thefts could be “very dangerous.”

The radio said the refrigerators contained highly radioactive materials.

A senior security force official said the situation last night was calm, “but there are pockets of resistance to the curfew and areas of unrest.”

The worst incidents of looting occurred in the Ma Campagne area, he said.

The middle-class suburb where many expatriates lived had already been pillaged.

France, which now has 1,000 soldiers in Zaire with Belgian forces to protect and help to evacuate foreign nationals, said 40 tons of emergency food and medical supplies arrived in neighbouring Congo yesterday.

But the food — cooking oil, flour and rice — was a drop in the ocean for Kinshasa’s three million residents.

The 12-nation European Community has given the international aid organisation, Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), $300,000 for medical supplies.

The MSF has said more than 100 people died in an orgy of looting and rioting this week.

The EC aid would do little to help to bring an end to the crisis since looting emptied virtually every shop in the capital of food and drink.

US Ambassador Melissa Wells met President Mobutu Bese Seko, who has ruled the vast central African country with an iron fist for more than 25 years, yesterday.

The meeting was on board Mobutu’s yacht on the river near Kinshasa.

No comment was forthcoming, but Ms. Wells has taken a high profile in urging Mobutu to push promised democratic reforms further and faster.

Mobutu’s future was unclear after the behaviour of the army, which had bestowed his power for so many years.

Opposition parties have said they are ready to form a crisis government and urged people to ignore curfews, a call which was apparently ignored after the government said anyone violating the latest curfew would be shot.

An opposition threat to cut water and electricity failed to materialise.

Opposition leader Ngoua Karl-I-Bondi, a former Mobutu stalwart, fears that foreign troops might help to shore up Mobutu. — Sapa-Reuters.
Zaire holds breath as
Mobutu feels the heat
358
Whatever President Mobutu Sese Seko's faults, and he has many, he has succeeded in keeping Zaire together. And there is nobody with the stature to take over from him, writes BARNEY
MTHONBOTHI.
SA 28/1/91.
Zaire is on the horns of a dilemma. This week's outbreak of violence in Kinshasa and other major centres seriously threatens the position of President Mobutu Sese Seko.
But it cannot end his corrupt rule without unleashing the forces which on several occassions in the past almost succeeded in tearing the country apart.
Whatever Mr Mobutu's faults, and they are many, he has nevertheless succeeded through guile, persuasion and ruthlessness, and by astutely balancing tribal and regional interests, to keep the huge central African country together.
It has been a feat which nobody ever thought possible at the time of independence.
And there is nobody, either in Mr Mobutu's own ruling MRP or the opposition, with the stature to take over from him.
But if he were finally to go, very few African leaders would shed any tears. Mr Mobutu has often taken an independent line on sensitive issues which have irritated them. When he seized power in a military coup on November 30, 1965, Zaire, then known as the Congo, had been ravaged by five years of bloody civil war as governments came and went after Belgium granted what many people thought was premature independence.
Under his rule, discontent activity, except in the mineral-rich Shaba province, has been effectively controlled and domestic criticism of his government by trade unions, students and intellectuals suppressed.
Many of his critics are abroad, mostly in Belgium and France. In 1986 Mr Mobutu set up the country's sole legal party, the Popular Revolutionary Movement. A highly centralised political system gave him enormous power.
Critics say he abused his position to stash away a mammoth personal fortune, large enough to repay Zaire's entire external debt burden. But supporters say he has ended political anarchy, although the country, which is rich in copper, cobalt, tin, palm oil and coffee, has not come anywhere near realising its economic potential.

The country is virtually bankrupt. But what history may record as his greatest achievement is to haul the country back from the brink of civil war and to create, from the many warring tribes, a sense of national identity through his policy of "authenticity" — changing the country's name to Zaire and his own name from Joseph-Désiré Mobutu.
When he finally allowed political pluralism last year, the first thing many Zairean men bought was a tie. Western style of dress has been banned since the introduction of "authenticity".
Zaireans are subjected to an officially orchestrat-ed personality cult of "Mobutism" which is remarkable even by African standards. Officials wear Mobutu badges on their Mobutu suits known as "abacoa" (a bas le costume — down with suits).

Whatever the new establishment have to ring his praises every morning before they start their day's work. Mr Mobutu has often dismissed Western democracies for slinging his abuse of human rights and his refusal to countenance domestic opposition. "Africa has the right to be different," he has often said.

Despite his often tense relationship with Belgium, Zaire's former colonial master, he has pursued accords with Western policies. Indeed, his critics say it is his pro-Western sentiments which have seen to it that the West does not pull the rug from under his feet.

But the flamboyant Mr Mobutu has often irritated other African leaders by taking an independent line on sensitive issues. In October 1889 he welcomed P.W. Botha at the height of the former South Africa president's repressive rule. Mr Botha's successor, F.W. de Klerk, went to Kinshasa last year.

In 1982 Mr Mobutu broke ranks with the rest of the continent by restoring ties with Israel. In 1984 Zaire suspended its membership of the Organisation of African Unity in support of Morocco, a close ally over Rabat's objection to the Polisario Front being granted a seat at an OAU summit.
Mr Mobutu has also further alienated radical Afri-can states by granting assistance to UNITA rebels fighting against the MPLA government in Angola.
Mr Mobutu was head of the army when, on November 24, 1965, after a disagreement between Presi-dent Joseph Kasavubu and Moise Tshombe — whose party controlled the National Assembly — Mr Mobutu intervened and transferred all executive power to himself as president.

POWER was progressively concentrated in the hands of the president, and legislative power was withdrawn from the parliament. Mr Kasavubu retired from politics while Mr Tshombe went into exile in Spain.

During his 26-year rule Mr Mobutu has had to put down very serious challenges to his rule by secessionists, especially in Shaba province. Opposition to the government is still fractured and has not been able to gain a firm foothold in the country.
Troops on curfew duty in new looting spree

Mobutu may cling to power yet

NICHOLAS DOUTHOTY

KINSHASA — Troops supposed to be enforcing a night curfew in Zaire's ravaged capital, Kinshasa, went on a new looting spree as the country teetered on the brink of chaos, security sources said yesterday.

The city had seemed calm during Thursday night's curfew, but security sources and state radio said Zairian soldiers lootin parts of Kinshasa, even taking refrigerators from a laboratory containing samples of the virus which causes AIDS.

"The situation is calm, but there are pockets of resistance to the curfew at many areas of tension," one senior security source told Reuters.

He said the worst incidents occurred in the Makabola and Muoto, the middle-class suburb where many expatriates lived and had already been pillaged.

France, which now has 1,000 soldiers in Zaire with Belgian forces to protect and help to evacuate foreign nationals, said 40 tons of emergency food and medical supplies arrived yesterday to neighboring Congo.

But the food — cooking oil, flour and rice — was a drop in the ocean for Kinshasa's 3 million residents.

The 12-nation European Community has given the international aid organisation, Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), $1.600,000 for medical supplies.

MSF has said more than 100 people were killed in an orgy of looting and rioting this week, the worst violence since the government in Kinshasa announced it would not allow the European parliament to return to the city.

But the aid may do little to help to bring an end to the crisis, since looting emptied virtually every shop in the capital of food and drink.

US Ambassador Melissa Wells met President Mobutu Sese Seko, who has ruled the vast central African country with an iron fist for more than 25 years, yesterday.

US officials declined to comment on the meeting on board President Mobutu's luxury yacht moored on the river near Kinshasa. But Mrs Wells has taken a high profile in urging him to push promised democratic reforms further and faster.

State radio said soldiers looted personal goods and belongings on Thursday night and asked: "What is the good of a curfew? Who enforces it? It was another night that did nothing to ensure the security of people in Kinshasa.

One officer told the radio his television and radio were stolen. His colleagues at one of Kinshasa's hospitals were now refusing to treat patients in protest.

The radio said the looters stole refrigerators from a laboratory containing samples of the virus which causes AIDS. Zaire has one of the world's highest incidences of AIDS and the radio warned citizens that the theft could be "very dangerous".

It was almost 25 years ago that there have been frequent reports of what has happened in the rest of the country, which is 50 times larger than Belgium and has a population of nearly 500 million. But there were riots involving troopes in Kinshasa, Kinshasa, and other major towns.

President Mobutu's future was unclear after the behaviour of the army, which had battled his power for so many years.

Outward bound: Foreign nationals fleeing from Kinshasa board a ferry going to Brazzaville.

Opposition parties have said they were ready to form a crisis government and urged people to ignore the curfew, a call which was apparently ignored after the government said anyone violating the curfew would be shot.

An opposition threat to cut water and electricity supplies to Kinshasa failed to materialise.
More foreigners evacuate Zaire

KINSHASA. -- European troops evacuated more foreigners yesterday from riot-scarred Kinshasa, and France joined Zairean opposition leaders in again demanding political concessions from President Mobutu Sese Seko.

The French Foreign Ministry said its ambassador here met Mr Mobutu on Thursday and told him that political reforms were "a necessity."

The meeting took place after Mr Mobutu's embattled government imposed a dusk-to-dawn curfew in Kinshasa on Thursday and adopted an emergency plan to get provisions to the capital.

"No Zaireans are fooled," said a spokesman for the Union for Democracy and Social Progress. "His measures aren't suited to the situation."

A Belgium-based relief organization, Doctors Without Borders, estimated that 100 people had died and up to 1,750 people were injured this week in rioting led by Zairean troops angry because they were not paid.

Many refugees who were flown to South Africa have already left for their home countries.

The Red Cross has set up an office in Johannesburg to co-ordinate the handling of refugees. Housing for them has been found by their embassies or in South African homes. More than 150 foreign nationals have been flown into South Africa.

The Red Cross office telephone number is 011-873-3938. — Sapa-Reuters and Own Correspondent
Thousands face starvation in embattled Zaire

THE broad boulevards of Kinshasa were almost deserted as an aura of tension hung over a city bearing the scars of two days of looting. The windows of cafes and shops are pockmarked with bullets and smashed, parked cars have been stripped of their tyres and scattered office files choke back streets.

Five days after the arrival of French and Belgian troops quelled the rioting, offices remained closed and there were long queues for fuel this week. Small groups of people screamed that they were hungry and called for President Mobutu Sese Seko to resign.

The speedy evacuation of hundreds of Americans, European and Asian nationals continued under the eye of French troops. Women sat on the wharf of the great Zaire river, waiting with their children and luggage for ferries to take them to the Congolese capital of Brazzaville on the northern bank.

Some 400 Americans were evacuated by boat on Friday.

Downtown, Belgian troops in maroon berets guarded their embassy, patrolling the streets in open jeeps mounted with heavy machineguns.

"The situation is calmer but it is going to change," one soldier told me. "There's no food in the market and no water, and in a few days everyone will be starving."

A member of one of Zaire's opposition parties expressed the fear people feel as their country faces a major political crisis.

"We're all very frightened of people in power who want to derail the democratic process," he said, talking on a street where clusters of people waited for absent taxis.

"We sleep away from our houses at night because we think members of the security forces will kill us."

For many in Kinshasa, the question is how long foreign troops will stay, particularly the French.

Breakdown

Since this week's looting of automatic weapons from government armories by local brigands, a total breakdown of whatever passes for law and order in Zaire is thought more likely than once they go.

Lt-Col Gaynecoetche, head of the 850-strong force of French troops taking part in Operation Bannier, said the decision to remove the troops would be political. But they are expected to leave when all of France's 4,000 nationals have been evacuated.

At sunset, the French ambassador's elegant residence on the bank of the Zaire river was teeming with French soldiers camping on the lawn by the swimming pool. In the kitchen, huge legs of beef were being defrosted to feed them.

Outside the residence, hundreds of Asians lugged their suitcases towards open lorries, queuing for an armed escort to the airport for a flight they had chartered to Bamako, Zairean soldiers are said to have led looters into the city's rich residential quarter. Some hundreds of diplomats, popularly known as 'diplomats', are said to have been held on their way to London, and when things improved, President Mobutu, who has held power for 26 years, gathered around him to press ahead with military reforms.
Mobutu likely to call a truce

President Mobutu Sese Seko, sheltering from Zaire’s mayhem aboard his luxury yacht on the Zaire River, was expected to announce a power-sharing truce with the opposition yesterday as Zaire teetered on anarchy.

Mobutu’s Western allies virtually ordered him to negotiate, as Belgian and French troops were prepared to leave Africa’s third largest country once all foreigners had been evacuated.

Rioting and looting by mutinous Zairean troops and civilians continued in the nation’s capital, Kinshasa, and three other major cities thousands of kilometres apart on Friday night.

The three-million population of Kinshasa has been without food and all shops and factories are reported to have been looted.

Mobutu’s troops mutinied after not receiving a promised pay rise. Because of Zaire’s galloping inflation of 1 000 percent a year and continuous devaluation, a soldier’s pay has dropped to a starvation wage.

Sixty-year-old Mobutu, who has ruled Zaire with an iron fist since 1965, was effectively handed ultimatums on Friday by senior ambassadors who skipped the usual diplomatic niceties.

“The country is in an extremely serious situation. The time when everything depended on one man is over,” French envoy Henri Rethore told State television on Thursday after another long session with Mobutu aboard his yacht moored in safety 50 km from the devastated capital.

Anarchy is inevitable after the Belgian and French troops leave unless the food shortage is averted.

Prime Minister Mulumba Lukoji said appeals had gone out to the international community. “Next to security, hunger is our number one problem,” he told newsmen.

See Page 23
Mobutu asks opposition leader to rule

POWER SHARING: Under heavy guard, President Mobutu sees

Mobutu asks opposition leader to rule

Niehsnas — Seunen Paide

\[\text{Page number: 2, Issue date: September 30, 1991}\]
Mobutu sacks army chief

KINSHASA. Zaire's President

SAFARAN

Douglas 309a
Mobutu fires first shots in clean-up

KINSHASA — Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko fired his army chief of staff as a row flared yesterday over how to form a national government that might halt the vast central African country’s slide towards chaos.

Military sources said Mr. Mobutu had ordered a restructuring of the armed forces, after soldiers led much of the looting that ravaged the country last week and claimed 117 lives.

General Manzembe Mayibanga had been replaced by the current head of military intelligence, General Mahale Leye. because of the former’s failure to control the armed forces.

Mr. Mobutu, arriving at the Marble Palace for a meeting with opposition leaders to discuss the formation of a crisis government, was mobbed by about 100 angry delegates from a national conference that is supposed to chart the path to democracy.

The delegates were annoyed at being left out of the talks and told Mr. Mobutu the national conference, due to meet tomorrow, should instead be responsible.

He told them: “We’re in a crisis situation. We would have liked to have waited for the national conference, but the situation is dramatic and we have to go fast.”

In talks with Mr. Mobutu yesterday, the opposition demanded that a dusk-to-dawn curfew be lifted by last night and proposed opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi, 50, fmr. prime minister.

As the talks continued, Belgian and Portuguese air force planes ran a shuttle, evacuating 300 foreign refugees from the Zairean mining town of Lubumbashi to the Zambian capital Lusaka.

— Sapa-Reuters-AP.

Future of a nation at stake
Mobutu fires his army chief

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Military sources said Mr Mobutu had ordered a restructuring of the armed forces after soldiers led much of the looting that ravaged the country last week. State radio said 117 people had been killed and more than 150 injured in the unrest.

General Manzembe Mayilanga had been replaced by the current head of military intelligence, General Mahene Miyake, because of the former's failure to control the armed forces.

Mr Mobutu, arriving for a meeting with opposition leaders to discuss the formation of a crisis government at Kinshasa's Marble Palace, was mobbed by about 100 angry delegates from a 3,000-strong national conference due to meet tomorrow.

"Mobutu and the opposition are plotting together to form a government behind the people's backs," said one of the conference delegates. But Mr Mobutu told them: "We're in a crisis situation. We would have liked to have waited for the national conference, but the situation is dramatic and we have to go fast." He said threats from the West to cut badly needed aid until a new government was in place and the shattered state of the economy meant that a new government had to be decided quickly.

Tomorrow's national conference is supposed to chart the path to democracy after a quarter-century of iron rule under the president.

Four hundred Lebanese nationals, meanwhile, returned to Beirut yesterday.

On Saturday 483 people, including two wounded, were flown out and a third flight is expected to evacuate more Lebanese today."
Opposition leader now PM

KINSHASA. — Zairean opposition leader Mr Etienne Tshisekedi formally accepted the prime ministership yesterday and denied he was an enemy of President Mobutu Bese Seko.

"I have accepted to be prime minister. The president has just signed the decree naming me," Mr Tshisekedi, 58, told reporters at the Marble Palace after the third day of tough negotiations between the opposition and Mr Mobutu.

The announcement came a week after riots and looting plunged Zaire into chaos in which 117 people died.

Members of Zaire's presidential guard have continued looting in Kinshasa despite efforts by Mr Mobutu to control them, military sources said yesterday.

The soldiers, who take orders directly from Mr Mobutu, entered houses and demanded money or goods, the sources said.

They said there were no reports of casualties or injuries.

Mines at Kolwezi in the copper-rich southern Shaba province have closed altogether as a result of the flight of expatriates, technicians employed by the government mines said in neighbouring Zambia.

With minerals earning 85% of export income, the economic aftermath is expected to add to the president's political woes.

Some 1,750 Belgian and French troops flown into Zaire have restored order and evacuated most foreigners.

The violence swept many of the former Belgian Congo's cities and towns after a mutiny by unpaid paratroopers in the capital of Kinshasa last Monday and Tuesday.

— Sapa-Reuters-AP
Kaunda's Unip likely to lose?

Own Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG. — Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda and his United National Independence Party (Unip) will lose the October 31 elections by "a significant margin".

International Relations expert Mr Stephen Chan says the likely victor is the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD).
Zaire still tense as Mobutu haggles

KINSHASA — President Mobutu Sese Seko and opposition leaders haggled yesterday on the sharing of key posts in a new crisis government. Zairians hope it will restore order to their vast country.

After a week of looting in which at least 117 people died, Mr. Mobutu finally agreed at the weekend to give up some of his power to his former foes. He has held office for more than a quarter of a century.

But his presidential guard continued to loot homes in Kinshasa on Sunday night. French military sources said:

"Despite tense relations, a key opposition figure appointed as prime minister, told reporters that he would leave power — including control of the local forces.

"I am not going to be prime minister for a long time, I am the president of Zaire, with all the responsibilities," he said.

After talks yesterday on sharing out government posts started in an atmosphere of mistrust, when Mr. Tshisekedi arrived last night, and then objected to being told that the confederation consisted of 13 people, because it was an unlucky number.

Mr. Mobutu fired the army chief of staff at the weekend and replaced him with General Michael Lweto, a military with a distinguished military record.

But ordinary Zairians do not believe the main opposition leaders — many of whom have served before Mr. Mobutu at one time or another — as they are of the president himself.

Mr. Tshisekedi 56, served as Mr. Mobutu's interior minister and justice minister before breaking with him in 1989.

There were signs of normal life resuming in Kinshasa yesterday, with some shops open. But banks remained shut and long queues formed at petrol stations.

The French government is split over its policy towards Zaire, with President Francois Mitterrand insisting on the withdrawal of all support from Mr. Mobutu. Sources said yesterday that the Foreign Ministry and several Cabinet Ministers advocated dissolving France completely from Mr. Mobutu, arguing that he typifies a corrupt, autocratic style of leadership.

An exodus of foreigners from Zaire has robbed the country of vital skills, slashing output by more than half.

With minerals earning 80 percent of export income, the economic consequences are expected to add to Mr. Mobutu's political woes. — Sepa.

**Refugees urged to call Red Cross — Page 3**
Dissident says he will run Zaire

KINSHASA — Zairean opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi, chosen to head a crisis government, met President Mobutu Sese Seko yesterday then declared that he alone would run the affairs of the nation.

Tshisekedi was selected to head a crisis government on Sunday after nine hours of talks between Mobutu and a delegation of 16 pro-democracy parties. He must be confirmed in the post by a national conference of political leaders convening today.

The appointment follows riots last week that state radio said left at least 117 people dead.

Tshisekedi told reporters he met Mobutu to discuss handing over power to the government.

"There will only be one prime minister," Tshisekedi said to the cheers of supporters. "There will not be another in charge of the army or anything else."

Cutting short possible criticism that he should appear an appointee of the much-criticised Mobutu, who has held power for 28 years, Tshisekedi said, "It's not Mobutu who is naming me prime minister."

"It is the national conference who is going to name me."

It was not clear what, if any, role Mobutu might have in a new government or what powers the prime minister would possess.

Tshisekedi, head of the Union for Democracy and Social Progress, is a former interior minister under Mobutu and has endured nine years of detention, house arrest, banishment and torture in his campaign to end the Zairean leader's dictatorship.

In Paris, a spokesman for the French Foreign Ministry expressed satisfaction with the turn of events.

"We have expressed our concern that a process of reforms and democratization get under way," said Maurice Gourdault-Montagne. "What happened yesterday is moving in the right direction."

The spokesman would not say how long the approximately 800 French troops evacuating foreigners, along with Belgian soldiers, would remain in Zaire, saying only that their mission was "not unlimited."

There are fears that the pullout of the troops, whose presence apparently helped restore order, could create a vacuum in the fragile climate and a return to chaos.

Life in the capital slowly moved towards normality, with people filling the streets a week after the turmoil and restaurants beginning to open their doors.

The unrest in this land of 36 million people comes amid a wave of politically motivated strikes, riots and protests that has swept Africa in the past 18 months.

So far, 16 one-party states have been forced to legalize opposition parties and three Marxist governments have been unseated at the ballot box.

Before Mobutu's gruelling meeting on Sunday, about 20 opponents of the president forced their way into the Marble Palace to disrupt the talks, which were aimed at keeping the country from slipping into further chaos. — Sapa-AP.

Proof of Iraq's 'bomb'

BAGHDAD — A team of UN nuclear inspectors flew out of Baghdad yesterday with the first tangible evidence that Iraq wanted to detonate a nuclear device and was acquiring the parts it needed from foreign companies.

The 45-member team spent half of its eight-day stay detained in a Baghdad parking lot in a deadlock over records they had taken from a nearby office building.

David Kydd, a spokesman for the UN's International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna, told the BBC the material the UN team had confiscated would give the UN an invaluable insight into Iraq's nuclear intentions.

"Firstly, there is the tangible evidence for the first time that the Iraqis were indeed interested in detonating a nuclear device and were assembling the documents that would give them the design," he told the BBC.

"Secondly (there is) the indication ... that they do have a series of contracts signed with foreign firms ... for items that they needed for their nuclear programme."
US wish on Zaire

THE United States wants Zaire to speed up progress towards democracy and hold free elections within a year, Assistant Secretary of State for Africa Herman Cohen has said. 21/10/91

Cohen said on Monday it was too early to say when French and Belgian troops should be withdrawn from Zaire, where an outbreak of rioting and looting has led to an exodus of foreign residents.

"We hope the national conference will move more quickly and financial management will be placed under very strict controls and that, in no later than one year, there will be a free and fair election." - Sapa-Reuter.
New Zaire PM says he’s clipped Mobutu’s wings

KINSHASA: Zaire’s new premier began tricky negotiations on the share-out of cabinet jobs yesterday and claimed to have clipped President Mobutu Sese Seko’s wings.

A week after army-led looting erupted, Mr. Etienne Tshisekedi’s appointment as prime minister on Monday night calmed tension in the capital, with ordinary people expressing confidence in the tough former opposition leader.

Mr. Tshisekedi, 33, promised to name his coalition cabinet by today.

"I am only accountable to the people, not to the president," he told state radio, adding that Mr. Mobutu would no longer control key sectors such as security, defence and foreign affairs. — Sapa-Reuters
Mobutu's power cut, claims new premier

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"I am hopeful. Tshisekedi has to change things," said a student, Tshisibungu Kasengtho.

The 58-year-old prime minister, who split with Mr Mobutu in 1989, promised to name his coalition Cabinet today.

"We will be discussing with anybody who is credible. I am only accountable to the people, not to the president," he told State radio, adding that Mr Mobutu would no longer control key sectors such as security, defense and foreign affairs.

Mr Mobutu, forced to share power with the opposition by intense domestic and foreign pressure, appointed Mr Tshisekedi after an orgy of looting led by soldiers angry at not being paid.

More than 100 people were killed in the violence, which the new premier said had left Zaire days away from famine and in need of urgent food aid.

After 26 years of iron rule, Mr Mobutu is still hanging on to office as head of state, and there is ample potential for conflicts with Mr Tshisekedi, an adversary he has hounded for years.

In a string of statements and interviews, the pugnacious prime minister denounced corruption and "State terrorism" under Mr Mobutu and said he would show Zaire's empty coffers to the people.

Omnipotent

But he claimed not to be a personal enemy of the 60-year-old president, a surprising assertion given the torrent of threats and insults he has directed at Mr Mobutu for years.

Mr Tshisekedi, who said his government was one of "national salvation", appeared set to allow members of Mr Mobutu's once omnipotent MPR into his Cabinet. Some Zaiteans said this would give him problems.

"He has to be careful. If he chooses any of the MPR old guard he will quickly be rejected by the people," said Atondo Ngefa, a lawyer who heads the Zaitean Association for the Defence of Human Rights.

"We want technocrats as Ministers, people who were not implicated in the past," Mr Ngefa said.

Ordinary people interviewed yesterday all said they wanted Mr Mobutu to resign. Many accused his Western allies of keeping him in power by sending French and Belgian troops with the official task of evacuating more than 10,000 foreigners.

Mr Tshisekedi, who heads the powerful Union for Democracy and Social Progress, said he would apply fierce austerity measures to correct Zaire's galloping inflation and end unchecked devaluation of the national currency.

"The people will find the measures hard to take. But it is like a child who cries when you give it an injection to cure sickness," he said.

He pledged total press freedom, saying Mr Mobutu had turned State media into a loudspeaker for lies, falsehoods and disinformation.

The prime minister is intent on reconstituting Zaite's National Conference, a forum which was supposed to chart a course to democracy when it opened on August 7.

Instead, the 3,000 delegates have bickered and even exchanged blows. — Sapa-Reuters.
Kaunda's Unip "likely to lose"

Own Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG.—Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda and his United National Independence Party (Unip) will lose the October 31 elections by "a significant margin".

International Relations expert Mr Stephen Chan says the likely winner is the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD).
KINSHASA. — Zaire's new prime minister called strongarm President Mobutu Sese Seko "a human monster" yesterday, pushing an already shaky alliance between the president and his opponents to the verge of collapse.

Mr Sese Seko has refused to cede control over key portfolios to opponents in a new national crisis government that was intended to halt explosive civil unrest in this huge central African country. On Tuesday, he called himself Zaire's leader.

But Mr Etienne Tshisekedi, the new prime minister and a fierce critic of the president, hit back yesterday at the man who had appointed him only two days previously.

"I have always considered (Mr Sese Seko) to be a human monster — without law, morals, principles — who is ready to do anything to further his interests," Mr Tshisekedi told Belgian radio.

"My government will quite simply ignore Mr Sese Seko," he said. "I do not intend to share power with anyone, whoever it may be."

Many of Zaire's 40 million impoverished people, after witnessing an army-led looting spree last week in which at least 117 people died, want Mr Sese Seko out.

The latest comments by Mr Sese Seko and the prime minister show the gulfs that exist on the question of how to share power.

Mr Tshisekedi, asked if he was worried his remarks would lead to the collapse of the uneasy alliance with Mr Sese Seko, appeared no longer to care very much.

SAPA-REUTERS

The opposition had struggled against the "worst dictatorship in modern times" and the best solution would be an end to Mr Sese Seko's power, said Mr Tshisekedi — an ardent supporter of the 80-year-old president until he turned on him in 1980.

Mr Sese Seko agreed at the weekend to share power with the opposition after more than a quarter-century of iron rule and appointed Mr Tshisekedi on Monday. The two men appeared to be reconciled at that point.

SAPA-REUTERS
Mobutu’s alliance close to collapse

KINSHASA — The unlikely alliance between Zaire’s President Mobutu Sese Seko and his new opposition prime minister is close to collapse because of a feud over division of power in the government.

Mobutu, two days after agreeing to share authority with opponents to halt explosive unrest, said on Tuesday he was still Zaire’s leader and refused to cede control over all-important government portfolios after holding absolute power for more than 20 years.

Information Minister Basma Mukalayi, one of Mobutu’s right-hand men, said there were major problems in agreeing on the sharing out of government posts, and accused Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi of breaking promises.

Mukalayi said a joint committee of Mobutu supporters and opponents, set up at the weekend to thrash out details of a crisis government, would issue a statement on the deadlock yesterday — the day Tshisekedi, a fierce Mobutu critic, was supposed to formally present his cabinet.

If the deadlock is not broken, the committee could withdraw Tshisekedi’s mandate, risking uproar on the streets and among Western countries that have pushed for Zaire’s corrupt political system to be reformed quickly.

The crushing majority of Zaire’s 40-million people live in poverty and have a burning hatred for Mobutu, whom they say has amassed a fortune at their expense. Mobutu said on Tuesday it was beneath his dignity to answer charges that he was “a thief and a murderer.”

He said he and Tshisekedi, a loyal supporter until 1989, had agreed to work to¬gether, but immediately distanced himself from his new prime minister.

“I do not share his point of view, his opinions or his ideology,” said Mobutu, surrounded by army bodyguards. He insisted his party — the Popular Movement for the Revolution — would have an equal share of power in government.

Tshisekedi, after accepting the premiership on Monday, said he had never been an enemy of Mobutu, who once had him thrown into a lunatic asylum.

In the past, Tshisekedi has said the president should be exiled or arrested.

What has clearly angered Mobutu is Tshisekedi’s assertion that he would have control over all key government portfolios.

Mobutu has also insisted that Tshisekedi be sworn in before the “rubber stamp” one-party parliament, which next meets on October 7.

The prime minister, however, wants to appear only before Zaire’s National Conference, a chaotic 3,000-delegate body that was supposed to chart Zaire’s course towards democracy once it was set up in August.

A senior source in the pro-Mobutu camp said Tshisekedi was planning to name a 35-member cabinet of 22 ministers and 11 secretaries of state.

Tshisekedi’s appointment has calmed tension in the capital. A dusk-to-dawn curfew imposed last week has been lifted.

Ordinary people interviewed on Tuesday all said they wanted Mobutu to resign.

Many accused his long-time Western allies of keeping him in titular power by sending French and Belgian troops to quell riots last week.

Their official task was to evacuate more than 10,000 foreign nationals. — Reuters.
Kinshasa tense as power struggle peaks

KINSHASA — President Mobutu Sese Seko told Western ambassadors yesterday that opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi had insulted him and that he would withdraw his nomination as prime minister.

Mr Tshisekedi in turn accused Mr Mobutu of trying to block creation of a new government, but said he and his allies would form one anyway.

Mr Mobutu declared that he would retain control of the army, challenging Mr Tshisekedi's assertions that the Zairean leader would be reduced to a figurehead, Western diplomatic sources said.

"The sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, quoted Mr Mobutu as saying: "Tshisekedi is not viable. He is not informing me of what he is doing. I remain chief of the army,"" Mr Mobutu had appointed Mr Tshisekedi prime minister late on Sunday. But on Tuesday, Mr Mobutu said Mr Tshisekedi was trying to seize all power in the central African nation.

Mr Mobutu's supporters said Mr Tshisekedi was preparing to break an agreement that the interim Cabinet be divided between the opposition and the ruling party.

Mr Mobutu is under pressure from Western governments to end 26 years of dictatorship over this sprawling central African country, after French and Belgian military intervention last week quelled rioting in several cities.

Mr Mobutu met late yesterday with the ambassadors of the United States, Belgium and the 12-nation European Community after an accord with the opposition to form a new government began crumbling.

A national political conference that was supposed to ratify Mr Tshisekedi as prime minister was postponed earlier, but Mr Tshisekedi said he would form a new "crisis government" anyway.

Mr Mobutu told the ambassadors that he might replace Mr Tshisekedi with Ngwéz Karl-Jacques Bond, another opposition leader. But it was not clear whether Mr Ngwéz would accept the post if offered it.

Reporting on the power struggle, Kinshasa newspapers quickly proclaimed Mr Tshisekedi the winner.

One banner headline read "Tshisekedi in command." Another said "Mobutu suffers a technical knockout".

The situation in the riot-torn capital grew more tense as the agreement between Mr Mobutu and the opposition unraveled. Soldiers of the presidential guard began deploying around the Intercontinental Hotel, where most remaining foreigners in Kinshasa were staying. No reason was given for the deployment.

Sources with the US Agency for International Development described the situation as "very explosive" and said its last four employees might leave. But US Embassy and Marine sources said they were unaware of orders for further evacuations.

The streets of riot-devastated Kinshasa had been calm earlier yesterday. Small goods that had disappeared since unpaid soldiers mutinied last week began reappearing in shops, but food prices still remained four times higher than normal.

France and Belgium have decided to bring food and emergency relief to Kinshasa, a city of 3 million.

Mr Tshisekedi had called on the Western governments to send food and medicine urgently to avoid famines and epidemics. — Sapa-AF.

● Choices facing Mobutu

— Page 19
President’s wife takes holiday on Riviera

London — As Zaire teeters on the verge of collapse, Mobilla Dowa Mobutu, wife of the beleaguered president, is reclining in her husband’s sumptuous villa in the south of France. According to Dierdre Mooney, French correspondent of London’s Evening Standard, Mrs Mobutu arrived at Nice airport in her husband’s private jet accompanied by members of her family and a number of diplomats.

The party travelled in a fleet of limousines to the president’s villa at Roquebrune Cap Martin, just outside Monaco. Mooney reports that the villa, with two swimming pools and a tennis court, overlooks the Mediterranean and has a breathtaking view of Monte Carlo. Its long approach is heavily guarded, she says.

President Mobutu, who visits the French Riviera regularly, also has a home in Paris and one in Belgium.
Choices that face embattled Mobutu

Mobutu still holds power in Zaire — but for how long? By JULIAN OZANNE in Kinshasa.

SHROUDED in the all the symbols of absolutist authority, President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire seems uncertain that his country stands on the brink of chaos.

A mutiny in the army over pay, rising and loot ing throughout the country, and the intervention of French and Belgian troops to restore a reuser of law and order and evacuate their nationals have rekindled the deep currents of discontent which have split over into violence and rebellion throughout Zaire's 31 years of independence.

Two choices face the president: a radical overhaul of the entire system of government, which would almost certainly spell the end of his 31-year reign, or a continuation of the same old order.

But, rather than a name of urgency, all that is emerging is a political battle between the president and Pierre Tshisekedi, the opposition he has chosen to form a crisis government — even how much power the new administration will wield over the army and bureaucracy.

Such political wrangling leaves the two engines of the president's crisis unresolved. There are profound economic catastrophes which have forced many Zairians, including soldiers, into desperate poverty and violence, and the failure to move towards a genuine participatory democracy.

Zaire's banks are closed, and money, food and medicines are in short supply. Thousands of people, already on the poverty line, have been left unemployed, turning up for work at locked and guarded factories to find that their employers have fled the country.

Mr Mobutu, who holds the key to any transition in Zaire, still refuses to articulate a commitment to a new political and economic order.

But the deepening economic crisis of hyper-inflation, growing urban poverty and the virtual collapse of the country's infrastructure and state-owned companies make the crisis unlike any other.

For the first time, it is the people of the capital and the army, traditionally Mr Mobutu's power base, who feel the violent eruption last week.

Furthermore, Washington, Brussels and Paris no longer view Mr Mobutu as vital to stability, or as a necessary bastion against the spread of communism.

Instead, they now fear that under Mr Mobutu, Zaire may be heading for disintegration, a collapse of its macro-economic stability and the inevitable spill-over of instability into the Zairean neighbourhoood.

Of particular concern is the resurgence of state and regional-based rebellions in Shaba — formerly Katanga — the people have twice before rebelled, both times they had to be put down with the aid of foreign troops.

Now, however, it seems that only with Mr Mobutu out of the country can stability be guaranteed. — Financial Times
Zaire power struggle as jungle law reigns

KINSHASA — President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, fuming at being labelled a “human monster” by his prime minister-designate, still believes their unlikely marriage is workable, Western diplomats said yesterday.

As President Mobutu remained locked in a power struggle with opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi, nominated premier, State radio said “men in uniform” were still running riot in the capital 10 days after it was devastated by army-led looting.

“There is no law left in Kinshasa apart from the law of the jungle,” a commentator said.

The diplomats said Mr Mobutu had told six key Western ambassadors on Wednesday evening that he had the constitutional right to sack Mr Tshisekedi, who is struggling to form a national government four days after Mr Mobutu was forced by foreign and domestic pressure to appoint him premier-designate.

But the diplomats denied a report that Mr Mobutu had said he had dumped or would dump Mr Tshisekedi for calling him a “human monster”.

“President Mobutu said he was not going to dismiss Tshisekedi because he still hoped they would reach an agreement,” said one.

The two strong-willed men, who worked closely for the first half of Mr Mobutu’s 26-year rule, have made a disastrous start to their implausible alliance.

Western governments are pushing them to get a credible government in place and diplomats fear another breakdown of public order if the pres-

Trying to form govt... Etienne Tshisekedi.

ent impasse drags into next week.

Mr Tshisekedi (58) has said repeatedly since Monday that he will not take orders from Mr Mobutu or leave the president in charge of key areas like defence, security and foreign affairs.

The envoys from the US, France, Belgium, Germany, Britain and Canada expressed concern to Mr Mobutu about Zaire’s deteriorating economy and public-order situation.

The official death toll of 117 in last month’s looting spree was challenged by the Zairean Association for the Defence of Human Rights yesterday.

After checks at all of Kinshasa’s main hospitals, the group named 83 people, including eight soldiers, whom it said had been killed by gunshots, stabbing, electrocution and other causes.

Although the homes of thousands of expatriates were systematically pillaged, only one foreigner — a French army corporal — was killed.

One ambassador said Mr Mobutu (86) showed no sign of planning to go quietly. “He is very determined,” he said. — Sapa-Reuters.
Mobutu hopes for agreement

KINSHASA — Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko, furious at being labelled a “human monster” by his prime minister-designate, still believes their unlikely marriage is workable, Western diplomats said yesterday.

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But the diplomats from the US, France, Belgium, Germany, Britain and Canada denied a report that Mobutu had said he had dumped or would dump Tshisekedi for calling him a “human monster” in an interview with Belgian radio.

“Mobutu said he was not going to dismiss Tshisekedi because he still hoped they would reach an agreement,” said one.

Tshisekedi has said repeatedly since Monday that he will not take orders from Mobutu or leave the president in charge of key areas like defence, security and foreign affairs.

He continued talks with opposition allies yesterday on the allocation of ministerial jobs.

A spokesman for his party, the Union for Democracy and Social Progress, said Tshisekedi was not aware of any Mobutu plan to dump him.

“The report could just be disinformation,” Mathieu Mulaia said.

Army boss disowns Haiti coup

As the crisis went on, outgoing Prime Minister Mulumba Lokoji remained in charge of daily business.

Although Kinshasa has been mainly calm for the past week, state radio said gangs of well armed men in uniform — it did not call them soldiers — were sowing terror in parts of the city, looting remaining goods and holding people up at gunpoint.

The official death toll of 117 in the looting spree on September 23 and 24 was challenged by the Zairean Association for the Defence of Human Rights yesterday.

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Although the homes of thousands of expatriates were pillaged, only one foreigner, a French army corporal, was killed.

— Sapa-Reuters.
Deadlock on Zaire Cabinet

CITIZEN 6/11/91

OPPOSITION sources in Zaire said strongman President Mobutu Sese Seko had accepted most members of a proposed crisis government.

But diplomatic sources said negotiations to form a new government remained deadlocked after a meeting on Friday between Mobutu and his archrival prime minister-designate Etienne Tshisekedi.

Kibassa Maliba, a co-chairman of Tshisekedi's Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS) party, said Mobutu had agreed to all the 20-member cabinet except the defence minister.

They said Mobutu rejected the proposed cabinet because it did not adhere to the terms of an agreement worked out on Sunday which led to Tshisekedi being designated Prime Minister in an effort to get Zaire out of its political crisis.

SAPA/Reuters
ETIENNE Tshisekedi wa Mulumba is a former ally of Mobutu who became one of his bitterest foes.

He is an opposition leader recently appointed Prime Minister by President Mobutu Sese Seko. But now the president has turned against him over an "insult".

Mobutu opponents have threatened to kill Tshisekedi if he sells out the opposition. Co-opting political rivals has long been a favourite Mobutu tactic.

This week, Tshisekedi declared that he alone would run the mineral-rich Central African nation at the head of a crisis government.

He was co-founder with Mobutu of the ruling Popular Movement for the Revolution in 1966 and served variously as Interior Minister, Justice Minister and Minister of Planning and Scientific Research.

He served as Justice Minister and Planning Minister before going to Morocco as ambassador in 1969.

He was later vice-president of the national assembly and chairman of the national airline, Air Zaire.

Tshisekedi started speaking out against the government in 1980 as a founding member of the

had been placed in a mental institution after trying to stage a demonstration against Mobutu in the capital.

But Tshisekedi circulated fairly freely and made frequent trips to the former colonial power, Belgium, and to the US to drum up support for the opposition movement.

Last year, after his release, Mobutu loyalists attacked Tshisekedi's house, beat him and assaulted his wife. Add to this he moves from house to house at night as a security measure.

Among the aims of his Union for Democracy and Social Progress, Tshisekedi says, are going back to the country's former name of the Congo and restoring the flag adopted when it became independent.

Earlier this year, Tshisekedi, one of four co-chairmen of the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS) party, was named prime minister but had to turn down the post.

Mobutu designated Tshisekedi for the job in July following a bout of rioting but Tshisekedi declined the offer after his supporters surrounded his house and threatened to burn it down if he didn't deal with the "man they call "Satan". -- Sapa-Reporter
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Chern 6/0/19

Chern 6/0/19
Unlocking the trade doors to Africa

RISKY BUSINESS

TWO weeks ago, 16 Premier International technical experts scurried out of Shaba province in Zaire with their lives. They had flown into Zaire to investigate the feasibility of buying the food division of Gecamines, a copper mining interest, the day the country erupted into violence.

Soon afterwards, Premier International sent in two jets to evacuate 16 employees and their dependants from Lubumbashi. The remaining 10 employees got out from Kinshasa with South African government assistance.

The company left behind a burnt-out shell of a supermarket on the outskirts of Kinshasa. It had been looted before being destroyed.

Premier's other retail warehouse in Lubumbashi was spared by the intervention of Belgian troops.

Premier Group deputy chief executive Gordia Utian says his gut reaction to the destruction in Zaire was to turn his back and walk away from the country. But Premier will go back and rebuild once conditions in Zaire have stabilised.

"What hasn't changed is the need for us to be in the area," he says.

South African trade with Africa has grown by 35 percent a year in the past three years. Where some European companies have disengaged either to redirect their energies in the post-1992 EC single market or because they were simply fed up with the basket case that many believe Africa to be, the South Africans have stepped in.

Lesson

With invisible, trade with Africa remains small but totals some R1.5 billion and is set to increase.

Foreign Affairs chief director for Africa, Sefiso Siswetsa says Africa is the natural market for South Africa's food and manufactured goods.

But as the revolts in Zaire have shown, it is a market which, though potentially lucrative, is also both difficult and potentially dangerous.

The lesson that Premier has learned from its dealings in Africa over the past 12 years, Mr Utian says, is that while the entrance fee is high and the annual subscriptions enormous, the possibilities and potential exceed both.

The company's interests in Africa are said to be worth between R460 and R500 million a year — more than eight percent of turnover in South Africa and the rest of Africa.

Mr Utian will not divulge how Premier expects to trade in most of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa — it is possible, he says.

But he will say that Premier has never embarassed its customers — it has never appeared that they were doing business with "South Asians."

In the past year of rapid political change in SA, the mood for offshore companies, he says, is changing and backdoor trading with Africa has declined.

Mr Laurence Meesman, a manager of Enterprises Unlimited, a company which has traded in Zambia, Zaire, Burundi, Rwanda and Zimbabwe for eight years, says the political changes have cut exports by three percent.

"A year ago, Mr Meesman would have left his South African passport at JNB airport and travelled to an African country on a "clean" passport to meet a business client.

"Presenting his credentials from a front company to, for example, Belgium, he and his client, who knew he was a South African, would conclude a deal and open up a letter of credit between the client's bank and that of the front company. Getting the goods to the destination would then involve falsifying certificates of the country of manufacture and the country of origin."

This involved payment of commission — bribes — all the way from South Africa through the frontline states to the final destination.

This was one of the simplest methods of doing business in Africa, other companies went to far more elaborate lengths.

Mr Prins says the best-known secret in Zambian is that its trade with South Africa amounts to close on R300 million a year. The redundancy of "middlemen" in African trade, he says, is making it cheaper for Africa to import South African products. It is also making possible direct contact between South African and African business communities and the benefits of getting to know the country's import needs.

Contact with African countries north of the neighboring states has increased dramatically over the past months. In the first nine months of this year more than 60 delegations from those countries have visited SA openly.

South African businesses have been welcomed at trade fairs in Zambia, Kenya and Mozambique this year — something that would have been unheard of three years ago.

Mr Prins expects trade with African countries outside the SA Customs Union to top between R5 and R7 billion this year. Hidden trade could bring the figure closer to R10 billion.

Besides Zimbabwe, South African's largest trading partners on the continent are Zambia, Zaire and Mozambique and Malawi. The only countries that South Africa had no dealings with last year were Equatorial Guinea and Djibouti.

Africa, excluding Customs Union partners, is already South Africa's sixth-largest trading partner and accounts for nearly 10 percent of this country's non-oil exports and some 25 percent of its manufactured exports.

Goods suitable for African needs are available quickly, production costs are lower, and technology and back-up services are close at hand in South Africa. Mr Prins says.

But all businessmen agree that the hitch in trade with Africa — besides political instability — is a lack of foreign exchange.

Africa suffers a debt burden of $71.5 billion ($700 billion) and, Mr Prins says, the continent is getting poorer by the day.

The extent to which Premier trades with African countries fluctuates according to their ability to obtain foreign exchange, Mr Utian says.

"Africa is certainly not Fifth Avenue in New York," he says.

Despite this, there are still profits to be made. South African businesses, Mr Utian says, have tapped only a small percentage of the available buying power because of political circumstances.

Credit Guarantee Insurance Corporation of Africa senior manager Gerrit Kruger says his company will not insure risk of payment in Zaire and Zambia and has not done so for more than 10 years.

The company also stopped covering South African businessmen involved in capital projects and investments in Zaire the day the fighting broke out on September 23.

However, for trade with countries in the rest of Africa, the company will insure the trader against the client being unable or unwilling to pay.

This cover applies only to politically motivated acts — ie. the goods are impounded or confiscated — and does not apply to theft or vandalism.

The company will also insure a South African interest — like a warehouse — against being destroyed or confiscated on political grounds.

Credit Guarantee's insurance cover is increasing dramatically in Africa, he says. Mr Kruger says that in the two years to June 1991 the value of goods it insured rose by R800 million.

Mr Prins says Africa's inability to pay for goods could be alleviated by barter trade which is negotiable because of the complications involved. There are rich niches to be captured in Cameroon and Nigeria which South Africa would be interested in, he says.

Future

Mr Musie Montet, administrative manager for the SA insurance, which has a large business interest in Zaire and also got burnt — says barter trade with that country has not been possible for a while.

He puts this down to the reluctance of President Mobutu to deal with the rest of the country's exports to the detriment of filling his own coffers.

It also has a Subcommittee working on assisting African countries to barter to alleviate the problems of foreign exchange.

Most of the businessmen agree that the future in doing business with Africa lies in joint-venture operations and development projects.

With recognition of South Africa as part of Africa and the growth of political acceptability, the chances of South African businessmen taking a slice of the African cake is looking favourable.

But first the dust from the rubble in Zaire will have to settle.
Mobutu, arch-foe must strike a deal

KINSHASA - A partial pull-out of French and Belgian troops from Zaire has increased pressure on President Mobutu Sese Seko and his arch-foe, Prime Minister designate Mr Etienne Tshisekedi, to agree on forming a new government.

Mobutu and Tshisekedi, a one-time Mobutu ally turned enemy, were due to meet again yesterday in an effort to hammer out an agreement, sources close to the president said.

Mobutu opponents also planned to demonstrate in the capital Kinshasa yesterday to protest at delay in forming the government.

Tshisekedi was designated prime minister early last week but has yet to take charge. The outgoing government has virtually ceased to function, leaving a power vacuum.

The pressure has been increased by the decision to pull out some of the French and Belgian troops, whose presence put an end to the riots.

French and Belgian troop strength in the sprawling central African country, where 117 people were killed in riots two weeks ago, is being reduced by about 200 men to about 1,200, diplomats and military sources say.

Paris and Brussels sent the troops to protect and evacuate foreign nationals; the latter task is now effectively complete.

"There is no question of our military or political presence giving the slightest support to a regime which seems to have run out of steam," French Foreign Minister Mr Roland Dumas said on Friday in Paris.

The withdrawal, which leaves about 1,000 troops in the devastated capital Kinshasa and a smaller number in the mineral-rich southern province of Shaba, was a signal to both sides to come quickly to agreement, diplomats said.

"Now you have to deal with your own problems," said one diplomat. "We are not here to maintain law and order, that’s your problem.

The efforts to form the new government are stalled by a number of issues, the main one being control of the army and security forces, diplomats and Zairian sources said.

Tshisekedi, a 58-year-old lawyer, told a news conference on Saturday that efforts to form the government were blocked by Mobutu’s insistence on retaining the military control he has exercised for 26 years.

"I think the people have seen the role the army and security forces have played, particularly with regard to respect of human rights," he said.

Residents say that, during the riots, soldiers shot looters who refused to turn over stolen property the troops wanted for themselves.

What is needed is a face-saving formula which allows Mobutu and Tshisekedi in effect to share control over the military and security forces, diplomats and Zairian politicial sources said.

Unless a compromise is reached soon, Mobutu may re-convence a committee of elders, which last week was involved in designating Tshisekedi as prime minister.

Tshisekedi, at his news conference, said he would not accept any further involvement by the committee and intended to deal directly with Mobutu.

"I will talk with him and him alone," Tshisekedi said.

Life in Kinshasa, which suffered hundreds of millions of dollars of damage in the riots, has been slowly returning to normal.

There is more food in the markets and prices, which soared after the riots, have started to come down.

A sack of manioc meal, which quadrupled in price to more than a million zaires - about R140 at the current exchange rate - has dropped to about 750,000 zaires.

Still the prices are way beyond the means of the vast majority of the city’s estimated three to four million people, most of whom have no money, and many of whom lost their jobs when businesses closed and foreigners left due to the riots.

"People are doing what they can - they are eating manioc leaves with some palm oil," said 19-year-old Honore Lesake-Pady, a high-school student.

"The people are letting the ‘sacred union’ do its work (with Mobutu)," he added. "But if they can’t work it out, then we will see what happens." - Sapa-Reuters
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My people want me, asserts Mobutu from luxury yacht

By James Tomlins
Star Foreign Service

PARIS — A feisty President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire said yesterday: "My people want me, and I'm prepared to stay in power until the year 2000."

In an exclusive interview with the Paris daily Liberation, given on his presidential yacht, Mr Mobutu denied reports that he was a dollar billionaire.

Asked if he was prepared to help Zaire emerge from its indebtedness, he replied: "Everybody says I have a colossal fortune, but that is absurd. I'm supposed to have four, five or six billion dollars. That is total nonsense."

As if my villa at Cap Martin, my Paris flat, my Chateau in Brussels and my property in Portugal could save Zaire.

"The fact is that I have several times come to the rescue of my country by spending my own money. In 1969 I transferred $10 million (about £28 million) from my French bank account to settle a problem. But for Heaven's sake, people must stop claiming that I have fantastic sums in foreign banks ... where is the proof?"

Turning to reports that he was on the verge of quitting power after 26 years, Mr Mobutu exploded: "If my people want me and I'm in good health, then I will remain as president."

"In any case, I have decided to fight, after all I am a good sport. My present mandate expires on December 5 and I have already announced that I will stand again. Owing to present circumstances we will have to see on what date these elections can be held. But I know I will beat my opponents by a long chalk."

He said he was one of the first African leaders to introduce a multiparty system in his country, with the result that today there were 260 political parties in Zaire.

He blamed the recent army mutiny on opposition leaders who told soldiers they had been neglected and badly paid.
**AFRICA**

**Riots hit copper output in Zaire**

LONDON — Zaire is likely to produce around 250,000 tons of copper this year and output losses as a result of the recent riots are about 3,000 to 4,000 tonnes at most, a senior source from the state mining company Gecamines said.

"Output is expected to return to normal sometime this week," said the source, who was in London attending the annual metals week gatherings.

The independent consultancy, Commodities Research Unit, recently pegged finished Zaire copper output this year at 240,000 to 255,000 tons, down from 415,000 tons last year.

The company still expects to produce about 12,000 tons of cobalt this year and losses from the recent strife were probably no more than 300 tons, the Gecamines source added.

The central African country produced 10,000 tons of cobalt last year, he said.

The recent riots had not damaged mining installations or offices in southern Zaire, he said. Edward Lysen, the company's Canadian financial director, said two weeks ago that its office in Kolwezi had been destroyed.

But the disturbances did reduce output as workers stayed away and supplies of acid and other inputs were held up.

Losses carrying supplies for the mining industry decided not to enter Zaire when the troubles started and papers were deposited in railway offices, the source said.

There had been no damage to the railway network, he added.

Zaire has several export routes for its copper — through the country's western port of Matadi, via Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, or via East London and Durban.

The Gecamines source said Zaire was likely to meet its official creditors' next week in Europe or in the Zaire mining town of Lubumbashi to discuss a resumption of loans.

The country is seeking in the region of $100m over four or five years to boost its copper output to 470,000 tonnes a year.

The IMF said last month Zaire was no longer entitled to borrower more money because it was behind in its payments. The IMF said its overdue payments totalled about $81.7m.

Other countries have also cut off aid.

US aid to Zaire totalling some $15m was also suspended because of arrears in repayments, the chaotic state of the economy and Zaire's record of human rights abuses.

Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko has failed to resolve a political crisis over control of the army.

Monday's talks, less an inconclusive first round on Friday, maintained a climate of instability which many diplomats fear could spill over into fresh violence.

Riots led by soldiers two weeks ago devasted the capital and killed more than 100 people. — Reuter.

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**Cabinda to get some autonomy**

LUANDA — Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos says his government is in contact with unidentified forces on oil-rich Cabinda and aims to concede some autonomy to the northern coastal enclave.

"Military tensions still exist in Cabinda, but there have been contacts with some forces with influence among the armed groups regarding the possibility of violence there, with a view to creating principles to end that war and provide a statute of autonomy whose terms could figure in the new constitution," dos Santos said at the opening of the 10th session of parliament this week.

The government and Unita rebels recently reached a peace accord. But Cabinda, which is separated from the rest of Angola by a small strip of Zairean territory, has been troubled by sporadic separatist violence.

The enclave produces nearly 70% of Angola's oil output of around 470,000 barrels per day. — Reuter.

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**Zambia's battered economy put on hold**

LUSAKA — Zambia's battered economy has been put on hold until after the country's first multiparty general election in two decades is held on October 30.

The world community is keeping a wary eye on the parliamentary and presidential elections, which could end President Kenneth Kaunda's 27-year rule.

"It's too close to call and there are too many factors which will determine who wins," said one Western diplomat.

Zambia's international aid was cut off when it defaulted on a $2.8m arrears payment to the World Bank in September.

A key factor in Zambia's off-again on-again economie reform programme backed by the IMF is an end to state subsidies, particularly on maize meal.

Despite heavy donor pressure, Kaunda has deferred raising meal prices until after the elections.

Government has just announced maize and wheat producer prices, but these are being eroded by inflation.

There is general agreement that Zambia's eight million people, burdened by $7.2bn in foreign debt, face hard times whoever wins the elections.

Economists say moves have been made in the right direction, including plans for civil service reform, privatisation of state firms, higher interest rates and a tightening of money supply. The big problem centres on maize meal subsidies, expected to reach $160m this year ($81m last year).

Meanwhile, bankers say the forex is in "exceedingly short supply".

Government is in effect mortgaging its vital copper exports to pay for fuel and emergency imports of South African maize meal.

Economists estimate year-on-year inflation at more than 100%.

The maximum lending rate for banks is 46%. The government-controlled savings account deposit rate is 33% — with banks obliged to hold 35% of deposits in non-interest-bearing Treasury bills.

Movement for Multi-party Democracy (MMD) leader Frederick Chiluba, Kaunda's presidential rival, admits immense problems lie ahead.

"If we accept that we must win the election, the Chiluba must also accept the idea that there are problems we must solve," he said. — Sapa-Reuter.
ZAGREB (Yugoslavia) — The Yugoslav army and Croatia's so-called "peace forces," which took practical steps yesterday toward their agreement, have now signed a ceasefire agreement, which took practical steps yesterday toward their agreement, have now signed a ceasefire agreement. The agreement, which was announced in Belgrade, also includes provisions for the relief of besieged towns and the guarantee of human rights for civilians in the area. The agreement was signed by the Yugoslav army and the Croatian army, with the Croatian government's approval. The agreement also includes provisions for the return of refugees and the rehabilitation of economic activities in the area. The agreement was welcomed by the international community, which expressed hope that it would bring an end to the conflict in Croatia.
Zaire leader urges mass protests

KINSHASA — Zaire's prime minister, frustrated by a deadlock in power-sharing talks with President Mobutu Sese Seko, has called on the people to take to the streets to vent their anger over the stalemate.

"The people are free to demonstrate their anger," Etienne Tshisekedi told reporters on Wednesday. "It is the people's choice. They can take to the streets."

Mobutu was forced to share power after 26 years of autocratic rule, following soldier-led looting and riots two weeks ago in which at least 117 people died. He said on state radio his differences with Tshisekedi were "very profound."

But he said it was still too soon to talk of a complete rupture in the negotiations with his prime minister, a 58-year-old lawyer and longtime opponent.

Tshisekedi said after the meeting with Mobutu on Wednesday, which lasted only 10 minutes: "We are back to ground zero."

He declared that Mobutu's demand for half the seats in a 22-member governing body was unacceptable.

The opposition coalition, called the Sacred Union, said it was planning a mass rally in the riot-damaged capital, Kinshasa.

"Mobutu always goes back on his word," said a high-ranked official of Tshisekedi's Sacred Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS) party. "He agrees to one thing in the morning and takes it back in the afternoon."

— Sapa-Reuters.
Mass protests in Zaire

KINSHASA - Zaire's prime minister, frustrated by a deadlock in power-sharing talks with President Mobutu Sese Seko, has called on the people to take to the streets to vent their anger - over the stalemate.

"The people are free to demonstrate their anger," Mr Etienne Tshisekedi told reporters on Wednesday. "It is the people's choice. They can take to the streets."

Mobutu, forced after 26 years of autocratic rule to share power following a month-long looting and riot two weeks ago in which at least 117 people died, said on State radio life's 'differences with Tshisekedi were "very profound."

But he said it was still too soon to talk of a complete rupture in the negotiations with his prime minister, a 58-year-old lawyer and longtime opponent.

Tshisekedi said after his second meeting with Mobutu on Wednesday, which lasted only 10 minutes: "We are back to ground zero."

Unacceptable

He declared that Mobutu's demand for half the seats in a 22-member government was unacceptable.

The opposition coalition, called the Sacred Union, said it was planning a mass rally in Kinshasa. The coalition was also due to hold a strategy session yesterday.

"Mobutu always goes back on his word," said Mr Mukenda, a high official of Tshisekedi's Union for Democracy and Social Progress party. "He agrees to one thing in the morning and takes it back in the afternoon."

The setback came as a shock to this city of four million people, some of whom had begun joyous demonstrations after Tshisekedi earlier in the day said he and Mobutu had overcome a 'major hurdle' over who would control the defence.
on a lavish scale
amphitheater of women
wines and dinner

Haiti's Baby Doc

358

31/10/94

Zaire's Mobutu is
tipped dictator

of Golden Gala

times by Rg billion
customized from hand
preparing for exile,

UN's Special Envoy to Rwanda

With him a mercenary intrepid

collection of volunteer fighters

Two days after his exodus

The entire country went into and out of a deep depression.

In a garden near the president's residence, the situation was tense but peaceful.

A man in a suit and tie walked slowly down the path of the garden, looking around him.

He seemed to be thinking about something important as he paused by a small fountain.

Just then, a woman in a dress appeared out of nowhere.

"What is your name?" the man asked her.

"I am the president," the woman replied.

The man looked at her, surprised.

"You cannot be the president," he said.

"Yes, I am," the woman replied.

"I have never seen you before," the man said.

"I am the president," the woman repeated.

The man looked around the garden, then back at the woman.

"I do not believe you," he said.

"I am the president," the woman said again.

"I must see proof," the man said.

"I am the president," the woman said once more.

The man looked at her again, this time with a mixture of disbelief and respect.

"I will give you proof," the woman said.

And with those words, she left the garden, leaving the man alone to ponder what had just happened.

He stood there for a while, thinking about what he had just witnessed.

Then, he turned and walked back toward the office building, his mind racing with thoughts and questions.

As he entered the building, he realized that the entire country was in shock.

The president had just declared himself as the president, and no one knew what to expect next.

It was a moment of incredible suspense.

In the end, however, it was decided that the president's action was valid, and he was recognized as the new leader of the country.

The people were divided on whether they accepted the president's claim, but they were all united in the hope that he would bring stability and prosperity to their land.

As for the man who had witnessed the scene, he knew that he had just experienced something truly remarkable.

He knew that he would never forget the moment, and he would always be grateful for the chance to witness such a historic event.

In the end, the man realized that sometimes, in the midst of chaos and uncertainty, there can be a moment of pure magic.

And that, he believed, was what happened that day in the garden.
Mobutu gives way

President Mobutu of Zaire yesterday agreed to the appointment of the first government formed by the opposition during his 26-year rule. But several important ministries went to Mobutu's supporters.
Mobutu agrees to opposition government

BRAZZAVILLE. — Zaire President Mobutu Sese Seko has agreed to the appointment of the first government formed by the opposition during his 26-year rule.

But several important ministries went to Mobutu supporters.

Zaire government radio announced the formation of the "cabinet government" that Western nations had been pressing Mr. Mobutu to appoint.

Mr. Mobutu, who celebrated his 61st birthday yesterday, failed in his demand for 50 percent of the 22 Cabinet ministries. But Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi also compromised, granting Mr. Mobutu's supporters the defence and foreign affairs portfolio.

Some of those named as ministers were little-known in the capital but it appeared that more than three-quarters of those appointed were from opposition parties.

France and Belgium sent paratroops into Zaire last month to safeguard the evacuation of more than 10,000 foreigners after unpaid Zairian troops mutinied and looted and ransacked businesses and homes in Kinshasa and other major cities. — Sapa-AP.
Zaire on edge as new govt awaited

KINSHASA. — Zaire remained without a government yesterday, three weeks after widespread riots rocked the regime of strong-arm President Mobutu Sese Seko and killed 117 people.

Kinshasa, devastated in an orgy of looting by disgruntled soldiers and destitute civilians last month, was tense as people awaited a formal announcement about a new cabinet line-up.

There was no indication of when or if Mr Mobutu, who turns 61 today, intended to give his approval to the first opposition-led government since he seized power in a 1965 coup.

Inflammatory tracts were widely circulated in this sprawling city of three million people. One leaflet called for anti-Mobutu demonstrations if there was no word about the government, another called on members of the president's Popular Revolutionary Movement (MPR) party to attack the homes of opposition leaders.

Opposition Prime Minister Mr Etienne Tshisekedi said he had formed his government and was waiting only for the president to announce it.

Mr Mukulayi Banza, a member of the MPR leadership, said on state-run television that his party no longer wanted seats in Mr Tshisekedi's government.

— Sapa-Reuters
Zaire's economy goes underground

KINSHASA — The two young men from Zaire put their precious cargo of Colgate toothpaste from SA into a plastic bag, stripped to their shorts and jumped into the Congo River just as the ferry approached the Congolese side. They may have accounted for a big percentage of Zaire's exports for the day.

Since unpaid Zairian soldiers mutinied last month, looting and destroying businesses and shops in the capital and several other major cities, the country has been virtually cut off from the outside world.

Much of its economy had already gone underground before the latest troubles sent more than 10,000 expatriates fleeing under the protection of French and Belgian troops.

In 1989, the latest year for which figures were available, total exports were valued at $2.1 billion. Foreign debt for that year totalled almost $4 billion.

In April, the government-controlled company that produces copper — which accounted for nearly 60% of Zaire's exports — announced it could provide only about 50% of the copper it had already sold.

Diamond supplies were not likely to be much affected, said a diamond industry executive. Zaire is the world's second-largest producer of industrial diamonds, but most of them are smuggled out of the country, he said.

Belgian Airlines, the airline, said it was unlikely to resume flights to Zaire in the near future. They have been an important revenue earner for the airline.

Inflation at the beginning of the year was more than 100%. By October, no one was bothering to estimate it.

The World Bank, IMF and Western donors cut off aid earlier this year. After the riots, they made clear aid would not be resumed until Mobutu handed over effective power to a government controlled by the opposition.

Though most Western diplomats reacted favourably to the creation of a government with most ministries controlled by the opposition, no one was ready to commit the kind of massive aid required to rebuild the country's infrastructure.

How can people survive with no jobs, and facing food prices that have tripled or quadrupled?

Much has been written about "system D," for the French word "debrouillard," or resourcefulness. Market women will buy a sack of peanuts, separate it into several smaller packets, and then sell them for a bit more than they paid. — Sapa-AP
KINSHASA — Zaire's new cabinet held its first meeting in the blazing sun at the weekend after Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi was barred from his office by troops loyal to strong-arm President Mobutu Sese Seko.

Post, Telephone and Telecommunications Minister Kiro Kamate said a quorum was present for the first meeting of an opposition-led cabinet in 26 years of Mobutu's rule.

There was no communic-
Zaire sacks new Premier

KINSHASA - Zaire plunged back to political chaos yesterday when President Mobutu Sese Seko disavowed his chief, Etienne Tshisekedi, as Prime Minister of the riot-torn state.

He appointed Mr. Tshisekedi to head Zaire's first opposition-led crisis government a week ago in the wake of riots that devastated the country.

Reversing his decision, Mr. Mobutu asked opposition parties to find another candidate.

On Saturday Mr. Tshisekedi, barred from his office by pro-Mobutu troops, was forced to hold his first Cabinet meeting outside in the broiling sun. — Sapa-Reuter.
Fury as new Zaire PM is sacked

KINSHASA — Zaire's strongman President Mobutu Sese Seko officially sacked opposition Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi yesterday, plunging the riot-torn central African country again into political chaos.

As units of President Mobutu's elite presidential guard used teargas and fired shots in the air to disperse 1500 Tshisekedi supporters outside the premier's office, the midday television news twice broadcast a presidential decree on his dismissal.

State radio later said one Tshisekedi supporter was seriously injured.

It called Mr. Tshisekedi's government "the most ephemeral in the country's history."

The demonstrators showed up at Mr. Tshisekedi's request to help him try to force his way into the office from which he had been barred since Saturday.

The fiery longtime Mobutu opponent, who recently referred to his arch foe as a "human monster," was unable to enter the building in an administrative district of Kinshasa.

Hundreds of demonstrators fled the clouds of teargas, and dozens took refuge in the French and Belgian embassies nearby.

"Zairean troops shortly afterwards blocked access to the embassies, bringing them face to face with Belgian and French paratroops."

Mr. Mobutu's decision to sack Mr. Tshisekedi had been inevitable since last week when a presidential spokesman said the path of office Mr. Tshisekedi signed on Wednesday last week was illegal.

"The one-time Mobutu ally turned fierce critic struck out references in the oath pledging support for the president and the constitution."

Mr. Mobutu said on Sunday he no longer recognised Mr. Tshisekedi as prime minister.

"Security was tight throughout this impoverished city of four million people, where most shops and businesses were wrecked in two days of rioting last month." — Sapa-Reuters.
Turmoil as Mobutu sacks his new prime minister

KINSHASA — Zaire’s strongarm President Mobutu Sese Seko officially sacked opposition Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi yesterday, plunging the riot-torn central African country once again into political chaos.

As units of Mobutu’s elite presidential guard used teargas and fired shots in the air to disperse about 15,000 Tshisekedi supporters outside the premier’s office, the midday television news twice broadcast a presidential decree on his dismissal.

The demonstrators showed up at Tshisekedi’s request to help him try to force his way into the office from which he had been barred since Saturday by pro-Mobutu troops.

The fiery long-time Mobutu opponent, who recently referred to his arch-foe as a “human monster,” was unable to enter the building in an administrative district of the wrecked capital Kinshasa.

Hundreds of demonstrators fled the clouds of teargas and dozens took refuge in the French and Belgian embassies.

Zairean troops shortly afterwards blocked access to the embassies, bringing them face to face with Belgian and French paratroops.

The foreign troops have been guarding the embassies since riots four weeks ago killed 210 people and caused hundreds of millions of dollars of damage to Kinshasa and several provincial cities.

Mobutu’s decision to sack Tshisekedi had been inevitable since last week when a presidential spokesman said the oath of office Tshisekedi signed on Wednesday was illegal.

He struck out references in the oath pledging support for the president and the constitution.

Mobutu said on Sunday he no longer recognised Tshisekedi as prime minister and called on opposition parties to select an alternative.

A close aide to Mobutu said an important meeting to decide the question was being held yesterday. — Sapa-Reuter.
KINSHASA - Looting has
started again in Zaire's
major copper-mining town
of Lubumbashi, witnesses:
arriving in the capital Kin-
shasa yesterday.

The witnesses said loot-
ers ransacked the south-
eastern city on Monday
night as the central African
country was locked in a
power struggle between
President Mobutu Sese
Soko and opposition Prime
Minister Etienne
Tshisekedi.

“They looted every-
thing, all night,” said one
resident contacted by tele-
phone. “They've stripped
the face of the town.
They've even taken corru-
gated metal from the
houses.”

Air links with
Lubumbashi, in Zaire's
copper-rich Shaba prov-
ince, were cut.

An eyewitness said sol-
diers carried out the loot-
ing, firing automatic weap-
on in the air.

The man, employed by
the state mining firm
Gecamines, said damage
was substantial but there
were no deaths. The town
was quiet by dawn yester-
day.

Belgian nationals in the
town had been placed un-
der the protection of Bel-
gian troops, sent there se-
veral weeks ago after more
than 100 people died in an
orgy of looting that swept
the country.

Mobutu officially
sacked opposition
Tshisekedi on Monday,
plunging the vast and im-
poorished central African
country into political chaos
again. - Sapa-Reuters
Riots follow Mobutu choice of premier

KINSHASA—Fresh rioting broke out in Zaire's capital Kinshasa today after President Mobutu Seke Seko named a replacement prime minister, Etienne Tshisekedi, witnesses said.

Protesters set fire to buses and put up barricades to stop traffic in the city of 4 million people which was last month hit by the most damaging riots in its history.

Armoured personnel carriers could be seen moving into strategic positions and there were some reports of gunfire.

Defying warnings at home and abroad that only major reforms could prevent a social explosion, President Mobutu picked a veteran but second-rank politician last night to head a new crisis government.

A presidential decree named Mungul Diaka as Zaire's fourth prime minister in 1991, a year which has seen Mr. Mobutu's intricate power structure unravel at astonishing speed.

Western embassies and Zairean observers feared for the worst after the president refused to reappoint Mr. Tshisekedi.

"I fear this will lead to real confrontation. None of the real opposition parties will accept this," one Western diplomat commented.

"The people will not tolerate this for 48 hours," said Faustin Birindwa, a senior aide to Mr. Tshisekedi.

Key Western embassies have urged Mr. Mobutu to reappoint Mr. Tshisekedi, and France warned it would end cooperation agreements if the president continued to resist democracy. — Sapa-Reuters.
Mobutu’s grip on Zaire weakening

KINSHASA — Looting and pillaging in Lubumbashi has deteriorated into pitched battles between rival political factions that have left many people dead, witnesses said yesterday.

One of the witnesses, Belgian army Col Eric Barbaix, said whole neighbourhoods of the city were set ablaze earlier this week after unpaid soldiers began looting. The witnesses spoke after their Tuesday-night evacuation from Lubumbashi to Brazzaville, capital of neighbouring Congo.

Barbaix, a doctor who helped the evacuation, said many people had died in the fires, and others in fighting that involved supporters and detractors of President Mobutu Sese Seko and also, for the first time, pitted rival opposition factions against each other. He said he could not say exactly how many deaths there were.

Zaire radio also reported “many deaths” without giving details.

Barbaix is among 800 Belgian paratroopers sent to Zaire last month to safeguard the evacuation of 10,000 foreigners after unpaid troops first mutinied in late September.

Mobutu’s grip on this Central African nation appeared further weakened. For the second time in a month, he was unable to control rioting soldiers and was rebuffed in his attempt to force opposition leaders to replace Etienne Tshisekedi as prime minister.

In Kinshasa, thousands of supporters of Tshisekedi, fired by Mobutu for refusing to accept his orders, marched in support of the prime minister.

The radio and television remain under Mobutu’s control, and opposition leaders say he is using it to spread rumours of chaos to set the stage for declaration of martial law.

There was no comment from Mobutu on the new riots in Lubumbashi, or reports of looting in several other cities.

Gerrit Vossebelt, a Dutch national evacuated to SA, said many buildings in Lubumbashi were destroyed.

In Brazzaville, evacuee Athanase Esathur described how he watched his shop, his house and his car set ablaze by a mob.

“We’ve lost everything,” confirmed Belgian restaurant owner Eugene Christocheda.

Nicolas Chalamos, a Greek who also fled, said: “I’ve got only the clothes that I have been wearing since Monday.” — Saps-AP.
Mobutu angers Zaire

KINSHASA. — President Mobutu Sese Seko today faced the fury of Zaireans demanding radical change after he rejected the opposition's choice for prime minister.

Defying warnings that only massive reforms could prevent a social explosion, President Mobutu picked a veteran, but second-rank, politician last night to head a new crisis government.

A presidential decree named Mangul Diaka as Zaire's fourth prime minister in 1991, a year which has seen Mr Mobutu's intricate power structure unravel at astonishing speed.

Western embassies and Zairean observers feared for the worst after Mr Mobutu refused to reappoint opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi as prime minister.

"I fear this will lead to real confrontation. None of the real opposition parties will accept this," a Western diplomat commented.

"Mangul Diaka is very charming, but he is not front-rank. He has no popular support in Kinshasa."

Parties in the opposition's Sacred Union were due to meet today amid fears of a violent popular reaction to President Mobutu's choice.

"The people will not tolerate this for 48 hours," said Faustin Birindwa, a senior aide to Mr Tshisekedi, Zaire's short-lived prime minister sacked by Mr Mobutu on Monday.

"Mangul is a turncoat. The people want Tshisekedi and there will be trouble if they don't get him," a hotel worker said.

Mr Tshisekedi, Mr Mobutu's fiercest adversary, was reaffirmed as the Sacred Union candidate for the premiership on Tuesday. — Sapa-Reuter.
Belgian troops will stay on indefinitely

55 percent of the country's energy comes from nuclear power plants. The French-speaking community is opposed to building more nuclear plants, and the government has decided to phase out nuclear power by 2025.

The situation in the Belgian Congo in the 1960s was marred by violence and unrest. The Belgian government maintained a brutal regime, and the Congo was seen as a source of natural resources, particularly rubber and copper.

The Congo was a territory that Belgium occupied for many years, and it became independent in 1960. However, the transition to independence was complicated, and there were many tensions and conflicts.

In recent years, there have been efforts to improve relations between Belgium and the Congo, and there have been initiatives to address past wrongs and promote reconciliation.

The Belgian government has also been involved in international efforts to support peace and stability in the Congo, including through the United Nations and other organizations.
Zairean army goes on the rampage

BRAZZAVILLE — Mutinous Zairean soldiers, whose riots already have claimed 17 lives in southern Zaire, pillaged the mining center of Lubumbashi again yesterday. President Mobutu Sese Seko appeared to have lost control of his army.

Mobutu's new prime minister, Bernardin Mungul-Diaka, was huddling in his house in the capital, Kinshasa, guarded by the president's special militia against hundreds of demonstrators who began attacking his residence on Wednesday night, Zaire state radio said.

Mungul-Diaka, a minor Zairean opposition leader once imprisoned for embezzling state funds, was named prime minister on Wednesday after Mobutu fired popular opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi for refusing to take orders from him.

Criticised

The new prime minister has failed to win support of opposition parties in Kinshasa. Western governments also withheld recognition of his appointment, pending discussions.

Belgium and France criticised Mobutu for firing Tshisekedi as leader of the country's first opposition-led government since Mobutu seized power in 1965.

In Lubumbashi soldiers, who had already stripped most of the city of 450,000 people bare after three days of riots, loot a warehouse containing food for Angolan refugees, the Belgian branch of the relief group Doctors Without Borders said.

A spokesman for the group, who spoke on condition of anonymity in Brussels, said hospitals reported receiving bodies of 17 people since unpaid soldiers revolted on Monday. She said the toll was far from complete since many casualties may not have reached hospitals.

The spokesman, who was in radio contact with Lubumbashi, said the pillaging continued yesterday.

In Kinshasa, Mobutu's opponents branded Mungul-Diaka a traitor, noting he had voted with other opposition party leaders to refuse to accept Mobutu's dismissal of Tshisekedi.

Mungul-Diaka, 57, had only joined the opposition recently, forming his Assembly for a Democratic Republic. It was one of the smaller parties among the more than 150 that form the opposition coalition, the Sacred Union. Mobutu has formed and funded many of the more than 200 parties that formed after he lifted a ban on political activity by any party other than his Popular Movement for the Revolution.

Though Mungul-Diaka was in exile for three years in the 1980s, he returned in 1993 and rejoined Mobutu's party.

Belgian Prime Minister Wilfried Martens yesterday said in Brussels that Belgium initially withheld judgment on whether the new Zairean premier was an acceptable leader to get the country out of political and economic distress.

The backing of the US, France and Belgium is seen as essential for any government in Zaire to get support from the developed nations. The three had backed Tshisekedi.

Martens said his government would have "intensive discussions" today before making a commitment.

"We will insist, together with our French and US partners, that a government is formed that can tackle the situation," Martens told reporters. — Sapa-AP.
Troops run riot in Zaire

BRAZZAVILLE — Rebel Zairean soldiers, whose riots have already claimed 17 lives, pillaged Lubumbashi again yesterday.

And in Kinshasa, looters sacked an uninhabited house belonging to President Mobutu Seke Seko, sources said.

Mr. Mobutu appears to have lost control of his army. His new prime minister, Bernardin Mungut-Diaka, was reported to be huddled in his house in Kinshasa, guarded by the president’s special militia. — Sapa-AP
BRAZZAVILLE, Congo. — Mutinous Zairean soldiers pillaged the mining centre of Lubumbashi again yesterday and the new prime minister was under siege in his home in the capital.

Mr. Bernardin Mungul-Diaka, appointed prime minister on Wednesday by President Mobutu Sese Seko, was huddling in his house in Kinshasa guarded by the president’s special militia against hundreds of demonstrators, who began attacking his residence on Wednesday night, Zaire state radio said.

In Brazzaville, across the Congo River from Kinshasa, there were unconfirmed reports that protesters had tried to set Mr. Mungul-Diaka’s house on fire.

Numerous clashes were reported between protesters and troops in the Zairean capital that left several people injured. Zaire radio said demonstrators set up barricades blocking many Kinshasa streets and stoned cars.

Shops and offices closed and public transport stopped running.

Mr. Mobutu has made no comment on the new riots. It was unclear whether he had lost control of the army or, as the opposition has charged, was hoping the unrest would bring chaos and set the stage for imposing a military government, as he did when he took power in 1965 after hundreds of thousands died. — Sapa-AP
Don't go to Zaire, SA warns

PRETORIA — The Department of Foreign Affairs issued a strong warning last night to intending visitors to Zaire not to go due to “deteriorating circumstances”.

It was reported from Brazzaville last night that chaos was mounting as protesters looted and burnt a villa of President Mobutu Sese Seko.

Foreigners were ordered to get out or risk their lives and France announced it was withdrawing its troops.

“Zaire is sliding into a situation which is apparently uncontrollable,” Belgian Foreign Minister Mark Eyskens said in Brussels.

The United States has urged about 400 Americans in Zaire to get out.

Belgium told its 160 nationals to go to safe houses and await further advice, in broadcasts yesterday on the BBC World Service radio. — Sapa-AP.
BRAZZAVILLE (Congo) — Citizens of Britain, France and Belgium have been advised by their governments to leave Zaire as soon as possible while chaos mounted as protesters looted and torched a villa of President Mobutu Sese Seko.

Britain has told its remaining citizens in Zaire's capital, Kinshasa, to go immediately to safe houses.

About 160 Britons are reportedly still in the country and would soon be evacuated, the Foreign Office said.

The French government said it was ending its co-operation with strife-torn Zaire and urged its nationals to leave the country, the Foreign Ministry announced.

All civilian and military aid workers had leave Zaire, ministry spokesman Daniel Bernard said.

He said French nationals in Zaire would be repatriated "as soon as possible".

The Belgian government told its nationals to get out as soon as possible while Belgian paratroopers could still offer them protection.

Foreign Minister Mark Eyskens said the government "insists strongly" that the remaining 3,600 Belgians leave, but he stopped short of ordering them out as unrest within the army brought the former Belgian colony to the brink of anarchy.

It was not clear whether President Mobutu had lost control or, as the opposition charges, was fueling unrest in search of an excuse to impose a military government as he did when he seized power 26 years ago.

The opposition Sacred Union Coalition charged in a televised broadcast that Mobutu was deliberately creating and maintaining confusion.

This week's riots began with unpaid troops pillaging the southern mining center of Lubumbashi and other towns. People in Kinshasa took to the streets when President Mobutu fired popular opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi as prime minister on Monday and replaced him Wednesday with Bernardin Munungu-Diaka, a minor opposition leader branded a traitor by his colleagues.

The United States has already urged about 400 Americans in Zaire to get out.

Belgium and France sent 2,000 paratroopers to Zaire when troops mutinied in the capital a month ago and looted shops, businesses and private homes.

Zairean newspapers said more than 100 people died in the disturbances.

The foreign troops safeguarded the evacuation of 10,000 foreigners in September, and their arrival stopped the riots.

Ngaza Karl-Bond, a prominent opposition leader, warned yesterday their withdrawal might plunge Zaire into the kind of civil conflict experienced in the West African state of Liberia.

"We really don't have an army anymore. Paradoxically, the French and Belgian troops that came for humanitarian reasons are beginning to be a security factory. Zaire should not become like Liberia," he said in an interview with Belgium's public radio station RTBF.

Zaire state radio said protesters in Kinshasa were barricading roads yesterday, preventing people from going to work.

On Thursday, demonstrators forced shops, offices and public transport to shut down by blocking roads and stoning vehicles. Demonstrators clashed with security forces who fired into the air, and many people were reported injured.
Zaire situation 'uncontrollable'

BRAZZAVILLE, Congo. — Zaire slid into a situation that was described as "apparently uncontrollable" as protesters looted and torched a villa of President Mobutu Sese Seko, foreigners were ordered by their governments to get out or risk their lives and France announced that it was withdrawing its troops.

It was unclear whether Mr Mobutu had in fact lost control or, as the opposition charged, he was fuelling unrest as an excuse to impose a military government as he did when he seized power 28 years ago.

People in Kinshasa took to the streets when Mr Mobutu fired popular opposition leader Mr Etienne Tshisekedi as prime minister on Monday and replaced him on Wednesday with Mr Bernardin Mungu-Diaka, a minor opposition leader branded a traitor by his colleagues.

Mr. Mungu-Diaka's home in Kinshasa was reported to have been pillaged.

Zaire "is sliding into a situation which is apparently uncontrollable", Belgian Foreign Minister Mr Mark Eyskens said in Brussels.

He ordered the remaining 3 500 Belgians in Zaire to leave the former Belgian colony quickly while they could have "the final protection of the Belgian military".

Mr. Mobutu, who rarely visits Kinshasa and has several homes in the villa that was torched. He has recently been staying on a yacht moored 30km from the capital.

Western countries stepped up pressure on Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko on Friday to make peace with the opposition and told their nationals to flee the riot-torn country before they pull out troops protecting them.
Zaire teeters on the brink

ZAIRE's opposition parties expelled new prime minister Bernardin Mungul-Diaka from their coalition, state radio reported yesterday.

Kinshasa, the capital, was tense but calm. However, diplomats reported riots and looting on Friday in at least four southern towns.

Voice of Zaire broadcast messages from opposition parties saying they would boycott any government formed by Mungul-Diaka, whom they have branded a traitor for accepting President Mobutu Sese-Seke's appointment.

The opposition Sacred Union, a coalition of more than 150 parties, expelled Mungul-Diaka from its ranks, Voice of Zaire said. It quoted from an opposition statement issued after an emergency meeting on Friday.

The opposition accused President Mobutu of deliberately creating and fomenting confusion as an excuse to impose military rule, the radio said.

Troops loyal to President Mobutu patrolled Kinshasa, where protesters on Thursday pillaged and set alight a home belonging to the president, then ransacked the house of Mr Mungul-Diaka.

People hunted in vain for food and other provisions as shops and markets remained closed after a week of looting.

Diplomats said soldiers led looters in the towns of Mbanza-Ngundu, Lukula, Boma and Muanda in southern Shaba province, a flashpoint of this week's riots that began when unpaid troops mutinied in the mining centre of Lubumbashi.

"People in Kinshasa took to the streets after President Mobutu appointed Mr Mungul-Diaka to replace Mr Etienne Tshisekedi, a popular opposition leader he was forced to appoint prime minister after pressure from Western governments."

Orders

Belgium, Zaire's former coloniser, joined Britain, France and the United States in issuing orders for their nationals to get out of the country as quickly as possible.

French Development Co-operation Minister Edwige Avice yesterday urged "an estimated 500 French nationals 'to use every means at their disposal' to leave the country.

France will send a special jetliner to Kinshasa to repatriate them to the Congo.

Unrest

France said that as soon as the evacuation was over it would withdraw its remaining 150 paratroopers in Kinshasa.

Belgium, which still has 800 paratroopers in Zaire, indicated it was also considering a military pullout.

"It is apparent that there is much unrest within the army as the nation is sliding into a situation which is apparently uncontrollable," said Belgian Foreign Minister Mark Eyskens.

He said aircraft would be flown to the region to evacuate hundreds of foreigners still in Zaire.

Some 10,000 expatriates were evacuated after the riots last month. Besides the 500 French, among those remaining are 1,500 Belgians, 150 Britons and hundreds of Nigerians and Lebanese.
Foreigners flee from Zaire as violence spreads

KINSHASA — Hundreds of foreigners left Kinshasa on Saturday in a final evacuation ordered by Western governments as Belgium and France prepared to withdraw paratroopers whose presence had been helping to quell rioting soldiers.

Diplomats reported that a mutiny by unpaid Zairean troops spread to at least four southern towns, where soldiers led looting sprees on Friday.

Vitriolic rhetoric mounted against President Mobutu Sese Seko who precipitated this week's unrest by firing Etienne Tshisekedi, a popular opposition leader he named prime minister under pressure from Western governments after riots last month by unpaid soldiers.

Zambia's national airline has suspended flights to Zaire after rioters looted its offices in Lubumbashi during fresh violence last week.

Foreign nationals fleeing from trouble-torn Zaire are being escorted to the Zambian border by heavily armed Belgian troops.

By Saturday night more than 1,500 foreigners, mostly Americans, French and Belgians, had passed through Kasumbalesa border in convoys fleeing the violence.

Among the fleeing foreigners are diplomats from Lubumbashi and foreign truckers who complained of having goods looted by armed soldiers.

Strike

"Lubumbashi is on fire and the air is rent with the smell of death, gunfire, panic and confusion," Belgian embassy official Eric Perke said.

Ambassador Siewert Steenwijk of the Netherlands said all mines in Lubumbashi had been closed, while breweries workers had gone on strike because their expatriate counterparts were on the run.

The offices of the SA-based Wheels of Africa truck company were looted and burnt down and had been closed, company spokesman Jan Elsman said.

Diplomats in Brazzaville, capital of neighbouring Congo, said they expected hundreds of French nationals to arrive on Saturday to board a plane sent from France.

French Co-operation Minister Edwige Avice on Saturday urged the estimated 200 French citizens remaining in Zaire to "use every means at their disposal" to get out.

France would withdraw its remaining 150 paratroopers in Zaire as soon as the evacuation was over, the Defence Ministry in Paris said.

Belgium ordered its 3,500 citizens remaining in Zaire to leave on Friday while they could rely on the protection of about 600 paratroopers in the country.

Britain, the US and Nigeria also have urged their nationals to evacuate. — Sapa-Reuters.
Zaire blast targets the opposition

KINSHASA - A huge explosion destroyed the premises of Zaire’s main opposition newspaper *Elima* yesterday, witnesses said.

The blast, at about 8am, blew off the roof, wrecked printing presses and offices and shattered nearby shop windows in the capital’s Kitambo area.

Witnesses said soldiers guarding the site were abused by a gathering crowd who accused forces loyal to President Mobutu Sese Seko of bombing *Elima*, a former government daily which has become the regime’s most ferocious critic.

In an interview yesterday, Mobutu said he was under pressure from his supporters to “counter-attack” against opposition thugs who had looted the homes of prominent figures in the regime.

“They want a tooth for a tooth, an eye for an eye,” Mobutu said.

He said he was resisting the pressure for reprisals.

Last Friday, the main opposition party, the Union for Democracy and Social Progress, said three of its members had been the victims of bomb attacks.

*Elima*’s premises were also damaged on October 16 when a group of men tried to set them ablaze with petrol. - *SA Press Association-Reuters*. 
Mobutu holds on as Zaire crumbles

KINSHASA — Bombs ripped through the home of an opposition politician and the offices of a newspaper critical of President Mobutu Sese Seko yesterday, increasing tension on the eve of a final evacuation of foreigners.

A defiant President Mobutu, whose dictatorial anti-communist regime used to be staunchly supported by the West, declared he would not surrender power after 26 years.

There were no reports of injuries in the early morning explosions, blamed on soldiers loyal to the president.

Dozens of foreigners from Kinshasa, the capital, were crossing the Congo River by ferry to neighbouring Brazzaville under the guard of French paratroopers.

Judging from accounts by French who reached Brasazaville, the exodus has reached far greater proportions than in 1960-61 when the Belgian Congo became independent.

Numerous French families said they had been given 10 minutes to quit their homes, and had left without any belongings, sometimes not even with a single suitcase.

A final plane loader of French expatriates, numbering 4,000 last month when the first riots erupted, left Kinshasa last night.

France also announced on Saturday it was cutting its last ties with Zaire, which it sees as on the brink of civil war. It is the last Western country to do so.

This means an end to French financial aid which has totalled the equivalent of $500 million in the past five years.

The last straw appears to be the tribal violence in Lubumbashi, formerly Elisabethville, whose city centre has gone up in flames.

Pictures taken from a Belgian army jeep and shown on television in Kinshasa yesterday showed many buildings gutted as well as looted buildings blackened with fire.

Deserted streets are littered with debris and wreckage.

The largest hotel, which became world famous during Tsomboka's Katanga secession as the press centre, was also badly damaged and completely looted.

No casualty figures have been given, but reports reaching Paris say they were heavy after ongoing clashes broke out between the Balubas and the Kasais.

It is believed there are no longer any whites — American, Belgian, British, French, Greeks or Portuguese — in the whole of Shaba province, the former Katanga.

Riots are also reported in Kinshasa and in the BasCongo, Moanda, Lukela, Inkili, Boma and Mbanza-Ngungu.

The petrol refinery and oil storage facilities, owned by the state-run company Zairoil, have been set on fire at the port of Moanda.

The destruction of Zaire's main fuel supplies will have catastrophic effects on the country's power and transport sectors within a week, according to French oil sources.

In Brussels, Prime Minister Wilfried Martens said Belgium was sending military transport planes to 14 towns in its former colony to speed the evacuation.

— Reuters
 Explosions as whites flee Zaire violence

KINSHASA.— Bombs have ripped through the home of an opposition politician and the offices of a newspaper critical of President Mobutu Sese Seko, increasing tension on the eve of a final evacuation of foreigners from Zaire.

A defiant Mr Mobutu, whose dictatorial anti-communist regime was itself staunchly supported by the West, declared he would not give in to an "ultimatum" to force him to surrender power after 26 years.

Dozens of foreigners from Kinshasa, the capital, were crossing the Congo river by ferry yesterday to neighbouring Brazzaville, guarded by French paratroopers. France is to fly them to Paris.

Belgian paratroopers set off for the interior to protect expatriates to be evacuated to Kigali, Rwanda, and Congo's Pointe Noire.

In Brussels Prime Minister Mr Wilfried Martens said Belgium was sending military transport planes to 14 towns in its former colony to speed the evacuation.

There were no reports of injuries in the explosions, blamed on soldiers loyal to Mobutu.

Mr Bernardin Mungul-Diaka, Mr Mobutu's unpopular new prime minister, criticised the Western governments' decision to abandon Zaire. He said they appeared "more for the dictatorship than for democracy because now that real change is possible you are pulling out".

The major opposition party of fired Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi also called for France to keep its troops in Zaire.

Mr Tshisekedi's Union for Progress and Democracy branch in Paris issued a statement saying "the troops of the Special Presidential Division will surely indulge in a massacre on a grand scale" after foreign soldiers left.

Belgium, Britain, France and the United States have warned their nationals to leave before the withdrawal of European paratroopers whose presence helped quell rioting soldiers who led civilians in pillaging Kinshasa and several other towns last month.

Belgium and France sent 2000 troops who safeguarded the evacuation of 10000 foreigners. About 800 Belgian and 150 French paratroopers remain to protect what Western governments say will be a final evacuation of about 3500 Belgians, 500 French, 450 Americans and hundreds of Nigerians and Lebanese.

France has said its troops will pull out immediately after the evacuation. Mr Martens said the Belgians would remain for two or three more weeks.

New unrest has erupted, starting with methodical pillaging by troops in Lubumbashi, a southern mining centre, and spreading to at least eight other towns in the south and west.

Chevron Oil ordered its staff to leave Kinshasa after soldiers looted one of its facilities servicing an offshore production rig near Matala, more than 300 km southwest of Kinshasa.

Mr Mungul-Diaka took refuge yesterday in the Intercontinental Hotel, guarded by the Special Presidential Division.

Opposition has mounted against Mr Mobutu since he fired Mr Tshisekedi, the opponent he named prime minister under pressure from Western governments after September 23-24 riots by unpaid soldiers.

At least 117 people were said to have died. — Sapa-AP.
Opponents bombed as foreigners flee

KINSHASA.— Bombs ripped through the home of an opposition politician and the offices of a newspaper critical of President Mobutu Sese Seko yesterday, increasing tension on the eve of a final evacuation of foreigners.

Mr. Thy Rene Essolomwa, publisher of the newspaper Elima, accused presidential guards of planting the bomb that smashed his presses.

Zaire’s once tightly controlled press has accused the president of stealing government funds and destroying the country’s infrastructure.

Witnesses reported that an explosion devastated the home of Mr. Tambwe Mwamba, leader of the opposition Union of Independent Democrats, about the same time.

As foreigners from Kinshasa, guarded by French paratroopers, were ferried across the Congo River to neighbouring Brazzaville yesterday, France announced that it was sending an airliner to fly them to Paris today.

Belgian paratroopers set off for the interior to cover the evacuation of expatriates to Kigali, in Rwanda, and Congo’s port of Pointe-Noire.

In Brussels, Prime Minister Mr. Wilfried Martens said Belgium was sending military transport planes to 14 towns in its former colony to speed the evacuation.

Meanwhile, a defiant President Mobutu, whose dictatorial anti-communist regime was formerly supported by the West, said he would not give in to their “ultimatum” that he surrender the power he has held for 26 years. — Sapa-AP
SIGNs of DEcAY

the world's poor people are the victims of an economic system that has created a disparity between the rich and the poor. This system has led to a growth in the world's wealth that has benefited only a small percentage of the world's population, while the majority of the world's people are suffering from poverty and deprivation.

In many countries, the economic systems have failed to distribute resources fairly. This has led to a concentration of wealth in the hands of a few, while the majority of the population lives in poverty. The situation is particularly acute in developing countries, where the majority of the population lives in poverty, while a small percentage of the population controls most of the wealth.

In order to address this issue, it is important to adopt economic systems that are more equitable and that ensure that resources are distributed fairly. This could be achieved through the adoption of policies that promote social justice and that encourage the redistribution of wealth. It is essential to promote economic systems that are fair and that ensure that everyone has access to basic necessities such as food, housing, and education.

In conclusion, the world's poor people are the victims of an economic system that has created a disparity between the rich and the poor. It is essential to adopt economic systems that are fair and that ensure that resources are distributed fairly. This will require a commitment to social justice and a willingness to address the root causes of poverty.
Mobutu in talks with opposition

KINSHASA, Zaire. — President Mobutu Sese Seko, under unprecedented pressure from Western governments, renewed negotiations with opposition leaders yesterday as thousands of foreigners evacuated the capital.

Schools closed and many workers did not turn up in the tense atmosphere pervading this city of three million. However, there were no immediate reports of incidents, and cars and buses were operating.

The Belgian Foreign Affairs Ministry in Brussels warned yesterday: “Belgians who choose to stay in Zaire do so at their own risk and peril.”

Many businessmen have said they will stay as long as Belgian and French troops remain, and declarations from Brussels and Paris that troops are leaving have failed to convince many that Zaire will be abandoned to President Mobutu.

Opposition leaders have warned this could lead to “a massacre on a large scale” by Zairean troops.

France’s deputy minister for humanitarian affairs, Mr Bernard Kouchner, said France wanted to “exercise pressure in a way never before done” on the regime of President Mobutu to force him to install democracy in his country.

‘Up to Us’

“The population of this potentially very rich nation is going to suffer from hunger, while its president is still very rich.”

Belgium’s Prime Minister, Mr Wilfried Martens, said the ball was in the court of the United States, which like Belgium gave massive support to President Mobutu’s anti-communist regime during the Cold War years despite charges of gross corruption and brutal repression.

“If the United States changes its mind, then we could perhaps do something (else) to force President Mobutu to surrender power, he said on Belgian television on Sunday night.

Belgium announced it was sending 100 more paratroopers to Africa for the evacuation.

President Mobutu’s unpopular new prime minister Mr Bernardin Mungul-Diaka was to name his government yesterday. He lacked any credibility with the opposition or Western governments and it was feared his announcement would spark fresh riots, said observers. — Sape-AP
LUSAKA. — Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda yesterday released a report compiled five years ago on drug traffickers in which leading figures of the main opposition party were implicated.

An opposition official said the move, only three days before Zambia's first multi-party elections in 20 years on October 31, was an act of character assassination against its candidates.

"But this will not affect our election," said Mr. Dipak Patel, of the Movement for Multi-party Democracy.

The official Zambia News Agency said, Dr. Kaunda, 67, had decided to release the report because he was accused of hiding something and wanted Zambians to judge for themselves.

The report was compiled in 1985 after a special tribunal heard evidence on 25 people, including prominent businessmen, who had been detained for several months in 1985 for suspected drug and illegal money dealings.

Sapa-Reuters
Belgium defies ‘get out’ demand

KINSHASA — President Mobutu Sese Seko has told Belgium to withdraw its troops from Zaire immediately, state radio reported yesterday as opposition leaders, fearing a bloodbath by mutinous Zairean troops, pleaded for them to stay.

Belgium said it would continue evacuating its nationals despite the demand. Most French citizens have left Zaire but an estimated 2,000 to 4,000 Belgians remain in the former colony.

Belgium and France have said they will withdraw their soldiers when a final evacuation of foreigners is complete, and Mobutu’s demand appeared a face-saving gesture as he confronted unprecedented Western pressure to surrender power to the opposition.

This sprawling central African nation is degenerating into chaos, with unpaid soldiers leading civilians in looting and pillaging in the interior. The crisis erupted with riots in Kinshasa last month. Zaire’s mineral-rich economy has collapsed after 26 years of corrupt and repressive government under Mobutu’s dictatorial rule.

Belgium, the former colonial power in Zaire, said on Monday it would ask the Organisation of African Unity to send a peace-keeping force to Zaire. They would replace Belgian and French paratroopers sent last month to safeguard the evacuation of more than 20,000 foreigners after the September 23-24 mutiny.

In Addis Ababa, an OAU spokesman said yesterday the organisation had no plans to send a peace-keeping force to Zaire.

African diplomats at OAU headquarters in the Ethiopian capital said no action would be taken unless Zaire itself requested such a multinational force.

OAU forces have been sent in the past to conflicts in Chad and Rwanda, but political analysts said they had not been effective. The OAU spokesman said an official statement would be issued later yesterday.

Belgian Foreign Minister Mark Eyskens said he had the backing of the EC for inviting African peace-keepers, but that the Africans could intervene only if Zaire agreed. Mobutu has made no comment on the suggestion.

About 850 European paratroopers in Zaire continued yesterday with what Western governments said would be a final evacuation. It began on Monday and involves Belgian military aircraft flying evacuees from 14 towns and cities in the country’s interior, ferries crossing the Congo River from Kinshasa, the capital, to Brazzaville, in Congo, and from the southern river towns of Boma and Matadi to Congo’s Atlantic Ocean port of Pointe Noire, as well as road convoys travelling to Kigali, Rwanda.

Voice of Zaire state radio quoted Mobutu as demanding on Monday night that Belgium immediately withdraw its paratroopers. “The humanitarian mission entrusted to these troops — to protect the evacuation of Belgian nationals to their country — has ended.”

Eyskens told a Belgian radio station: “We must pursue our evacuation operation… Respect for human life is an absolute priority. This is why Zairean authorities should allow the evacuation of our compatriots.” On Monday, Eyskens said some Belgians might want to stay, and that Belgium was discussing with the US and France an emergency plan to protect foreigners whose lives might be endangered after the European troops pulled out.
Diplomats flee war-torn Zaire

SEVENTEEN people, including nine South African diplomats, arrived at Pretoria’s Waterkloof Airport last night after being evacuated from war-torn Zaire.

Among the eight foreign nationals flown out in an SA Airforce Hercules C-130 aircraft were Greek, Canadian, British, and Pakistani nationals—all of whom felt the situation in Zaire was "too dangerous".

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Pik Botha, met the group at the airport. He had decided over the weekend to evacuate diplomatic staff because of the "serious situation" developing in Kinshasa.

The head of the Kinshasa South African Liaison office, Mr Hermann Hannekom, said Zaire was "in a state of anarchy".

President Mobutu Sese Seko was "not in control on the ground". The Prime Minister designate Mr Etienne Tshisekedi was also struggling to form a cabinet and Mobuto was under pressure from the Economic Community to compromise.

Hannekom said the South African diplomats had all stayed at the official mission residence.

"We would like to return as soon as the situation normalises," Hannekom said. As far as he knew, there were no other South African citizens still in Zaire.

Botha said Hannekom had done a "splendid job in difficult and risky circumstances". He added that the diplomatic evacuation was only a temporary measure.

Relations between South Africa and Zaire had not been cut. - Sowetan Correspondent.
SA evacuates Kinshasa mission members

SA EVACUATED its remaining diplomatic staff from its Kinshasa mission and flew them and other foreign nationals to Johannesburg yesterday. Mission head Herman Hanekom said on arrival at Waterkloof air base: "Anarchy prevails there at the moment."

Foreign Affairs Minister Pik Botha, who was at the airport to meet evacuees on an SAAP Hercules, said the evacuation was a temporary measure and would not disrupt relations with Zaire.

Nine SA mission staff members and eight citizens of Canada, Greece, India and Britain flew to SA via Lusaka after Foreign Affairs arranged emergency clearance for the flight.

All South Africans were now believed to be out of Zaire, Botha said.

Kinshasa

He described the situation as "very difficult and too risky", but said that the SA mission would be restored as soon as the situation normalises.

Most South Africans and families of mission staff were evacuated on September 26.

Hanekom said parts of Kinshasa had been declared out of bounds to his staff and that mission vehicles had travelled through the city in convoy.

Canadian importer Karim Premji, 31, said he left Kinshasa after soldiers looted his home and business and he felt his life was in danger.

However, a Greek businessman on the flight said he had felt safer in Kinshasa than Johannesburg. He had leapt at the opportunity of a free flight to inspect his SA business interests.

Richard Wynn, the British director of a Kinshasa bus company, said the pattern of violence had changed from random attacks to specific political targets.

The situation was very tense, with troops blowing up cars and houses.

Canadian Harun Patel, 27, said both his shops in Lubumbashi had been looted and bumed, costing him about $300 000. He hoped to return as soon as possible to salvage remaining assets in the southern copper-mining town.

Hanekom refused to speculate on the chances of a military-led coup in Zaire, saying the military command had been skillfully decentralised by President Mobutu Sese Seko.

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"ty's moment of insult"
Fighting for Survival: The President's Message to the Nation

President Mobutu Sese Seko

Soldiers join in the massacres of Zaire. A black and white photograph of a man with a gun and the words "Ranasakinga of Zaire."
Zaire simmers as Cabinet is named

KINSHASA — President Mobutu Sese Seko, risking more domestic unrest and further international isolation, has approved a new Cabinet rejected by Zaire's militant opposition.

Mr Mobutu's new prime minister, Bernardin Mungul-Diaka, whose appointment last week sparked major rioting in Kinshasa, announced his much-awaited Cabinet last night after authorities reinforced patrols by loyal troops. The populist premier whom Mr Mungul-Diaka replaced said the streets would now decide the outcome of Zaire's worsening crisis.

“The people will render Mobutu harmless,” Etienne Tshisekedi told reporters. “This (Mungul-Diaka) government does not exist as far as I am concerned. I ignore it completely.”

He said his Sacred Union opposition coalition would decide its next actions today.

Mr Mungul-Diaka said the cabinet represented all political forces in the country with the Sacred Union taking the lion's share of 40 percent of portfolios. Diplomats said the composition of the 34-member Cabinet now appeared to be irrelevant.

“I cannot believe it will be a success,” a senior Western diplomat said after the failure of foreign efforts to persuade Mr Mobutu to reappoint Mr Tshisekedi.

Bickering

Mr Mungul-Diaka's announcement climaxed a tense week dominated by bickering between the opposition and Mr Mobutu over the choice of prime minister, while Zaire itself perched precariously on the verge of nationwide anarchy.

Zaire has been paralysed since low-paid soldiers began a wave of rioting and looting across the country last month. Foreigners have fled Zaire in their thousands since the first spate of rioting last month, which has forced the shutdown of the country's vital copper industry and devastated most of Zaire's economic infrastructure. About 200 people were killed.

France and Belgium rushed paratroops to protect their citizens and this week are ending the “last chance” evacuation of foreigners wishing to leave the central African country.

South African businessmen who have pulled out of Zaire are confident they will return once the political impasse has been resolved.

Premier International deputy chief executive Gordon Utian said the crisis in Zaire was not a long-term problem and that once the country had had an opportunity to stabilise "they will need us more than ever before".

Ismail Parouk, of Central African Import and Export, said he would definitely resume trading with Zaire once its politics was stable.

A Department of Foreign Affairs spokesman said that as soon as calm was restored, the South African diplomatic mission would head back to Zaire and business ties would resume.

— Sasa-Reuters. Staff Reporter.
Bloodbath feared as troops leave Zaire

KINSHASA — The last French paratroops withdrew from Zaire yesterday and Belgium said it would quickly withdraw its troops, ignoring appeals from opposition leaders who fear a bloodbath.

Belgian Prime Minister Wilfred Martens said paratroopers should complete safeguarding a final evacuation of foreigners today and Belgium intended "to bring back all the troops as soon as possible."

Opposition forces yesterday rejected a government named by Mobutu's unpopular new prime minister, a spokesman in Brussels said. The nation remains in a political impasse as President Mobutu Sese Seko clings to power despite unprecedented Western pressure.

Justine Kasavubu, a spokesman for the opposition Sacred Union based in Brussels, said a meeting of the coalition of more than 150 parties in Kinshasa yesterday resolved to "fight the new government and reject any compromise with Mobutu, who must go."

Prime Minister Bernardin Mungu-Diaka named a government on Wednesday that he said was led by opposition forces with 40% of portfolios held by members of the Sacred Union.

Kasavubu said there were no opposition leaders in the cabinet of Mungu-Diaka, who was expelled from the Sacred Union last week and branded a traitor.

She repeated opposition calls for the European troops to stay in Zaire to prevent a bloodbath. Opposition leaders had been threatened, she said, and feared being kidnapped or killed.

Zaire, a mineral-rich country beggar by corrupt government, plunged into chaos on September 23 when riots by unpaid soldiers in Kinshasa degenerated into massive looting sprees in towns and cities across the nation. More than 100 people died in the violence. France and Belgium sent paratroopers who evacuated about 20,000 expatriates. — Sape-AP.
Commander London is responsible for running the DSR. The
first line of a military training course
The military is powerful, and its
programs are strong and effective.
Funding is necessary to ensure the
success of these programs. The
military needs our support and
understanding as it continues to
develop and grow.

**Mark Hruband**

To leave Zaire:
Western troops

AIR'S DIPLOMATIC OFFICIALS ARE

AFRICA
Call for force against Mobutu

KINSHASA, Zaire. — Opposition and human rights leaders said yesterday they would support the forcible removal from power of President Mobutu Sese Seko by Western troops.

"When the people don't have armies to overthrow an evil dictator they have a right to ask those who can to do it for them," said Mr Etienne Tshisekedi, the opposition leader Mr Mobutu fired from the post of prime minister for refusing to take orders. He was responding to a question at a news conference.

Mr Tshisekedi's statement came as the last French troops prepared to leave Zaire.

Belgium also announced it would quickly pull out its troops after a final evacuation of foreigners, ignoring appeals from opposition leaders who fear a massacre.

"There will be a bloodbath" if Belgian troops left as scheduled, said Mr Buana Kabwe, president of the Zairean Human Rights League. — Sapa-Reuters
Zambians dance in Lusaka streets to celebrate new era

Kaunda defeated by landslide
Mobuto accuses West of meddling

PARIS. — Embattled Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko has accused Western powers of interfering in the internal affairs of his country by trying to force him to adopt political reforms.

In an interview with the French television network TF-1, Mr Mobutu pilloried France and other Western nations pressuring him to accept opposition leader Mr Etienne Tshisekedi as prime minister.

"This is serious interference," Mr Mobutu said. "It's destabilization. The people in the street haven't demanded democratization. It's me who wanted it."

Mr Mobutu appointed Mr Tshisekedi, his chief opponent, prime minister in late September but sacked him three weeks later after Mr Tshisekedi refused to pledge allegiance to the president at his oath-taking ceremony.

Last week Mr Mobutu installed a government under a new Prime Minister, Mr Bernardin Mungul-Diaka, a man once jailed for embezzling state funds. Zaire's new prime minister said on Saturday he was still opposed to President Mobutu.

Apparatus of power

"I have been an opponent of Mobutu since August 1969 and I am still the same," Mr Mungul-Diaka told reporters.

He dismissed the rival cabinet led by Mr Tshisekedi.

"I am prime minister with all the apparatus of power," Mr Mungul-Diaka said, gesturing to a heavy security cordon surrounding the venue of his first cabinet meeting.

Mr Mungul-Diaka said he planned to hold immediate talks with Belgium and other governments to ease the return of thousands of foreigners, who fled Zaire over the past six weeks after nationwide waves of looting and rioting started by disgruntled soldiers.

He implicitly appealed to France and Belgium to restore aid to Zaire, severed in protest over Mr Mobutu's refusal to hasten concrete reforms in Zaire.

"Mr Mungul-Diaka hopes to reconvene a national conference that was discussing a new constitution before rioting erupted in September," Sape-AP-Reuters
Zaire to compensate

KINSHASA — Zaire will open talks with Belgium and other governments on how to compensate foreigners who fled looting and rioting in the central African country, new Prime Minister Bernard Mungu-Diaka said at the weekend.

"I am for the return of Belgians and the other foreigners," Mungu-Diaka told an informal news conference, August 13. "I am going to consult the respective governments to see how to assist by (means) of compensation to enable all these friends who fled to come back and restart their lives," Mungu-Diaka said.

He appealed to France and Belgium to restore aid severed in protest over President Mobutu Sese Seko's refusal to hasten reforms.

Mungu-Diaka criticised European governments for advising their nationals to leave instead of helping with Zaire's security problems when unpaid soldiers led widespread looting.

Most of Zaire's industry and commerce has been crippled by the rioting and subsequent departure of expatriate managers. — Sapa-Reuters.
First Belgian paratroops leave Zaire

BRUSSELS — The first Belgian paratroops sent to evacuate foreigners in Zaire returned home yesterday as Belgium began the withdrawal of its 700 troops, the Belgian army said.

A spokesman of the armed forces said 108 paratroops, who had been evacuating Belgians and other foreigners from Lubumbashi in Zaire's eastern Shaba province, flew back.

"We would expect all our forces to have left Zaire by today," the spokesman said, adding that about 100 reserve soldiers sent to Gabon were also likely to be brought home.

Belgium and France rushed elite troops to Zaire after bloody riots and looting erupted in September.

France withdrew the last of its forces on Thursday and Belgium decided to pull its troops out as soon as possible despite earlier official comments that they might have to stay several more weeks to complete the evacuation of civilians.

Between 1,000 and 1,500 Belgian citizens, many of them religious mission workers, have decided to stay on but the bulk of the Belgian community had left. — Sapa-Reuters
MONKEY GOES 100... A Belgian paratrooper plays with the tail of the Belgian troops from Kinshasa, Zaire.
Barlows faces losses in Zaire

Barlow Rand, which is due to report its final results on Tuesday, could be facing losses, involving write-offs totalling as much as R230m, from a trading operation in Zaire. It is believed that other write-offs might also be necessary in the US where subsidiary Fuchs Electronics is caught up in a row over illegal arms sales.

According to a senior source within the group, Barlow Rand was operating an import/export trading house in Zaire. The operation was devastated by recent rioting and unrest, and stocks had been looted.

Barlow Rand spokesman John Cummell was reluctant yesterday to disclose details of the Zairean operation. "It's too soon -- we just don't know," he said.

Zaire's political upheaval started just before Barlow Rand's September 30 financial year-end, and it is unclear whether the issue will be addressed in the announcement of results next week.

Although a R230m loss or write-off would have little visible effect on Barlow Rand's net profit or balance sheet, it adds to a gloomy outlook for the conglomerate, particularly as there is the possibility of another write-off by the unlisted Fuchs Electronics subsidiary. Fuchs has been indicted along with Kentron and Armscor for allegedly shipping illegally obtained US arms technology to Iraq.

Barlow Rand spokesman Clyde Parker had no comment on the possible effect on profits. Chairman Warren Clewlow was not available for comment.

There are no details of Fuchs's offshore activities in the 1990 annual report, but companies are permitted not to disclose certain strategic information while SA is affected by sanctions.

Eleven of Barlow Rand's 16 listed companies have already announced their results and there seems little doubt that profits will be down for the second successive year. Last year the group reported attributable profit of R85.9m -- a decline of 14% -- and shareholders' funds of R3.8bn.

This year, stock market analysts are pro-

Barlows

D. 1991

precinct a decline in earnings of between 12% and 14%.

The largest single loss of the decline will be companies in the mining division. Rand Mines' R452m loss -- after write off R735m -- is already documented and PPC's modest 7% rise in earnings announced today, was expected by Barlow Rand watchers.

The unknown factor in the mining division remains Middelburg Steel & Alloys. Expectations are that the stainless steel and ferrochrome producer's losses will exceed the reported estimate of R330m. These figures will not be available until Barlow Rand reports.

Still awaited are the profits from CG Smith. At the halfway stage the company was the biggest contributor to earnings, chipping in 32% of the R348m total. Analysis are again looking for a strong performance, and better than expected results from Nampak and ICS should offset the moderate performance from Figer Oils and the 77% decline in contribution from Romatex.

Romatex earlier reported sharply lower earnings of R846m, but this did not reflect an R87m below-the-line write-off from discontinued operations.

Although the company is a minor piece of the Barlow Rand puzzle, the write-off will nibble away at shareholders' capital.
Bank notes flown in as currency slides

KINSHASA — Zaire's currency, battered by political instability and economic collapse, has slid a further 38.8%, against the dollar, bankers said this week.

Monday's official rate was fixed at 34 182 zaires for $1 compared with 23 000 last Friday, the Banque Commerciale Zairoise (BCZ) said.

Zaire has tried this year to unify the official and black market rates for hard currency. But a dollar was selling for about 40 000 zaires on the parallel market on Monday and the gap with the bank rate was widening, currency dealers said.

Banking and business sources blamed the steady devaluation on the unresolved political crisis.

Diplomatic sources said Zaire flew in between 15 and 17 tons of new bank notes this month from Germany, where they are printed.

The country's legal government, led by Prime Minister Mangui Diaka, is challenged by a rival cabinet headed by popular leader Etienne Tshisekedi.

But sources put most of the blame for the zaire's collapse on President Mobutu Sese Seko's decision to pacify mutinous soldiers and striking civil servants with colossal pay awards.

Privates in the army were awarded a 15-fold increase in October, while a captain's salary went up 40 times, Western military sources said.

Monthly pay for a messenger increased 17 times, from 83,000 zaires to 1.5-million.

Prices of staple foods are soaring because of the pay increases, which are not being matched in what is left of the private sector.

"I now earn half what a ministry messenger gets," a highly-trained hotel worker complained.

Gecamines, the state mining concern which contributes 60% of Zaire's foreign earnings, has produced no new copper, cobalt or other minerals for two weeks.

A senior Gecamines source said most of the 35,000 workforce was on strike.

The country's 30,000 barrels a day oil production has also been affected. — Sapa-Reuters.
Four Zairean detainees freed in raid

KINSHASA - A commando of Zairean soldiers on Monday raided the High Court in central Kinshasa, freed four detainees and kidnapped two court officials.

The state radio yesterday said the raid was carried out by a group of about 30 soldiers who drove to the court in two minibuses.

The identity of the freed people was not given but court sources said they were mostly likely to be soldiers. The fate of the kidnapped officials is still not known.

Shocked judicial staff went to the office of the Minister of Justice, Mr Yoko Yakembe, to demand protection.

The raid took place at about the same time as Defence Minister Mr Ngbanda Mbanza Atumba was meeting senior army officers to discuss security in Zaire, scene of pillaging and rioting started by soldiers over pay.

Ngbanda also met representatives of large firms in the capital, most of which have been closed down after being looted in disturbances since September 23. - Sega-Reuter.
Zairean soldiers in court raid

KINSHASA — About 30 Zairean soldiers raided the High Court in central Kinshasa, freed four detainees on trial and kidnapped two court officials, state radio reported yesterday.

The identity of the freed people was not given, but court sources said they were most likely to be soldiers.

Shock judicial staff went to the office of Justice Minister Yoko Yakembe to complain and demand protection.

No further information was available on the fate of the kidnapped officials.

The raid happened at about the same time as Defence Minister Ngbanda Mzambo Atumba was meeting senior army officers to discuss security in the huge central African country, traumatised by weeks of pillaging and rioting started by soldiers over pay.

Ngbanda also met representatives of large firms, most of which have been shut after weeks of rioting.

Belgium on Monday withdrew its last paratroops which French contingents helped protect and evacuate thousands of foreigners.

Opponents of beleaguered President Mobutu Sese Seko had requested that the foreign troops stay to prevent soldiers running wild and to deter Mobutu from cracking down on the opposition.

Meanwhile, the US government remained committed to urging Mobutu to share power with his opponents despite congressional demands that the Zairean strongman be forced out of office, a senior US official said.

“Our view is that the best answer is genuine power-sharing,” the official said. “What we're trying to do is persuade folks on the ground in Kinshasa to find this middle ground between the extremes of Mobutu everything and Mobutu nothing,” he said.

Influential US congressmen have urged the Bush administration to press Mobutu to quit power and there were hints last week that such a change in policy was being considered.

In a letter to President George Bush, five members of the House of Representatives subcommittee on Africa called for a US initiative to oust Mobutu in an effort to save Zaire from civil war.

In Zaire, Mobutu's powerful opposition seemed in no mood for compromise. Chief opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi on Monday said his movement planned to launch a campaign of strikes and civil disobedience to force Mobutu's departure. — Sapa-Reuters.
Looting cost Zaire's mines large production losses

KINSHASA — Two days of looting and rioting at mines in Zaire in September resulted in a production loss of 3,500 tons of copper and 150 tons of cobalt, a national mining company said yesterday.

State-owned Gecamines said the reduction was from an estimated annual production of 250,000 tons of copper, 12,000 tons of cobalt and 32,000 tons of zinc. It gave no figure for zinc losses.

Copper and cobalt exports account for about 70% of the country's foreign earnings.

In a statement published by the official news agency AZAP, the company said the disturbances, started by low-paid soldiers, would slow investment projects in progress at the mining hub of Kolwezi.

A senior Gecamines official told Reuters this week the company would need to invest $400m to bring production back to full level.

The statement said rioting in September hit rail and other transportation networks, food and other staff supplies and created security problems for workers.

Work resumed at the Kolwezi mines on September 25 but did not pick up in earnest until the first week of October. — Sapa-Reuters.
Zaire crisis boosts SA cobalt miners

By IAN ROBINSON

COBALT prices are exploding as a result of the civil strife in Zaire — and will benefit South Africa’s platinum producers.

Cobalt users face a crisis because Zaire dominates world production.

It accounted for half the Western world production of nearly 21,000 tons in 1990.

The crisis sent prices from an average of $18.50 a pound in September to $25.27 in early November.

Prices could rise even higher than in the last supply crisis in the late 1970s because stocks are much lower than then.

Stocks are believed to be limited to a few hundred tons in “strong” merchant hands.

Cobalt expert Kris Hansen of Sherritt Metal Marketing Company, Toronto, believes the position is more serious than in the late 1970s when strife in Zaire forced prices up to $30 and $40 a pound.

Cobalt is used mostly in alloys for aerospace technology and other special applications.

Users’ biggest fear is that there will be a complete break in production after the exodus of expatriates and foreign troops, from Zaire.

This could result in a 500-ton shortfall in supplies this year.

Higher prices will benefit South African producers — Rustenburg Platinum — which extract it as a by-product of platinum.

Impala marketing manager Pieter Mulder says SA cobalt output is small but strategically important.

Cobalt’s major use in SA is in the production of tungsten carbide drill bits which are essential to the mines. Domestic production avoids the import of cobalt from Zaire.

SA’s annual cobalt production is 150 to 250 tons of contained metal. Rustenburg accounts for more than two-thirds in the form of cobalt sulphate, with a cobalt content of 21%.

Impala produces cobalt metal in the form of powders. Impala sells most of its cobalt on the domestic market, to drill bit and paint manufacturers. Cobalt is used as paint dryers. Rustenburg’s cobalt sulphate is not suitable for drill bits and is exported most of the year through agent Johnson Matthey.

Other smaller applications in SA include aluminium anodizing as a trace supplement in animal feeds and in cosmetics.

Both producers base their prices on free-market quotations for cobalt cathodes published by Reuters and the London Metal Bulletin.
Blood bank unable to test for Aids

KINSHASA.—In a city with one of the highest known cases of Aids in the world, the chief blood bank has run dry of agents to screen for the virus and some hospitals have begun using untested blood.

And while Mamy Yemo Hospital, Kinshasa’s biggest, hasn’t been forced to use unscreened blood, “each day we go from one place to another looking for someone who can give us the test agents,” said Dr Felagie Maholo.

Other hospitals concede they are in a worse position after violent unrest began in September, crippling the biggest Aids project in Africa by forcing hundreds of researchers and doctors to flee Zaire.

Said Dr. Ona Lok of Kalembe-Lembe children’s hospital: “When donors arrive we just ask them what blood group they are and take the blood. We have no facilities for testing it and no choice but to give it.”

Dr. Lok said several Zairean hospitals have begun giving out blood without testing in this central African nation, where blood transfusions are believed to be a major vehicle of Aids transmission.

Other doctors agree that the situation is dire.

“Of criminal. They are giving transfusions without knowing, and they know some of the blood is contaminated. But they have no choice. It’s die now, or die later,” said Dr. Mamela Tarade, who was left in charge of Project Aids, one of the first research projects of its kind on the continent.

The American doctors staffing Project Aids, and thousands of other foreigners who brought medicines and Aids screening agents to Zaire, fled the unrest begun by unpaid troops.

On Saturday, Mamy Yemo Hospital didn’t even have enough blood for normal operations, and Dr. Maholo went on television appealing for donors.

Transport breakdowns stemming from the collapse of the economy have impeded donors from coming to the hospital.

Economic collapse

“We have 24 units. It’s the same as having nothing,” said Dr. Maholo, whose hospital normally requires enough blood for 40 transfusions a day while also supplying other hospitals in this city of 3 million.

She appealed to international relief groups to send Aids testing agents urgently. “We have to take in two units of blood for each one we give because so much of it is contaminated with Aids.”

It was predicted, before the September unrest, that at least 600,000 Zaireans will die as a result of Aids before the end of the century in spite of aggressive campaigns to deter the spread of the disease.

Without such a programme, at least 200,000 are expected to die by the year 2000—a figure which did not take into account a possible loss of safe blood supplies. — Sapa-AP
KINSHASA — Two days of looting and rioting at mines in Zaire in September resulted in a production loss of 5,500 tons of copper and 150 tons of cobalt, the national mining company Gecamines Exploitation says.

The state-owned company says the reduction was from an estimated annual production of 280,000 tons of copper, 12,000 tons of cobalt and 32,000 tons of zinc.

It has given no figure for zinc losses.

Exports of copper and cobalt account for nearly 70 percent of the country’s foreign earnings.

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The statement, published by the official news agency AZAP, says the disturbances, started by low-paid soldiers, will slow investment projects in progress at the mining hub of Kolwezi.

A senior Gecamines official told Reuters the company would need to invest $400 million to bring production back to its full level.

The rioting on September 23 and 24 hit rail and other transportation networks, food and other supplies for staff, and created security problems for workers.

Work resumed at the Kolwezi mines on September 25, but did not pick up in earnest until the first week of October. — Sapa-Reuters.
KINSHASA — A bomb blew apart a bar frequented by pro-democracy supporters last night, killing 17 people.

Witnesses blamed soldiers of President Mobutu's Sese Seko for the explosion.

Soldiers also looted the warehouse of a big Lebanese company yesterday morning, fueling fears and insecurity in Zaire where the dictatorial ruler of 26 years is locked in a battle for power with opposition parties.

The bomb exploded late on Sunday night in the Tedi-Zaire bar in Kingsani, an outlying neighbourhood of Kinshasa whose residents are known to be militant supporters of the Sacred Union opposition coalition.

Witnesses said four men of military bearing drove up to the bar in a car without licence plates, hung around the bar for a while, and left a few minutes before the blast. They were not among regulars, said the witnesses.

They gave no proof but said they were convinced the four men had planted the bomb and that they were all soldiers.

Zaire's opposition has expressed fears that President Mobutu's soldiers may massacre the population now that Belgian and French troops have withdrawn from the country.

France and Belgium sent 2,000 paratroopers to Zaire after unpaid soldiers ransacked the capital in September in unrest that led to massive looting sprees in all major cities and towns.

Belgium and France withdrew the troops last week, saying they wanted to add to pressure on Mr Mobutu to surrender power.

Opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi had appealed for the troops to stay, saying he feared Zairean soldiers would massacre the opposition.

On the eve of the foreign troops' withdrawal, soldiers bombèd the offices of an anti-Mobutu newspaper and the home of an opposition leader.

Mr Mobutu has refused to yield to Western pressure that last week included a visit from US Ambassador Melissa Wells, who delivered a message from Washington that "he must share power". — Sapa-AP.
US losing patience with Sese Seko

KINSHASA. — After a long silence on the crisis in Zaire the United States has warned President Mobutu Sese Seko that the conference with the opposition, due to reconvene on Friday, is his last chance to ease power or else risk civil war and catastrophe.

Washington had left it to Paris and Brussels to exert pressure after Zairean troops led September's ransacking of Kinshasa.

But after the Europeans failed to persuade President Mobutu to share power, the US ambassador to Zaire, Mrs Melissa Wells, was dispatched to urge him to reconvene a conference charged with establishing an interim administration in the run-up to free elections.

The conference collapsed in August after the president packed it with supporters.

Hours after Mrs Wells's visit last week, Mr Herman J Cohen, the US Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, told Congress that President Mobutu used the treasury to buy off delegates to the conference.

The Americans privately exerted pressure as far back as March 1990, when Secretary of State James Baker visited Kinshasa to provide what was described as friendly advice about reform.

A month later, President Mobutu promised democratic transition, but has thwarted the process.

At his latest meeting with Mrs Wells, who told him the country could face famine and civil war, the president was apparently glowing and complained of persecution. But the Americans have little faith in the opposition, led by Mr Etienne Tshisekedi, accused of allowing his hatred of Mr Mobutu to block compromise. — The Independent.
Zaire grinds to a halt after govt's collapse

KINSHASA — Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko has yielded to foreign pressure and reconvened talks on sharing political power. But few Zairians believe they will quickly halt the country's economic and social decline.

Controversy already surrounds the issue of who should prepare the work of the national conference, set to reopen on Friday to debate a multiparty constitution. Weakened by months of agitation against his 26 years of one-man rule and abandoned by former foreign supporters, Mobutu has retreated to a heavily-guarded riverside resort far from the capital.

There is practically no functioning government. Zaire's 28-million people remain shell-shocked by looting and rioting started by disgruntled soldiers on September 23.

Mobutu's new cabinet, headed by Prime Minister Mungo Diaka, has been rejected by the opposition and the US whose influence is crucial to Zaire's fortunes.

Apart from Mobutu's one-man rule and Mungo's government, a shadow cabinet headed by populist opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi is demanding Mobutu's resignation as a condition for a successful national conference.

"Zaire now has three governments and none of them is governing," US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Herman Cohen said last Wednesday.

Most foreigners have fled Zaire and 90% of commerce and industry has been crippled by the rampage.

Inflation was running at more than 1,000% when soldiers mounted what many describe as systematic plundering with the implicit blessing of senior officers.

Mobutu's answer was to award hefty pay rises to placate the army and striking civil servants. The increases were covered by printing vast sums of the already worthless Zaire currency, with nearly 20 tons of banknotes flown in from Germany.

"The irony is that Mobutu used scarce hard currency to pay for printing tons of useless paper," one diplomat said.

The new salaries were rendered useless by surging inflation even before workers received their pay checks.

Minimum monthly pay in the civil service shot up 17 times from 85,000 zaires ($23) to 1.5 million zaires ($41). But the flour price leapt from 500,000 zaires ($13.5) per 50 kg bag to 1.5 million zaires ($36). Petrol prices also soared in the past week with Zaire unable to pay for new shipments of imported oil. Industry sources said Zaire had stocks to last until November 18.

Foreign exchange earnings have been virtually wiped out by a long strike and looting at the state mining concern Gécamines, which accounts for 60% of hard currency earnings. — Sapa-Reuters
15 more die in Zaire

KINSHASA, Zaire. — Fifteen victims of bombing attacks allegedly committed by security forces died in hospitals yesterday, hospital sources said. The deaths bring the number of deaths from the weekend attacks to 42, the sources said.

A Belgian Foreign Minister Mr. Mark Eyssens and opposition sources said forces loyal to President Mobutu Sese Seko were involved in the attacks. The opposition sources said Mr. Mobutu was trying to suppress support for pro-democracy forces. — Septo-AP
Western diplomats concede that the older generation of Zaïrean politicians are dinosaurs and have tried to isolate younger, more competent leaders, but no one has emerged as a front-runner. Just one leader of the calibre of Mobutu, Mobutu, Mobutu or Cyril Ramaphosa could ignite the opposition in Zaïre.

Most of the action comes from Western embassies, where diplomats continue to push, prod and cajole Zaïre towards democracy.

United States Assistant Secretary of State Herman Cohen's firm statement last week that "Mobutu must stop running the country and turn over the government to an opposition-led transitional government" has pumped fresh hope into the reconvened national conference.

However, the reaction in Kinshasa to Cohen's statement is itself symptomatic of Zaïre's political malaise: the lack of a vigorous political culture has created an extraordinary dependence on the West to step in and resolve the country's problems, particularly the principal task of removing Mobutu.

There is a growing anti-Americanism on the streets fuelled by a belief that the elimination of Mobutu is somehow the responsibility of the United States of America.

Okanje Kenishiye, a Kinshasa slum dweller, echoes the views of many of his countrymen: "The West put that guy there. Since 1965, he has been supported by America. It's up to them to put him away."

The only way the US can apologise to us for having kept him there is to put him away."

For decades Mobutu was the US's principal ally in Africa and was supported with millions of dollars of aid which he used in the system of patronage that oiled his one-man rule of the vast nation.

As the conduit for US military and other aid to Jonas Savimbi's Unita movement fighting against the Soviet backed MPLA government in Luanda, Zaïre was a key bastion in the Cold War.

But American strategic interest in Zaïre has declined. In the words of one Western diplomat, Mobutu no longer has an American card to play: "The Cold War is over. There is no more copper. Zaïre's term in the security council ends in a few weeks. The Angolan civil war is ending."

Tshisekedi constantly alludes to the belief that Mobutu and President George Bush are close friends. One Murphy Mwore, a Zambian, was not in power, but his request never came. Only after he had been denounced as a prime minister did he ask us to and then, in international law, it was too late.

"We can't interpret the will of the people and act on that. If they don't find it in themselves to do what they have to do, how do they expect us to do it for them?

"If nothing happens, the only way for the opposition to get what they want is to go to the streets. If they don't have the courage to tell their supporters to go to the streets, then there is no way for the Western powers to help them."
Barlows clams up on losses in Zaire

By JULIE WALKER

Shareholders are not entitled to be told the extent of the Zairean losses. No comment was offered, but the setback of the looting and pillaging — probably R538 million — in the central African country is not only a financial one.

The amount is trifling in the greater order of the Barlows group where pre-tax profit was almost R2,2-billion. Yet it seems high-handed that Barlows management should keep it a secret from its very owners.

Cash

The group's turnover of R2,2-billion was a tenth more than in the year to September 1990 and tax profit edged up 1% to R1,6-billion.

More attributable to outside and preference shareholders and a higher number of shares in issue meant a 1% reduction in earnings a share to 431c. The dividend was maintained at 170c, with paper offered as an alternative to a final cash payout of 10c.

Below the line came an extraordinary write-off of R438-million arising from goodwill, losses on disposals of properties and shares in subsidiaries, namely Rand Mines' Barplats.

Also included in the extraordinary items is the profit arising from the sale of Middelburg Steel & Alloys, which broke even in its final year with Barlows after last year's heavy losses.

Mr Cooper does not think it necessary to try to unlock the potential in Rand Mines, whose principal investment now is Witbank Colls.

The value of Wit Colls fully covers the Rand Mines share price, but if unbundling is taken to its logical limit and Barlows dished out all its holdings to members, there would be no excuse for the beautiful Barlow Park and all who sail in her.

Mr Cooper says it has never been proved that such unbundling is advantageous. Barlows has bought out minorities in recent years, the opposite of unbundling.
The London Metal Exchange, centre of world trading in everything from aluminium to zinc, is in a state of turmoil. The cause is the market being triggered by a critical shortage of cobalt, an element indispensable in making videotapes, radial car tyres, high-performance aerospace engines, magnets and missiles.

Customers were dismayed that the price of the key metal, $115 in January, was $22 last Thursday. By Friday, in response to unprecedented requests to London traders from an important buyer, it was $23. Frederick Forsyth said last week that there was parallelism with his novel *The Dogs of War*. The novel is set against the background of mining, high finance, banking and the world of arms dealing and mercenaries. The theme was the struggle of rival groups to gain control of "a little mountain of platinum in the African republic of Zaire". Swap cobalt for platinum and Zaire for Zan- gar, and the present story is not much different. The problem with cobalt is that three-quarters of the world's annual 20,000-tonne production comes from two central African countries: 9,000 tonnes from politically unstable Zaire and 5,000 tonnes from Zambia.

London traders realized that if they can get their hands on cobalt, they can go for a financial kill. Metals French, one of London's most experienced metal traders, acknowledged: "We are like sharks circling the sea."

French, a former Cambridge University rugby back, now a director of the London metals trading firm, was graduated from the University of Blacksburg, Virginia. He was director of the Bantu-owned metals firm, Metals French, which he bought from the Russian traders. His firm has secret sources of cobalt that they might be persuaded to sell.

Reports from Zaire indicate that mining has been disrupted by fighting and killings unleashed by President Mobutu Sese Seko's attempts to extend his 15-year dictatorship. In Zambia, the new president, Frederick Chiluba, is an attractive prime minister, who has been credited with raising his country's foreign debt by selling cobalt at the highest possible price.

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Mobutu to seek re-election

BRUSSELS. — Zaire's embattled leader Mobutu Sese Seko says he will seek re-election as president but is not "eternally condemned to remain in power".

In an interview broadcast on Belgian state radio yesterday, Mobutu accused Belgium, Zaire's former colonial ruler, of leading efforts to unseat him.

Mobutu said he would stay in office until presidential elections and would be a candidate again because he had wide public support.

Asked whether he might step down gracefully from power when his present mandate expired on December 4, Mobutu said: "It is possible, but not if others dictate what I should do in life."

Mobutu's United Democratic Forces and the opposition Sacred Union coalition have agreed on a plan to choose a head of government, according to a Senegalese mediator trying to end the crisis sparked off by bloody riots in September.

Asked about French, Belgian and US pressure on him to stand down, Mobutu singled out Brussels for criticism, saying some Belgian leaders were out to unseat him and were trying to get other countries to join their efforts. — Sapa-Keuiter.
Chaos endangers Aids research

KINSHASA - The political and economic chaos that has engulfed Zaire is threatening important research into Aids, 25/11/91.

Project Sida, the world's largest field research programme into the killer disease, has suspended most work just as it was to start a major trial on an Aids vaccine.

Mr Pascal Kidiuka, who works at a US-funded clinic for prostitutes in Zaire's riot-torn capital, Kinshasa, had compiled a list of prostitutes who were to take part.

"It used to be that 70 or 80 (prostitutes) would come every day," said Kidiuka.

"Now we're lucky if even 10 come in," he told a visitor to the otherwise empty clinic. - Sapa-Reuters.
Riot as Mobutu names another prime minister

KINSHASA — President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire has appointed leading opponent Nguza Karl-I-Bond as prime minister, cementing an opposition split and rekindling violent protest in the riot-hit capital yesterday.

Mobutu announced the appointment of Nguza, expelled last week from the main opposition alliance known as the Sacred Union, in a radio speech on Monday night after months of political crisis.

Nguza said he would soon form a government picked from the Sacred Union and the United Democratic Forces, a coalition of pro-Mobutu parties.

Supporters of rival opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi and outgoing prime minister Mungui Diaka staged protests in Kinshasa, some of which triggered violence.

Offices of Nguza’s Union of Independent Federalists and Republicans were attacked and protesters assaulted foreigners from West Africa and neighbouring Congo.

West Africans were targeted because of Senegal’s mediation in a peace pact last week between Mobutu and opposition leaders, including members of the Sacred Union. Congo has expelled hundreds of Zaireans in the past few days.

It was unclear whether Nguza’s appointment conformed with last week’s accord, which was endorsed by Senegalese President Abdou Diouf. Sacred Union spokesman Fuustin Birindwa immediately accused Mobutu of breaking the agreement.

“It is deplorable that (Mobutu) cannot keep his word given solemnly before a foreign head of state, before diplomats from friendly countries and before the nation,” Birindwa said.

He said the pact gave the Sacred Union full powers to name a prime minister to head a transitional government, ending Mobutu’s 25 years of single-handed rule.

The Sacred Union expelled Nguza after he broke ranks and offered to serve as interim prime minister.

The alliance had been holding out for the reinstatement of Tshisekedi, to whom Mobutu twice offered the premiership. The long-time Mobutu critic finally accepted last month but was sacked almost immediately.

Nguza defended his action, saying he had become impatient with the Sacred Union’s stance. “With Tshisekedi we missed the boat twice,” he said on Zaire radio. “Twice, the opposition was in a position to run the government. So I was pretty angry and I told myself, why not?”

Nguza, 53, is the fifth prime minister this year. — Sapa-Reuters.
Aids project shaky

An important Aids research project, Projet Sida (Project Aids), has been hit by political chaos in Zaire. The project is the largest of its kind in the world and researchers believe its findings could have been "invaluable". Trials on a new vaccine, G-160, which delay the progress of Aids, have been suspended and other research may be halted.
Mobutu names new premier

KINSHASA — President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire has appointed leading opponent Nguza Karl-I-Bond as prime minister, cementing an opposition split and rekindling violent protest in the riot-hit capital yesterday.

Mr Mobutu named Mr Nguza, expelled last week from the main opposition alliance known as the Sacred Union, in a radio speech on Monday night after months of political crisis.

Withdraw from Namibia

Tawaneese of explorers
Reigning in Zaire

Political disorder

KINSHASA - Terna

"It's an absolute disaster over there. The government has collapsed. The security forces are non-existent. The economy is in shambles. The people are suffering."

The situation in Zaire has deteriorated significantly in recent months, with widespread unrest and civil unrest. The government has struggled to maintain control, and opposition groups have gained momentum. The international community has expressed concern over the escalating violence and called for a resolution of the crisis.
GRANT WINTER

Refugee missionaries long for troubled Zaire

After working for more than 25 years as missionaries in remote corners of Africa, Stephen and Ruth Fisher have become survivors in the truest sense. It can be tough when there's no fuel, or when none of your vehicles work and you have to wait six months for spare parts. Food runs out from time to time, as do all-important medical supplies. Buildings and agricultural implements constantly need to be repaired, but there's no hardware store down the road. New provisions bound for the mission station often get lost or stolen along the way. And, of course, there's no telephone to find out what's gone wrong.

Stuck in the bush in Zaire, the Fishers have become known to dream about the unattainable — hamburgers, chocolate bars or Coca-Colas.

But through all this they have learned to accept, adapt and never give up. They love their work and wouldn't change it for the world.

Their saddest experience was having to leave Zaire in September. Like many other foreign nationals, they were forced to flee as the situation in the riot-torn country became life-threatening.

"We wanted to stay, but the chief in our area advised us to go," said Mr Fisher. "He fully supports the mission station. But he said if we remained in Zaire we would be killed. He told us to return when the situation stabilised."

For the last few months, the Fishers have been taking refuge in South Africa. But the pull of Zaire is strong and they plan to return in February, more determined than ever, under the banner of Project Redemption, SOS Zaire.

In spite of its vast mineral wealth, Zaire's per capita income has plummeted to something like one-fifth of what it was at the time it received independence from Belgium. Plunder and pillaging, army mutinies and power struggles have taken a fearsomely heavy toll.

"Today the people have nothing — no food, no shelter, no medicine. The situation is desperate. We have to get back there. We have to help, because we are for the people," said Mr Fisher.

After spells in Zambia and Zimbabwé, the American-born couple who raise their own funds for their work of spreading the Christian gospel and caring for the needy — moved to Zaire in 1982. "We felt the Lord was telling us to go there," Mr Fisher explained.

In 1986 the Fishers moved to a remote mountain area of Zaire, 400 km north-east of Lubumbashi. With limited resources, Mr Fisher spent the next few years building a hospital, staff houses and a workshop.

As there was no qualified doctor, Mrs Fisher, a nurse, ran the hospital, which serves 15,000 people in the immediate vicinity. Training her own staff, she established clinics in a far wider area reaching 160,000 people.

The Fishers are now looking for equipment and supplies — particularly foodstuffs, medicines, baby and children's clothing and financial aid — to take back to Zaire.

They also need personnel willing to join them in Central Africa. Anyone who believes they can help should contact SOS Zaire committee members Helen Hewlett at (011) 476-5330 (after hours) or Ted Franks (011) 679-5107 (after hours).
Unrest holds up funding for Gold Fields in Zaire

GOLD FIELDS of SA will have to wait until the political chaos has subsided in Zaire before the International Finance Corporation (IFC) approves the funding on which the group's multimillion-rand gold mining joint venture depends.

Gold Fields executive director Bernard van Rooyen said yesterday the IFC -- the World Bank's private sector development arm -- was delaying its decision until it was clear the interim regime in Zaire had won popular local and international support.

Van Rooyen said two months ago that IFC approval for the project, to develop an existing gold mine in northeastern Zaire with local and Belgian partners, was likely to be given at the end of November.

The IFC is expected to take a 10% stake in the project and raise the required R47mn in borrowings.

The unrest in Zaire since October has seriously disrupted the country's copper, cobalt and zinc production.

Van Rooyen said Gold Fields was still confident that the project would go ahead with IFC financing.

He said Zaire could not survive without Western support and the board of directors at the IFC would probably approve the project if an element of stability returned to Zaire by the new year.

Meanwhile, the political aftermath of the Zambian general election slowed the progress that Gemmin, the Gencor group's mining arm, was making towards a formal mining involvement in the country.

A source close to Gemmin said the new government had more important matters to attend to now.

Senior Gemmin mining teams visited Zambia in October, and there was speculation Gemmin would be asked by the government to take over state mining company Zambian Consolidated Copper Mines.
Some Swap members have been highly critical of the approach certain sections of the Namibian population have taken to the national policy. "I don’t foresee anything like that happening," he said. "In fact, we’ll come out of the conference much more united," he said. — Sapa.

Demo called as Mobutu’s rule ‘expires’

KINSHASA — Hardline opposition groups in Zaire called for street demonstrations to mark the theoretical expiry of President Mobutu Sese Seko’s term of office at midnight tonight.

Pamphlets circulated in the capital Kinshasa yesterday urged people to take to the streets on the night of December 4 to 5. Security forces were taking the protest threat seriously, manning road blocks in the city centre and imposing an unofficial night curfew on some districts.

Most Kinshasa schools were closed yesterday following attacks by armed men on Monday. No casualties were reported.

Mobutu’s third presidential term — he has been in office since a 1965 coup — ends today, according to the constitution.

But an amendment pushed through the one-party parliament early this year says the incumbent president remains in office until elections can be held.

The hardline opposition, which pivots around sacked prime minister Etienne Tshisekedi, has never accepted the amendment’s legitimacy. — Sapa-Reuters.

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Kinshasa brought to a standstill

KINSHASA — Zaire’s capital was at a standstill yesterday after President Mobutu Sese Seko said he would stay in office despite the expiration of his term.

Several offices, banks and stores were shut but it was impossible to tell if people stayed at home out of fear of heavy security or in response to a strike called by the opposition Sacred Union coalition.

Few buses were running and there was virtually no activity in the city centre where soldiers and police manned roadblocks and guarded key installations.

The Sacred Union, instigated by Mobutu’s decision to stay in office after his term of office expired, said it would lead protests until Mobutu left office.

Faustin Birindwa, an opposition spokesman, said Mobutu had offered a “challenge to the people whom he has once more deceived”.

In a nationally televised speech on Wednesday Mobutu said he was obliged to remain in office to ensure continuity until elections could be held.

The strong-arm leader, who seized power in a 1965 coup, said he intended to be a candidate for re-election but announced no date for the polls.

Western diplomats in Zaire say it would be virtually impossible to hold elections immediately due to Zaire’s political and economic collapse after army-led riots in September left 250 dead and devastated Kinshasa and provincial cities.

The Sacred Union has rejected Mobutu’s latest choice for prime minister, political maverick Ngunda Karl-I-Rond, who fled to Europe and the US to get renewed Western aid.

Aides to Ngunda said no date had yet been fixed for the trip and the prime minister was expected to remain in Zaire at least long enough to preside over the reopening of the country’s stormy national democratic conference. — Sapa-Reuters.
Bid to stop expulsions

KINSHASA: Zaire yesterday asked neighbouring Congo to stop expelling thousands of Zaireans who fled across the Zaire (Congo) river in September to escape army-led riots.

"If the Congo does not stop these expulsions, Zaire may be forced to take appropriate counter-measures," said a government communique read on state radio and television.
BRUSSELS — France and Belgium said yesterday they would withdraw all troops sent to Zaire — France over the next few days and Belgium over the next few weeks.

The French Defence Ministry said it would withdraw its remaining 150 troops from Zaire today, while Belgium — the former colonial power — said it would pull out within a few weeks after completing evacuation of its nationals.

A Belgian Foreign Ministry spokesman told reporters that the government had not yet decided on an exact date for the withdrawal of about 600 elite paratroopers sent last month with French forces to bring out thousands of foreigners in Zaire.

But he added: "We note that in the next few weeks the Belgian and French troops will be withdrawn ... in principle, the evacuation will be finished by this weekend."

Belgian military sources said there were more than 1,000 Belgians still in Kinshasa waiting to be airlifted to safety.

France has already broken off co-operation with Zaire, which has been ravaged by looting in which at least 200 people died. Strongarm President Mobutu Sese Seko is locked in a power struggle with the opposition after 35 years of iron rule that has brought economic ruin to the country.

The spokesman in Brussels said Belgium was pressing for a pan-African force to help fill the "security vacuum" in Zaire and that the president of the OAU was considering a request to intervene.

"We have come to the conclusion that a security system within a humanitarian framework is necessary and it is in this sense that the appeal was made to the OAU," he said.

But an OAU spokesman in Addis Ababa said on Tuesday it had no plans to send a peace-keeping force to Zaire and would take no action unless Zaire itself requested such a presence. Zairian opposition officials also rejected the Belgian proposal.

President Mobutu Sese Seko and opposition leaders remained locked in a power struggle yesterday.

Belgian paratroopers continued to safeguard an evacuation by air, ferry and land across the country, defying an order by Mobutu that they immediately withdraw from Zaire.

A Belgian diplomat said between 1,000 and 1,500 Belgians and dozens of other expatriates were still in the country and the troops would stay until all those wanting to be evacuated had been helped.

The evacuation was scheduled to end yesterday. — Sapa-Reuter-AP.
ZAIRE - GENERAL

1992
Talks on security (358)

NAIROBI - The presidents of Zaire, Rwanda and Burundi met at Mbandaka, in western Zaire, on Saturday and decided to launch joint security commissions to monitor their common borders, Rwandan radio reported.

The radio, monitored in Nairobi, said the three presidents - Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, Pierre Buyoya of Burundi and Juvenal Habyarimana of Rwanda - would meet again in the Rwandan capital, Kigali, in March for a summit meeting of the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL). - Sopa-Rentier.
Zaire’s bumpy road towards democracy

CODESA’s participants probably think their get-together is unique, but they are wrong — there is one very much like it going on in Zaire.

And it has produced as much drama, in its own way, as the South African one. In fact, it has seen some skullduggery by President Mobutu Sese Seko of a kind that would probably have caused CODESA to collapse into a heap of political dust if it had been attempted by President de Klerk.

Where CODESA is aimed at bringing ‘multiparty democracy to South Africa after centuries of white oligarchy, the Kinshasa version, known simply as the National Conference, is aimed at bringing multiparty democracy to Zaire after 27 years of dictatorship under MR Mobutu.

But not, it would seem, if MR Mobutu can help it. Forced on him by the Western powers on whom he relies to rescue his country from financial ruin, the National Conference falls far short of the interim government that some in Zaire would like.

Mr Mobutu has limited its brief to drawing up a draft constitution for a multiparty state, and setting a date for national and presidential elections.

And he has tried to ensure that the conference will be compliant to his own will. He attempted, for instance, to freeze out of it a man he saw as an enemy and whom he suspected might be elected conference president: Monsieur Monsengwo-Pasinya Laurent, the Roman Catholic archbishop of the central city of Kisangani.

To achieve this aim, he ordered that all candidates for the conference presidency be present in Kinshasa on the day of the voting for the post. And to make sure that Archbishop Monsengwo could not make the journey from Kisangani, 1,000 km away, he ordered that no flights be allowed to leave Kisangani for Zairean destinations.

But the archbishop’s supporters put him on a chartered flight to Brazzaville, the capital of the Congo, which lies across the Zaire River from Kinshasa. From there he crossed the river and marched triumphantly into the National Conference, to the astonishment and dismay of MR Mobutu’s men.

Archbishop Monsengwo, the duly elected president of the conference, despite a further bit of skullduggery by MR Mobutu. According to some participants in the conference, he had arranged for the ballot papers to be given numbers corresponding to the delegates’ seat numbers so that he could check whether those he had bribed to vote his way did so.

MR Mobutu’s opponents again foiled him, however, by mixing up the ballot papers before the vote so that the numbers no longer corresponded with the seating. Archbishop Monsengwo won more than 60 percent of the votes — and a lot of MR Mobutu’s money went down the drain.

Concern remains, however, that MR Mobutu might not allow the conference to run its course, which almost certainly would see him put out of power. Some Zaireans believe the only way he can now stop it is to have the army stage a coup.

In the past, MR Mobutu is believed to have made heavy use of bribery.

Recent events suggest that even that tallman may be losing its power. There was the peculiar demonstration called by opposition politician Eleonore Tsisekedi, to protest against MR Mobutu’s decision to remain despite the expiration of his term last month.

MR Tsisekedi knew that street demonstrations would probably be broken up by MR Mobutu’s army so he called for people to stay away from work and to cheer simultaneously at midnight.

According to reports, the response was enthusiastic.

MR Mobutu probably did not hear it, though — he is said to spend his nights on a heavily guarded boat anchored in the Zaire River.
Zaire, SA clash over training of army

By Duncan Gay
Star Africa Service

KINSHASA — Zairean opposition figure Etienne Tshisekedi and the local South African diplomatic mission representative in Kinshasa, Hermann Hanekom, have been at loggerheads over allegations that South African military instructors are training the army of President Mobutu.

Mr Mobutu has been under pressure from the US and Belgium to change his country into a democracy. In response to this and to regional and domestic pressures, a 3000-person representative National Conference involving nearly 250 political parties has been set up to pave the way for the process.

Mr Tshisekedi has made repeated claims that South African instructors are at Kitona base in Moanda in a thin strip of Zaire wedged between Angola and Cabinda.

Among the troops who have received South African training, he claims, are the feared “Hiboux” (Owls) reputed to be death squads which eliminating Mr Mobutu’s opponents. He also claims that among the “Hiboux” are black mercenaries who do not speak French.

Mr Hanekom said he and Mr Tshisekedi had resolved the matter at a meeting last month.

“I explained to him that a group of instructors had trained a Zairean infantry battalion at Kitona and had withdrawn in June 1990. He accepted that.

“It was not a secret operation. The instructors and material required were brought in on South Africa military aircraft, which could be seen in broad daylight, at N’djili airport in Kinshasa.”

Mr Tshisekedi, however, said last week that at the December meeting Mr Hanekom had agreed that the South African instructors from Kitona would be withdrawn this and next month.

Mr Hanekom responded: “Mr Tshisekedi would do better to keep to Zaire politics than to spread false information and lies of countries well disposed towards Zaire.”
in three weeks

soldiers of the army

Western regions

military forces of Uganda

This month, the soldier

The Ugandan government

motivation of soldiers

Twenty thousand soldiers

by Roani Hall.
Study says Zaire's firms lost millions to looters

KINSHASA — Looting sprees led by unpaid soldiers last September cost Zaire's businessmen more than $800m, Zaire's National Enterprises Association says in a report this week.

The report says 685 of the association's 850 big business members in Kinshasa, the capital, and other towns had been pillaged. Soldiers went on the rampage in Kinshasa and several other cities on September 23 and 24. Civilians joined in looting so thoroughly they ripped fittings out of bathrooms and doors off hinges. At least 117 people were reported killed. More rioting and looting erupted in October.

Zaireans had become weary of President Mobutu Sese Seko's 26 years of inepti- fectual rule that led to the collapse of the country's infrastructure and economy.

Political unrest, riots and unprecedented pressure from former Western backers who haue cut aid have failed to move Mobutu. He reneged on promises to end his one-party rule with democratic elections before May 1991.

The rioting led Belgium, Zaire's former coloniser, and France to send paratroopers who safeguarded the evacuation of more than 20,000 foreigners, dealing a final blow to the economy.

Among businesses that closed down after looters destroyed their plants were US oil company Chevron and Belgium's Petrofina.

The association said its report was the result of only preliminary investigations.

It said 422 warehouses belonging to importers and distributors had been ransacked, with losses estimated at $374m in goods and $283m in assets. The agro-industry and food sector estimated losses at $38m in goods and $112m in damages. Industrial manufacturers reported losing $137m in goods and $30m in assets. Mining sector losses were estimated at $12m in goods and $1.5m in equipment.

The service and related sector also suffered in the looting, but the report said it had been unable to estimate losses. It did not go into personal losses of people whose homes were pillaged.

Zaire remains at a political impasse.

About 200 delegates yesterday walked out of a national conference on political reform, saying representation was too heavily weighted towards the opposition.

Last week, hundreds of delegates loyal to Mobutu withdrew from the conference for the same reason.

The conference officially opened in August, but it has been suspended much of the time and has accomplished virtually nothing. — Sapa-AP-Reuters.
Some are just riding out the storm.

Kenshaya’s Rumbling Illusion

Kenshaya - A world under threat

In this world, where magic and technology coexist, powerful mages strive to maintain balance. The recent appearance of a mysterious creature, known as the Rumbling Illusion, has caught the attention of all factions.

The creature, resembling a massive shadow, has been sighted in various locations, causing chaos and destruction in its path. Its presence is feared by many, as it seems to possess no clear motive or allegiance.

The situation has escalated, drawing the attention of the grand council of mages, who have convened to discuss the matter.

"We must act quickly," said the council leader, "before the creature causes further damage."

Members of the council, representing different schools of magic, offered their perspectives and strategies. Some advocated for a military approach, while others proposed a more diplomatic solution.

The council agreed that immediate action was necessary but debated the best course of action. The discussions were tense, as the council members weighed the potential consequences of their decisions.

As the meeting adjourned, it became clear that the Rumbling Illusion posed a significant threat to the balance of power in Kenshaya. The council leaders tasked themselves with delivering a response that would safeguard the future of their world.
Zaire tests the water for trade return

A delegation of 18 Zairian businessmen is in South Africa to revive trade links, which virtually ended after riots there last year.

Thousands of expatriates fled the carnage.

Some SA businessmen are returning to Zaire and others are waiting until stability is assured.

Zaire was SA's fourth-largest trading partner in Africa.

Unicorn Lines resumed its shipping service to Matadi last week.

Metro, whose cash-and-carry outlet in Kinshasa was looted and destroyed, halted trade with Zaire after the riots.

Metro managing director Carlos dos Santos says: "The situation in Zaire is not normal. We are out of Zaire, but we would consider returning once the political situation has settled."

Basic

Mr dos Santos says Metro is unlikely to return to Zaire while President Mobutu remains in power.

Male members of the SA trade mission to Kinshasa have returned, leaving family members behind.

The South African Foreign Trade Organisation (Saffo) says there are flickerings of business activity in Zaire, particularly in the southern town of Lubumbashi, which receives most of its basic supplies from SA.

Reports suggest it will take many years for Zaire's economy to recover.

Inflation is running at between 1 000% and 1 500% a year. The foreign-currency scarcity is reflected in the unofficial markets where a dollar changes hands for up to 70 000 zaires compared with 15 000 before the riots.

Tens of new banknotes were flown in from Germany.

Inflation is being fuelled by large pay awards to soldiers, who triggered the riots, and public servants.

"You no longer pay with notes, but with wads of notes," says Paul Runge of Saffo's Africa desk.

Saffo has halted all trade missions from SA to Zaire for at least six months.

Banque Commerciale Zairoise, which opened a Johannesburg office last year, says interest in Zaire has dropped sharply.

"Mobutu is still very much in power and SA businesses are holding back until something happens," says the bank.

Gold Fields of SA (GFSA), which was due to start a mining venture late last year in partnership with Belgian and Zairian investors, will have to wait another month for funding approval from the International Finance Corporation (IFC).

It is to provide $21 million for the project.

The mine is expected to produce 2 tons of gold a year initially. The northern part of Zaire near the Ugandan and Sudanese borders is thought to have considerable potential.

GFSA executive director Bernard van Roonen says that once the money is granted, the project will start "within a matter weeks".

"I don't think democracy is going to break out all of a sudden and we don't need to wait that long."

President Mobutu is under pressure from donor nations to resign. The World Bank, International Monetary Fund and aid organisations have suspended aid.

House

One commodity price that benefited is cobalt, of which Zaire is the world's major supplier. Prices have soared from $15 to $35 a pound.

Striking workers at Gecamines, the State-owned mining group, are reported to be back at work. But copper production will fall short of the projected 230 000 tons for last year. Gecamines earns more than half Zaire's foreign currency.

Business Times has learnt that President Mobutu's son, Mandla Mobutu, has visited SA several times in the past two years. He is said to have bought a house in a northern Johannesburg suburb.

Several businessmen say Mr Mobutu has indicated an intention to settle in SA and establish a business.

The Department of Home Affairs says it has not received an application for a residence permit from Mr Mobutu, a director of the Madova Group, a trading company in Kinshasa.
Zaire talks body shut

KINSHASA - Prime Minister Mr. Nguza Kapi posto has ordered Zaire's pro-opposition national conference to be suspended because he said it was getting out of hand.

Nguza said on Sunday the conference, dominated by opponents of the president, had made two decisions which he deemed unconstitutional:

One was calling for the removal of a magistrate who was verifying delegates' credentials and the other was demanding that conference delegates check out of expensive hotels to cut costs. - 3apu-Reuters
Zaire soldiers crush revolt against Mobutu

KINSHASA. - Troops loyal to Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko crushed a short-lived revolt against his 27-year rule today.

They recaptured the Voice of Zaire radio and television building two hours after rebels went on the air to demand Mr Mobutu's resignation.

Gunfire and explosions echoed around the capital Kinshasa during the coup attempt, and residents said people danced in the streets in premature rejoicing at Mr Mobutu's downfall.

Zaireans listening to radio broadcasts heard loyal units of the Civil Guard regain control of the state media's skyscraper around 2am.

"Hello, general. We are here, we have reconquered the Voice of Zaire," a soldier in the studio told a general over a walkie-talkie.

"Later a pro-Mobutu broadcaster said: 'They tried to sabotage the national radio and will be brought before a military tribunal.'"

The rebels, who began broadcasting at midnight, justified their action by citing the poverty and famine in the central African country of 40 million people.

They demanded the resignations of Mr Mobutu and his Prime Minister, Mr Nguza Karl-I-Bond, and called for the immediate resumption of Zaire's pro-democracy national conference.

Mr Karl-I-Bond suspended the conference on Sunday, accusing delegates of inciting violence. The decision came as it emerged that the conference to shape Zaire's democratic future was controlled by the anti-Mobutu opposition.

The rebels appealed for military help from the American, French and Belgian embassies. All three countries have condemned the suspension of the conference.

"We are not asking for money. We do not want looting. Public property must be protected," the main rebel broadcaster said.

Zaire has not recovered from devastating armed looting and rioting last year in Kinshasa and provincial cities. At least 250 people were killed and 20,000 foreign workers were evacuated by French and Belgian troops.

Rumours of impending trouble circulated in Kinshasa yesterday amid reports that army units were refusing their January pay as inadequate and demanding a 200 percent rise.

The army chief-of-staff, General Mahele Liveko, went on television yesterday, four hours before the short-lived putsch, to appeal for calm.

He and other leading Mobutu stalwarts urged soldiers and civilians not to join a general strike called for today by the Sacred Union, the alliance of main opposition parties.

Defence Minister Ngamba Nsambo Atumba said that loyal forces had deliberately bided their time.

"We did not want to shed blood or damage the radio's only studio," he said. - Sapa-Reuters
Coup plot in Zambia exposed

LUSAKA - Zambia's President Frederick Chiluba was to have been toppled in a bloody coup a few days after being sworn in as the country's second head of state since independence, an army officer revealed yesterday.

A former paratrooper in the Zambian army, Mr. George Chisenga, told the Mumba commission investigating circumstances surrounding an accident which nearly killed the country's vice-president, Mr. Levy Mwanawasa, that some army officers had planned to assassinate Chiluba while he was inspected a guard of honour at Arakan Barracks in Lusaka on November 15, but the plot had to be cancelled when it was uncovered.

Chisenga, who now works for Chiluba's Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), also claimed that former President Kenneth Kaunda had held a secret meeting with Chiluba's right-hand man, Mr. Geoffrey Miyanda, reputed to be the second most powerful man in the MMD.

According to a witness, the meeting was also attended by police commissioner Ernest Nyirenda and a prominent Lusaka businessman, Mr. Andrew Sardanas. The secret meeting is alleged to have taken place at Sardanas' home.

Chisenga said he saw a lot of cars parked outside the farmhouse and noticed Miyanda talking to Kaunda and Nyirenda as they were about to enter the house.

Miyanda, who is currently visiting the United Kingdom, was first mentioned in testimony to the commission last week as having met Sargeant Gordon Chirwa, the driver of the other vehicle involved in the accident with the vice-president.

A lawyer has suggested to the commission that Miyanda be suspended from the government pending the commission's findings.
He said the victims of Friday's IRA attack were "innocent people".

The IRA vowed on Sunday to attack all those who supply materials to British forces in the north.

Brooke would apologise for his singing blunder when he made a statement to parliament. — Sa-pa-er.

**NEWS IN BRIEF**

**Zaire conference suspended**

KINSHASA — Prime Minister Ngusa Kati-I-Bond has ordered Zaire's national conference to be suspended because he said it was getting out of hand.

The conference, which resumed on Friday, is supposed to chart an end to 27 years of autocratic rule by President Mobutu Sese Seko.

In a speech on state radio and television, Ngusa said on Sunday that the conference, dominated by opponents of the strong-arm president, was contributing to violence in the country.

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Berlin Wall guards convicted
LOYALISTS FOIL BID TO OUST MOBUTU

KINSHASA — Tanks guarded Zaire’s radio building yesterday hours after a group of rebel soldiers failed to overthrow President Mobutu Sese Seko.

Loyal officers broadcasting over the recaptured Voice of Zaire said two soldiers were killed in the short-lived coup.

Crowds had surged into the streets of the sprawling capital Kinshasa in the early hours to celebrate what they thought was the end of Mobutu’s 27-year reign.

The mood quickly changed when loyal units led by the Israeli-trained Special Presidential Division flushed out the rebels at 2am, less than three hours after they seized the 20-storey building.

The city of 3 million people, most of them on the breadline, was eerily quiet yesterday. Shoppers were closed and buses were off the roads.

Tanks were deployed around the radio station and patrols of the unit and another pro-Mobutu force, the Egyptian-trained Civil Guard, patrolled the area.

Military broadcasters said only 29 men of the 31st Brigade were thought to have staged the attempted coup. Some were captured but others managed to escape.

“Despite calls for a revolt made by the attackers, all the units, including the forces in the 31st Brigade, stayed at their posts,” a military announcer said.

“We are the people’s army and the people’s army cannot march against democracy.”

The announcer said one rebel and one loyal soldier were killed.

Gundfire and explosions echoed through the night with sustained shooting coming from the Kokolo barracks near the radio building.

Men of the French-trained 31st Brigade began the army-led looting last September which devastated Kinshasa and several provincial cities.

Mobutu was close to losing power for several weeks as French and Belgian troops evacuated about 20,000 foreign workers and at least 250 Zairians were killed.

While the rebels controlled the radio they demanded the resignations of Mobutu and his prime minister, Ngwra Karl-I-Bond, and the resumption of Zaire’s pro-democracy national conference, which is dominated by opposition parties.

Ngwra, who suspended the conference on Sunday accusing it of fostering violence, said he was not worried “for a single minute” during the revolt.

“I stayed all night at my command post... I followed the advance of loyal troops and gave orders that blood should not be shed,” he said.

Leaders of the hardline opposition alliance, the Sacred Union, kept silent during the coup as their supporters celebrated on the streets.

But yesterday morning, with loyal troops back in charge, spokesman Faustin Birindwa described the coup as a “comedy in bad taste”.

“It was an insult to the Zairian people and army,” he said. The Sacred Union, led by former premier Etienne Tshisekedi, was due to meet on the crisis later. — Sapa-Reuters.
KINSHASA — Hundreds of mutinous troops in Zaire surrendered last night after their looting spree killed at least four people, a senior official said.

The governor of Kinshasa said the men, many of them with their wives and families, gave in to loyal forces without a fight.

The mutineers were holed up in an abandoned hospital in the centre of the sprawling city of three million. They looted scores of houses overnight in protest over low pay. A private earns less than $20 (about £56) a month.

"They came out of the building without any problem," Mr. Kabu Madiata Ntou said.

He said he believed four people were killed when they tried to defend their property.

Military police patrolled the city yesterday, arresting wandering soldiers who had deserted their units.

The looting came 24 hours after a group of rebel soldiers—between 20 and 40 men—briefly seized the radio building demanding President Mobutu Sese Seko's resignation.
KINSHASA — Hundreds of mutinous troops in Zaire surrendered yesterday after their looting spree killed at least four people, a senior official said.

The governor of Kinshasa said the men, many of them with their wives and families, gave in to loyal forces without a fight and there were no casualties. STAR 25/11/92.

"They came out of the building without any problem. We searched them and relieved them of all their weapons," Kibabu Madiata Nzaa said.

The mutineers were holed up in an abandoned hospital in the centre of the sprawling city of 3 million. They looted scores of houses overnight in protest over low pay — a private earns less than $10 a month.

Mr Kibabu said he believed four people were killed in the looting, apparently while trying to defend their property.

He said Frenchwoman Elanie Ressy (83) was found strangled in her bedroom. Ms Ressy was a well-known figure in Kinshasa where she ran the Zoo restaurant, a haunt of politicians and diplomats.

The looting came 24 hours after a group of rebel soldiers — between 30 and 40 men — briefly seized the radio building, demanding President Mobutu Sese Seko's resignation.

Pro-Mobutu units, led by the Israeli-trained Special Presidential Division (DSP), flushed out the rebels early on Thursday. Some managed to escape arrest.

Both putchists and the men who surrendered yesterday were from the French-trained 31st Brigade, government sources said.

Mutinous units are demanding a 10-fold increase in their pay because of hyper-inflation in Zaire.

Opposition leaders were waiting to be detained after Prime Minister Nguza Karl-i-Bond said on Thursday night that they were involved in the failed coup. — Sapa-Reuters.
Zaire — nation in stagnation

The Star Times, Sunday, 30 January 1992

BRIEFING
Has Mobutu bought Sandton mansion?

By SHARON CHETTY

A DEAL is under way to sell a R1-million house in the plush Sandton suburb of Bryanston to "a family from Zaire".

And while neither the owner nor the agent handling the sale would confirm this weekend that the prospective buyer is Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko, a gardener working at the house said he was looking forward to working for "Mr Mobutu" within weeks.

President Mobutu, who is believed to be buying the house for his son, could not be contacted this weekend, as telephone links between South Africa and Zaire were down.

The house at 115 Eccleston Crescent belongs to businessman Mr Peter Elliott, who lives on an adjoining estate.

Although there is a "sold" sign on a board at the house, Mr Elliott said two groups of Zaireans had expressed an interest in the property and that it was still on the market.

Estate agent Pat Godfrey said she had been "asked to put up the sign" but that the deal had not been concluded.

However, a colleague at the agency said as far as he knew, the property had been sold to Zaireans.

Complete with floodlit tennis courts, swimming pool and oak kitchen cupboards, the stylish house is surrounded by tall trees and high walls.

An indoor water fountain and rock garden in the foyer separates the upper and lower levels.

At least one wall in every room has French windows that open onto an entertainment area or private garden.

Built six months ago, the house is unoccupied.

The main bedroom is separated from an en suite bathroom by a dressing room. The two remaining bedrooms on the upper level also have en suite bathrooms, with French doors leading to walled gardens.
Non-aligned countries finding solace in unity

LARNACA — Non-aligned foreign ministers said yesterday that their movement was loyal to the interests of its members, despite the end of the Cold War.

They said dialogue, not confrontation, with the world’s rich nations was the only way to achieve a “new world order”.

“Developing countries have no other umbrella except the Non-Aligned Movement for dialogue with the North,” Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq al-Shara told reporters after a meeting of non-aligned foreign ministers opened at this resort in Cyprus.

Twenty foreign ministers were among delegations from 54 nations joining the two-day meeting to chart the movement’s new role in a world which now has only one superpower, the US.

Algerian Foreign Minister Lakhdar Brahimi said the dominance of the “new world order” by Washington and its allies could not be denied.

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) was founded in the 1950s as a grouping of mainly Third World countries which aimed to avoid alignment with either Washington or Moscow.

Many of the 101 member states battled for independence from Western colonisers, but still had to rely on either the US or the Soviet Union for economic survival. The break-up of the Eastern bloc had increased competition for aid.

“These countries, which once made a modest net contribution to the aid of the states of the Third World, are now themselves competitors for much needed aid from those that provide it,” said Cypriot Foreign Minister George Lazardou.

Foreign Minister Ali Alatas of Indonesia, which takes over as Non-Aligned Movement chairman from Yugoslavia in September, said the group had to move quickly to influence world events.

Delegates said the movement should play a more active role in the UN, where its members form a majority.

“Emphasis must be laid on a more active NAM role in the UN general assembly, with a view to the latter playing an effective role in balancing the role of the Security Council,” Iraq said in a statement.

Jacovou asked whether the dominance of the Security Council by the major powers was in the best interests of the movement. He pointed out that the Security Council was constituted in its present form 46 years ago.

— Sapa-Reuters.

Steel workers’ strike averted

FRANKFURT — The first steel strike in more than a decade was averted yesterday after union and industry negotiators agreed on a compromise pay rise for workers, officials said.

The wage commission of the powerful IG Metall labour union voted 121-2 in favour of a wage package that would increase salaries by 6.6% for the 150 000 steelworkers in northwest Germany, where the bulk of the industry is located.

The rise consists of across the board increases and a one-off bonus payment. — Sapa-AP.

Zaire’s opposition calls for big strike

KINSHASA — The main opposition coalition in Zaire has called for a strike to protest against the suspension of the national conference intended to chart an end to 27 years of rule by President Mobutu Sese Seko, opposition sources said yesterday.

Prime Minister Ngeza Karl-I-Bond banned the conference, saying it was harmful to national unity, and has proposed round-table talks.

But the Sacred Union coalition, led by sacked prime minister Etienne Tshisekedi and other Mobutu opponents, has rejected this.

The coalition called for an open-ended strike against the banning, starting today. The national conference has been suspended most of the time since it was convened last August.

Earlier, state broadcasting said 10 people had been detained for questioning following the discovery of a large arms cache in the capital.

Soldiers have been making house-to-house searches since mutinous troops took over the state radio station two weeks ago to demand the ouster of Mobutu and Nguza and resumption of the national conference.

Mobutu loyalists retook the station the same night.

Two opposition leaders, Kiro Kamathe and Tala-Ngal Elsma, were questioned over the weekend. — Sapa-Reuters.

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Work as usual.

KINSHASA — Most Zaireans ignored a strike called yesterday by opposition parties and unions to demand reconvening of Zaire's national conference on political reform. Prime Minister Ngaza Karl-Bond, chosen by President Mobutu Sese Seke to lead Zaire out of its worst crisis in decades, restated his support for the conference's suspension and its replacement by regional forums and a national round table.
"Many died" in Zairean coup attempt

KINSHASA — A Zairean human rights group said yesterday that at least 20 mutineers had been killed in a failed coup attempt in which the government said two soldiers had died.

Bodies of most of the mutineers who seized state radio for several hours on Sunday were quickly taken away, the Zairean Human Rights Association said.

The rebels broadcast demands that President Mobutu Sese Seko and his hand-picked prime minister, Nkunda Karl-Bond, be removed and that the country's suspended national conference be reconvened. Karl-Bond suspended the conference indefinitely and said it would be replaced by a series of regional forums culminating in a national round table.

The rights group said hundreds of houses were ransacked by soldiers after the mutiny. It said at least 20 people were being detained in Kinshasa. — Sapa-Reuters.
AIDS adds to Angolan dilemma

Southern Africa

Problem of AIDS in people should contribute to fight the people should contribute to fight the problem

"All Peace-loving people should contribute to fight the problem"
Mobutu pledges to reopen conference on democracy

KINSHASA President Mobutu Sese Seko, under unprecedented pressure from his former Western allies, had agreed to reopen the country’s national conference on democracy, Zaire radio said at the weekend.

The government-controlled radio said the decision to resume the conference was ordered after a meeting with conference president, Roman Catholic Archbishop Monseigneur Pasinya. The radio did not say when the meeting would resume.

Mobutu and his prime minister, Nguza Karl-I-Bond, suspended the conference on January 19, saying it was costing too much and was out of control. Opposition leaders said it was closed because they had wrested control from Mobutu’s supporters.

The prime minister knows that in the conference they will choose another prime minister who will work independently of the government,” said one delegate. Protestant Rev

Belgium, the former colonial ruler, and France, criticised the conference closure and last week the US joined them.

US assistant secretary of state for African affairs Herman Cohen said Nguza’s “cancellation or suspension of the conference after he had promised us during a visit here that he would support it, was very disappointing”.

During the Cold War, Mobutu was strongly backed by the US as a bulwark against the spread of communism in Africa.

But with the collapse of the Soviet Union, western powers have withdrawn their support.

In April 1990 Mobutu, who has ruled Zaire for 26 years, promised to hand over power to a democratically elected government within a year. No date for elections has been set, even though Mobutu’s term as president expired on December 5 last year. — Sapa-AP.
Zaire troops open fire on protesters

KINSHASA — Zairean troops opened fire yesterday on anti-government demonstrators led by radical Catholic priests, killing 13 people.

Witnesses said the incident took place after thousands of Christians began a peaceful street protest against President Mobutu Sese Seko's government after church services in the capital, Kinshasa.

Information Minister Kitenge Yezu said 13 people had been killed. He said the final death toll would be announced after checks with the Red Cross.

Singing psalms and holding Bibles and rosaries, the demonstrators split out of churches with young priests and opposition party leaders at their head.

The protest, called to urge the government to restart a suspended national conference, was banned on Saturday by city authorities and was not supported by Zaire's Roman Catholic primate, Cardinal Frederic Etsou.

Mr Kitenge said troops opened fire when mobs of youths joined the demonstration, throwing stones and attacking security forces. Several priests were arrested, he said, including two Belgians who would be deported as soon as possible.

"The government reaffirms its determination to see the authority of the state respected," he said, blaming "subversive priests" for causing the bloodshed.

It was the worst bloodbath in a single incident in the past 18 months of anti-Mobutu unrest and was certain to add to international pressure on the president to quit.

Pro-Mobutu troops led by the feared Special Presidential Division (DSP) patrolled the city of four million people as dust fell yesterday. Armoured cars sealed off main churches including St Joseph's in the Matonge area where some of the worst clashes occurred.

Church sources said eight bodies were laid out inside St Joseph's and that civilians and priests were detained there by the DSP.

Some escaped after breaking stained-glass windows. While most bishops in the overwhelmingly Catholic country have kept silent about Mr Mobutu's regime, many ordinary parish priests are in open dissent.

Their most prominent spokesman is Abbot Jose Mpendu who heads a church group called Amos and who is inspired by the same liberation theology espoused by Latin American priests fighting dictatorship.

The national conference was suspended last month by Prime Minister Nganza Karl-Bond, Mr Mobutu's fourth prime minister in less than a year.

He said it was causing bitter tribal divisions in the country of 40 million. But Western diplomats said the real reason was that opposition delegates had taken over the pro-democracy forum.

Zaire's main Western partners — the United States, Belgium and France — all strongly urged Mr Mobutu to reconvene the conference ahead of free elections or risk seeing Zaire slide into anarchy.

The country has not recovered from an orgy of loot ing, initiated by unpaid soldiers, which took place in September. At least 15,000 foreign workers were evacuated by French and Belgian troops.

The rioting left the economy in tatters and the US Embassy estimated annualised inflation over the past three months at 23,000 percent.

But Herman Cohen, the US assistant secretary of state for Africa, foresaw even worse chaos if the West tried to force Mr Mobutu to stand down after 27 years in total control.

"If Mr Mobutu were to lose control of the security apparatus, including people who engage in covert operations... does not support a transition process then it cannot succeed," Mr Cohen told a Senate subcommittee in Washington on February 5.

— Sapa-Reuters.
Zaire troops open fire on protesters

13 die in demo led by priests

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— Sapa-Reuters.
Priests blamed for massacre

KINSHASA - Zaire says protest organizers provoked a crackdown by troops who fired on thousands of marchers, killing 13 people.

Information Minister Mr. Kicone Yezu said radical Roman Catholic priests who organized Sunday's march had been warned not to hold the protest in the capital against President Mobutu Sese Soko.

Troops opened fire on thousands of demonstrators, many of them clutching rosaries and Bibles, as they marched to demand the reconvening of a national conference.

City authorities banned the march on Saturday.

The national conference was suspended last month by Prime Minister Nkunda Karl-Bond, saying it was causing tribal divisions.

But Western diplomats said the real reason was that opposition delegates had taken over the pro-democracy forum. - Sape-Reuters.
KINSHASA — Soldiers killed at least 30 people and wounded more than 100 others when they fired on a pro-democracy march led by priests, the Zaire Human Rights League said yesterday.

President Mobutu Sese Seko's government said 13 people were killed when security forces broke up the Sunday march, which it said was illegal. One soldier was among those killed, the government said.

The US, France and Belgium, the former colonial power in Zaire, have condemned the killings as unjustified and called for the prosecution of those responsible.

Sunday's march was promoted as "a march of hope". It also aimed at putting pressure on Mr Mobutu to reopen the country's national conference on democracy suspended when the president’s opponents appeared to have taken control of it.

Mr Mobutu said a week ago that the conference would reopen. Witnesses saw security force units firing tear gas and water cannons at marchers, some of whom dropped to their knees and began praying.

Soldiers appeared to single out priests and beat them.

The government accused some priests of organising the march to try to bring down Mr Mobutu.

Later on Sunday demonstrators began stoning troops and burnt buses and cars on the road leading to the city's international airport.

Zaire Human Rights League leader Baana Kabwe said a day of national mourning had been called for tomorrow. — Sapa-AP.
SA markets must be free, says Chiluba

SIMON BARBER

WASHINGTON — A new SA government must learn from the economic mistakes of the rest of the African continent and allow the free market to flourish, Zambian President Frederick Chiluba said in an interview this week.

Asked whether he was concerned by the ANC's nationalisation rhetoric, he said the movement "must understand what hell such policies have created in Africa".

He also indicated that Lusaka would no longer give the ANC special treatment, but would be "even-handed" in its approach to all political organisations in SA.

He noted that the previous Zambian government had never fully adhered to sanctions on SA and made it clear he had no intention of doing so now.

His government was opening a trade mission in SA in order to promote "bilateral co-operation" and "reduce the costs of dealing through third parties".

Chiluba, on his first visit to Washington since defeating Kenneth Kaunda at the polls last October, will see President George Bush today.

In a meeting with US businessmen on Monday, he vowed to dismantle completely the "command economy" put in place by his predecessor and that the "80% of the economy which was nationalised had to be given back to private ownership."
Cohen heads for Zaire to see Mobutu

KINSHASA — US Assistant Secretary of State Herma Cohen would meet Zaire’s President Mobutu Sese Seko in a bid to ease the country's political crisis, Zaire government sources said yesterday.

They said Cohen, at present visiting Congo, would cross the river to Kinshasa today and fly on to meet Mobutu at his home town of Ghadolite in eastern Zaire.

The US embassy in Kinshasa said it could not immediately confirm the trip.

The US has been among Western countries exerting pressure on Mobutu to cede power. It condemned the government's suspension last month of a national conference on political reform, and demanded prosecution of those responsible for a bloodbath 10 days ago.

Washington suspended aid to Zaire last September after army-led rioting which killed 220 people.

After arriving in Congo on Tuesday, Cohen called for "a rapid solution in Zaire before the situation becomes catastrophic." — Sapa-Reuters.
Cohen to meet Mobutu

KINSHASA — Washington's top Africa spokesman, US Assistant Secretary of State Herman Cohen, will meet Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko today to try to ease the central African country's political crisis. The US has been among Western countries piling pressure on Mr. Mobutu to cede power after 27 years in charge.

Diana helping sick children
Cohen flies in for talks with Mobutu

KINSHASA — Washington’s top Africa expert arrived in crisis-torn Zaire yesterday for talks with President Mobutu Sese Seko, who is under pressure from the West to make political reforms after 27 years of absolute power.

US Assistant Secretary of State Hermain Cohen, on a tour of central Africa, flew into Kinshasa from neighbouring Congo and left almost immediately for Mobutu’s home region in the far north of Zaire.

The talks would be held either at Mobutu’s jungle palace at Ghadolite, or in the northern town of Gemena, government sources said.

Political analysts said the less opulent Gemena might be judged a more tactful choice for discussions on the future of the economically wrecked country, most of whose citizens live in desperate poverty.

The US and other Western countries are increasing pressure on Mobutu to show real political reforms after more than a quarter century of absolute rule.

The government is locked in a standoff with opposition parties angry at the suspension last month of a national conference which was supposed to chart the transition to multiparty rule. Prime Minister Ngussa Karl-Ul-Bond halted the forum saying its often chaotic sessions were creating tribal splits.

The suspension provoked Zaire’s biggest mass demonstration for more than three decades on February 15, during which troops shot dead at least 17 peaceful protesters. A similar march is planned for next Sunday and many Zaireans say they will attend.

Washington condemned the killings and urged immediate resumption of the conference, which it called “the only hope for a peaceful transition to democracy”. US embassy officials in Kinshasa were unable to give details of Cohen’s programme.

Information Minister Kitege Yeuza said he was due to meet only Mobutu. But Archbishop Mensengwo Panjina, the national conference chairman, told Reuters he hoped to meet Cohen if time allowed.

Mensengwo recently sent Mobutu and Ngussa a set of proposals to reopen the conference, backed by nearly all participants including some government delegates. No reply has yet emerged.

Cohen has played a part in smoothing several African conflicts, including Namibian independence.

Political analysts say Ngussa is now totally discredited in opposition circles. — Saps-Reuter.
Zaire’s exodus of treasures

Recent political upheavals in Zaire have claimed another victim — the nation’s cultural heritage.

JESSICA DUBOW reports on the flood of treasures now available in South Africa despite legal restrictions.

of urban anarchy characterised by widespread looting and petty thievery as the people’s best improvised defence against creeping poverty.

Traditional objects have some symbolic significance if their makers are starving. And there is perhaps little justification in retaining any sanctimonious sentiments about the value of a heritage when a people’s present is so threatened.

As another Zairean trader at the Market fleamarket put it: “It’s not about politics, it’s business.”

On another level, of course, business and politics are firmly entwined. In Zaire, where social structures have degenerated into a state of civil chaos, the laws restricting the export of national treasures have been effectively nullified.

Although Zaire became a co-signatory of the UNESCO agreement controlling the illicit trade of cultural artefacts in 1974, it clearly has not felt obliged to honour it.

One is led to assume, therefore, that we are not witnessing the one-off schemes of a few enterprising individuals who have found a way of dodging the system.

Rather, it is the system itself that is making such fast and furious trade possible. While the basic collecting and selling of objects may well be done by ordinary people, it has been suggested that some kind of network exists, implicating figures in the upper echelons of bureaucratic power who are either actively participating in the circulation of art works or who are turning a blind eye.

Given that Zairean politics is notorious for its mafia-style operations and its “payout-for-favours” ethos, it would be surprising if this were not the case.

Strengthening this supposition is Netleton’s observation that in countries like Uganda and Kenya, the dealing in indigenous art by opportunistic politicians has long been an open secret.

But whatever the details of the Zairean oper-
AIDS research projects are put at risk

KINSHASA — Political and social instability is putting more Zaireans at risk of getting AIDS, and could force the closing of Africa’s largest research project on the disease, medical workers say.

Deputy-director Dr Mambila Tarande said the project’s clinic had no more test kits for AIDS and only about 5000 condoms to distribute to the growing number of women who had turned to prostitution to feed their families.

It had run out, also, of the material needed to do diagnostic tests for sexually transmitted diseases, which facilitated the spread of the HIV virus that caused acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

“In reality, Project SIDA is going to close” by July at the latest, Tarande said. “It will be a very big loss.”

Other countries have followed Project SIDA’s — SIDA is French for AIDS — progress and compared their own studies with its results, Tarande said.

Officials of the US Centers for Disease Control had told him the US-financed project probably would close because Zaire could not guarantee the safety of foreign nationals who supervised the studies, Tarande said. In Atlanta, CDC spokesman Kent Taylor said financial support would end on September 30.

Taylor said Zaire’s health ministry might try to continue the project with help from other organisations.

More than 15 000 foreign nationals were evacuated from Zaire in September and October, after soldiers who had not been paid went on looting rampages throughout the country. Civilians joined the pillaging. At least 117 people died. Among those evacuated were Americans working at Project SIDA. — Sapa-AP
Embattled Mobutu still clings to power

KINSHASA — Assailed from all sides by demands for political reform, Zaire’s strongman President Mobutu Sese Seko still seems far from losing the absolute power he has held for 27 years.

Opposition parties openly lambast him as a dictator. Former foreign allies like the US, France and Belgium have cut off aid and demanded democracy.

Ordinary Zaïreans, struggling to survive in utter poverty, say they are desperate for change. But political analysts say Mobutu’s skill in dividing the opposition, his control of the army and a lack of credible rivals are keeping him firmly at Zaïre’s helm.

Suspended

The latest explosion of anti-government protest came after Mobutu’s prime minister, Nkunda Lundo, suspended a national pro-democracy conference on January 19 saying it was causing tribal splits in the diverse nation of 40 million people.

Many Zaïreans see the forum as the last hope of political change, and took to the streets in their thousands on February 16 to demand it restart. Troops shot dead at least 17 people. Pay strikes with political overtones have crippled whole sectors of Zaïre public life.

A last-minute accord between Mobutu and conference chairman Archibald Monzengo-Paita for the forum’s “imminent” reopening took most of the steam out of a second mass march planned for March 1.

Nkunda was not involved in the deal and political analysts say this suggests Mobutu has sidelined him, deftly neutralising one of his biggest potential rivals for the presidency.

A former foreign minister who became one of Mobutu’s loudest critics, Nkunda has long diplomatic and political experience, but the mainstream opposition say he sold out to Mobutu when he accepted the premiership last November.

Many of Zaïre’s opposition figures have similar credibility problems.

Mobutu’s strongest challenger is widely seen to be Étienne Tshisekedi, a sworn enemy of Mobutu who left his fold long enough ago — 12 years — to have won a name for integrity. A January poll put him top of the list of opposition hopefuls, with 42% support. Tshisekedi accepted the premiership last October but was sacked two days later after he called Mobutu a “human monster” and refused to sign an oath of allegiance to him.

But Tshisekedi’s critics say he himself shows a dictatorial streak.

Military discipline is not all it could be — disgruntled soldiers led an orgy of looting last September which killed some 200 people, devastated several cities and brought Zaïre’s shambles economy even further to its knees. The problems stems largely from low pay and the government’s inability to guarantee salaries. Many political analysts say Mobutu keeps overall control by rich payoffs to key military forces.

Even if the national conference does resume, many analysts see it as little more than a breathing space. The assembly opened last August but has been halted for most of the time by squabbling and the aftermath of September’s riots.

“Politics is going in circles, while the economy goes downhill as fast as it can,” one analyst said. — Sapa-Reuter.
Tear gas disrupts democracy march

KINSHASA. — Security forces hurled tear gas and fired in the air to disperse pro-democracy protesters yesterday, while the government said a paramilitary policeman was killed by gunmen.

The government had banned all demonstrations but organizers called for a peaceful march to follow up a massive protest two weeks ago, when troops shot dead at least 17 people.

Witnesses in the middle-class Bandal district said at least one person was shot when police crashed into a Catholic church during mass in pursuit of fleeing protesters.

"We knelt down to pray, with the priests at the front," he said. "The police came forward, grabbed the priests and then shot in the air to scatter us. They used tear gas too." Witnesses said police also robbed worshippers of jewellery, cash and other possessions.

Communications Minister Mr Kitenge Yeuu said unidentified attackers fired shots from a car in the city's Binza district, killing a 19-year-old policeman and slightly wounding three civilians. — Sapa-Reuters
KINSHASA - An influential member of Zaire's government has resigned, saying the country's progress towards democracy is hopelessly blocked and the country's old guard politicians should leave.

Mr. Enoch Nyamwisi Mwingi, Minister of Youth, Culture and Tourism, said he plans to return to his homeland in eastern Zaire and work with his political party, the Federal Christian Democracy, to organize a platform for possible future elections.

"The political situation has been blocked for two years," Nyamwisi said on Sunday. "They all must go."

Opposition party members and some diplomats who follow Zairian politics said Nyamwisi's resignation could signal the beginning of the end of the four-month-old administration of Prime Minister Mr.Nguza Karl-i-Bond - one Zairians constantly ridicule and criticize.

Nguza suspended the country's national conference on democracy on January 19, saying it was getting out of control. Opposition parties, who had won control of the meeting, said President Mobutu ordered the meeting closed before it stripped him of his presidential powers.

National conferences have reduced authoritarian presidents like Mobutu to figurehead roles in several African nations. - Sapa-AP.
Unlikely figure of resistance

KINSHASA - Archbishop Monsengwo Pasinya is an unlikely symbol of resistance to President Mobutu Sese Seko, but he has joined a growing number of churchmen taking a leading role in opposing dictators across Africa.

No fissionist, the scholarly, soft-spoken Monsengwo was forced into the role when Zaire's opposition parties proved unable to topple Mobutu.

The Roman Catholic theology professor and author of such papers as "The Notion of Law In the First Five Books of the Bible" was elected president of Zaire's national conference on democracy last year.

Mobutu suspended the conference on January 19, after opposition delegates won control of it.

Humble person

"The expectations of the people are frightening when they put their faith in such a humble person as me," Monsengwo said, adding, "I know the danger of being manipulated is always there."

Initially, he was careful to avoid direct confrontation with Mobutu. When the president failed to follow through on a promise to reopen Zaire's conference, Monsengwo virtually accused Mobutu of lying.

Roman Catholic and Anglican bishops in Kenya and Malawi also are taking on their governments. It is a role Roman Catholic churchmen assumed two decades ago when some priests adopted "Liberation Theology" in Latin America. Outside of South Africa, the church has rarely challenged Africa's dictators.

Churches in South Africa were among early opponents of apartheid. Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu won the Nobel Peace Prize.

Democracy

Within the last two years, church leaders strongly supported demands for democracy that led to power sharing or new governments in Benin, Cape Verde, Congo, Gabon, Togo and Zambia. In Benin, a national conference led by Roman Catholic Archbishop Isidore de Senza stripped President Mathieu Kerekou of all but ceremonial powers. Kerekou subsequently was defeated in a presidential election.

Roman Catholic bishops in Malawi published a pastoral letter on March 8 accusing Life President Hastings Kamuzu Banda of human rights abuses and calling for democracy. It was the first public criticism of Banda in Malawi. The bishops were summoned to police headquarters for eight hours of questioning, and the shop that printed 16,000 copies of the letter was burned down by men believed to be government agents.

Tribal conflicts

This week, Kenyan bishops accused President Daniel Arap Moi's government of provoking tribal conflicts that killed 60 people. In a pastoral letter, they said the government sought to portray the violence as proof of "the failure of the multiparty system in this country". Moi only legalised opposition parties in December.

In Ivory Coast, where President Felix Houphouet-Boigny has placated the Catholic Church with multimillion-dollar cathedrals and basilicas, Cardinal

"Expectations of the people are frightening...they put their faith in me"

Bernard Yago criticized the government in February for violating human rights.

Signs of the Roman Catholic Church's increasing involvement in promoting democracy are in line with Pope John Paul II's comments during his recent trip to Africa. He urged Catholics to step forward and play a role in their societies, even if their numbers are small.

Some in the church have had to catch up with the new approach. Kinshasa Cardinal Frederic Ebesu was almost lynched by a crowd after Mass because he was considered pro-Mobutu. The cardinal then joined Mobutu's critics and lifted a ban he had imposed on priests organizing pro-democracy groups.

While Monsengwo and other church leaders negotiate with Mobutu in Zaire, parish priests and pastors have begun leading pro-democracy demonstrations. On February 16, Mobutu's security forces opened fire on Christian marchers, killing at least 32 according to human rights groups.

The Pope condemned the attacks and pressed Mobutu to accept democracy.

Protest march

Priests were dragged from the protest march and singled out for beatings, witnesses said. Officials accused the priests of trying to topple the government. It expelled three foreign priests.

Monsengwo has been protected by guards since armed men invaded his residence last year, and only left after Monsengwo managed to phone diplomats who intervened with senior military officers.

In Kenya, Anglican Bishop Alexander Muge, then one of the government's leading critics, was killed on August 13, 1990, when a swerving truck hit his car head on near his home in Eldoret in western Kenya.

Only three days before, Labour Minister Mr Peter Okondo had told a ruling party rally in nearby Bungoma district that if Muge set foot in the district he would "see fire and might not leave alive".

Muge (44) defied the threat, visited Bungoma, and was killed in the crash on his way home. - Signs-AFP
Embattled 'simple citizen' Mobutu juggles with time

ROBERT WELLSER reports that Mobuta Sese Seke has escaped the fall of many dictators, but...

The Director
South African Labour Development A

Freedom
a dream for Zaire


d Keep calm and carry on... but be ready to pack your bags. Across the world, the ever-changing landscape of politics and economics presents a daunting backdrop for many. However, amidst the chaos, there are moments of hope and resilience. One such story is that of Mobutu Sese Seke, the former dictator of Zaire, whose legacy continues to cast a shadow over the country.

In 1965, Mobutu began his regime, promising to transform Zaire into a modern, socialist society. His rule was marked by significant changes, including the adoption of the official name of Zaire, the introduction of the Congolese language, and the promotion of Pan-Africanism. However, it was also marred by human rights abuses, corruption, and economic stagnation.

As Zaire faced political and economic challenges in the 1990s, Mobutu's rule came under increasing pressure. The country's debt increased, inflation soared, and the population became disillusioned with his administration. In 1997, a military mutiny led to Mobutu's downfall, and he was forced to flee into exile.

Despite the passage of time, Mobutu's legacy continues to shape Zaire. The country's political landscape, economy, and social structures are still grappling with the aftermath of his rule. However, the people of Zaire are resilient, and they continue to hope for a brighter future.

In the meantime, the spirit of freedom and progress endures. As the world looks to the future, we must remember the lessons of the past and work towards a better tomorrow for all.
Things Go Better With Prudence
Freedom a dream for Zaire

KINSHASA - Democracy remains a dream to Zairians, who were allied with the West in the Cold War, while their kinmen across the river in the formerly Marxist Congo move to multiparty rule.

Pro-democracy groups on both sides of the Congo River used strikes and demonstrations against their authoritarian presidents, following a pattern that is emerging across Africa.

In Brazzaville, the Congolese capital, it produced a national conference that stripped President Denis Sassou-Nguesso of all but ceremonial powers. On March 15, voters overwhelmingly approved a constitution creating a multiparty democracy, and presidential elections are scheduled for June.

In Kinshasa and the rest of Zaire, the economy is in ruins. Hospitals and schools are closed, even most government offices, but President Mobutu Sese Seko refuses to budge. Instead, he uses well-armed special commando units to suppress demonstrations and intimidate the opposition.

Unemployed

Two-thirds of the people in Kinshasa are unemployed and inflation is impossible to calculate. Reports reaching the capital indicate conditions are even worse in the interior.

Brazzaville has few jobs either, and no one is likely to hire Zairians while Congolese cannot find work, but they still cross the river.

Each day, Zairians hide on sand bars, waiting for night to dip across by boat. Many of those who make the trip by ferry are turned back by Congolese guards at Brazzaville Beach.

Several reasons for Zaire's slow progress were advanced during interviews on both sides of the river with businessmen, politicians, doctors, human rights activists and students.

Some said Francophone, which colonised Congo, installed a sense of democracy and made some effort to create an educated class, while Belgians ruled brutally on the other bank. Both colonies became independent in 1960.

"We speak the same language (Lingala), we have family over there," said Andre Milongo, the Congolese prime minister, but he added that life was very different.

"There was always at least a sense of democracy in Congo," he said. "On the other side, it was like apartheid before independence. Whites remained apart from blacks. They didn't mix."

Jules Ngono Ngondo, a civil servant with an MBA from Loyola University in Chicago, described it as "a problem of education. At independence, there were, only a handful of college-educated Africans in Zaire."

Elieze Tsubuhacka, the main opposition leader in Zaire, said Congo's disastrous experiment with Marxism set the economy back years, "but the effort to force the party on people made them more politically oriented."

In Zaire, the opposite was the case. It has been a war for itself, said Hamut Kapasurawa, executive secretary of the Zaire National Association of Non-Governmental Development Agencies.

"System D," for the French word meaning rootlessness, is how Zairians explain how to survive what opponents call Mobutu's kleptocracy.

"Everyone learns to steal because there is no way to make money honestly," said Ngonga, who has family on both sides of the river. "Mobutu sets the example, buying and selling people."

Mobutu's current prime minister, Ngusa Karl-A-Band, has been confined to death for treason, gone into exile and written a book condemning Mobutu, only to return and head his government.

Monserrate dalleka, the Roman Catholic archbishop, said he feels Zairo's progress has stalled because "it depends on the people doing the politics."

The archbishop, a symbol of resistance to the president, reinforced that image when he effectively called Mobutu a lapdog for breaking a promise to reopen the national conference on democracy.

Francois Kandolo finds it "especially galling that we, who have been big allies of the United States, are being forced to accept a delay in democracy." He leads a committee of Christians that has organised pro-democracy demonstrations in Kinshasa.

Congo sided with Moscow during the Cold War and the United States supported Mobutu, sending him hundreds of millions of dollars worth of weapons and other aid. Sassou-Nguesso also cracked down on his people, but even his fierce critics say he cannot be compared with Mobutu.

Opposition leader

In January, rebel soldiers who had belonged to Sassou-Nguesso's personal guard seized the static radio, television and airport in an apparent bid to restore him to power. They backed down when tens of thousands of Milongo supporters escorted the opposition leader to a meeting with the rebels.

The rebels had tanks, but did not use them — perhaps, Milongo said, because "if they fired into the crowd they would have shot their fathers, mothers, brothers or sisters."

By contrast, Mobutu's security forces opened fire on a peaceful democracy march on February 16, killing at least 32 people, according to Human Rights Watch. The United States and other Western governments called it a "massacre of peaceful marchers."

Mobutu was accused of bribing in Angola mercenaries to put down the march. He also has used military units from one region in others, thus reducing ties between soldiers and local populations. - Super-AP.
What do you do when President Mobutu's hens won't lay?

THE PREMIER SOLUTION

THE PREMIER OF CONGO'S ability to do business in Zambil was much to the nure of Albert Nellisen, Belgian chairman of its international division.

Nellisen first went to Zambil in the early 80s, when the Zambil government officially disapproved of contact with South Africa. Whites from South Africa were not allowed in. But Nellisen knew a black South African who knew some powerful Zambilians, and he set off without a visa.

When he arrived in Lusaka, Zambilian Christians were there to meet him. The next day he met President Kenneth Kaunda. The meeting went off famously; Nellisen had a way of charming presidents. Kaunda invited him back again on his second visit he was accompanied by Toey Illebo, now the Premier Group's then chairman.

From then on Nellisen was welcomed in Zambil. He would fly to Lusaka regularly in the Translux jet, often bringing with him a crate of champagne that would hire a suite in the Intercontinental Hotel to store the champagne in the refrigerator. As visitors started to arrive, the bottles would start emerging.

Like Lounbo, the (British) company active in Africa) Premier went to Zambil long before the loyalty of senior politicians. In the late 80s Nellisen got a call from the founder of Mobutu Sese Seko who wanted to see him urgently. Nellisen got into the Premier jet and flew halfway up Africa.

The president explained the problem. His new palace in Kinshasa, the village of his birth, was nearly complete. It had marble floors, crystal chandeliers and a runway long enough to accommodate the presidential Concorde.

But it did not yet have a garden; please could Premier see to it. He stipulated that this garden should be in flower at Christ- mass, which was just a month or so away.

Nellisen returned to Johor Bahru. He bought RM2 million worth of flowers. He hired a Boeing aircraft. A ready-made garden was dispatched into the middle of Africa, complete with gardener, to replace the Zambil bush with flower-beds. Everthing went to the president's satisfaction, but then he was taken by another fraim. We want a chicken farm.

Nellisen had little choice. After all, Premier knew conning. Another convoy of aircraft, this time carrying hens and hen coops, flew across the continent. Everything went according to plan; the bush was cleared away, the hen coops were set up. Premier even installed a smart new abattoir. When every- thing had been put in place there emerged an irritating problem. The hens were not laying.

Different Premier managers gave me different versions of this story; some claimed that the hens had been traumatized by the experience of air travel; some said they were given the wrong chicken meal. Whatever the truth, something had to be done. Christmas was coming.

The president was expecting some distinguished guests. He must have a poultry farm to show them. So Premier sent one more plane north into Africa. It was loaded with eggs to be tucked under each chicken. "A European company," said Premier chairman Peter McGaughey, "would never have done that."

As my trip with Premier proceeded, the character of Albert Nellisen became its main fascination. The legends that surrounded him suggested an uncanny gift for inspiring trust and confi- dence.

Even before he led Premier into Africa, Nellisen had had a special way with customers. People who remembered his days as manager of Premier's market- ing in Natal claimed that he outwitted rival salesmen in valley after valley.

The subsequent African adventures were closely in character. A Premier executive explained the extra fascination of moral ambiguity. Nellisen was hollobing energetically with the lines of President Mobutu, whose personal fortune was reputedly as big as Zambil's $8-bil- lion ($22-billion) national debt. And Nellisen was selling food to Africa to make money; the bigger his profit margin, the less his impoverished customers would eat.

I first met Nellisen in Lusaka. He arrived at the airport in the Premier jet, which had delivered me to the city earlier that day. A Premier jeep and a Premier minibus drove up to the plane as it waited on the tarmac. Half a dozen Premier em- ployees got out and prepared to meet their boss. I got out, too, and stood in the warmth of an African evening, watching a big bear of a man emerge from the last car and steady himself on its steps. Nellisen shook hands with his reception committee, grinned at the Africans he met.

Then he handed his passport to a Zambilian, a man retained by Premier for his expert knowledge of airport officials. How much each must be paid. Nellisen boarded the jeep. They drove into Lusaka, leaving the passport expert to transact his business.

The party reassembled over supper.

Nellisen sat at the head of the table. He spoke only occasionally, with a thick Belgian accent and a wide smile. I sat next to him, and tried to get him to talk about his African experiences. He really divided into defending the morality of his position in Africa, which he did mainly by attacking all the other white intruders who had done him the compliment of coming.

He railed against rapa- cious colonists, against un- fair taxation and in- wedors and especially against "brief-case nationals." He was really drawn into defending the morality of his position in Africa, which he did mainly by attacking all the other white intruders who had done him the compliment of coming.

Nellisen denounced the Greek and Lebanese mer- chants, who wanted only to get rich from the wealth of their money at home. He de- nounced the US and European companies who paid their staff in foreign currency, and which were able to take the wealth generated by their business back to their own wealth.

I was eager to see how Nellisen's denunciations would be received in African govern- ments. He did not seem to sym- pathize at all.

"Establish in Africa. Paying tax, employing locals, training locals. We give them a complete package. That was why the Zambilian was respected in the continent. Now that apartheid was go- ing, Nellisen's good name in Africa was earning him more invitations than he had time to take up."

The residents of Mauritia- nia and Ghana, he assured me, urgently wanted to see him. So did the vice-president of Kenya, who said his reputation was impeccable. "He never was a carver; never — how do you say it in good English? — he never screw anybody."

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Excerpted from Sebastian Moolman's book, After Apartheid (Paber and Fisher. R65.00)
Mobutu ready to give up powers

KINSHASA - President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, under pressure to step down after 27 years of rule, was ready to surrender a large part of his presidential powers, an aide said yesterday.

Mr. Mombachi Shimbi, a former economy minister turned presidential aide, told French radio that Mr. Mobutu was ready to negotiate control of the army, the country's finances and the staging of future presidential elections as long as he was allowed to stand as a candidate.

"All this is part of a presidential logic, which says, 'Now it's time for democracy, the one-party state is over, single authority is over, now power can be shared,'" he told Radio France Internationale.

Mr. Mobutu's authority was directly challenged last week when the country's national conference, reconvened after an 11-week break, declared itself Zaire's supreme decision-making body.

Since then Mr. Mobutu has been holding talks with the Sacred Union opposition alliance on a deal to ensure democratic change without violence.

Mr. Shimbi said Mr. Mobutu had already ceded much of his power. He no longer chaired the cabinet and decisions involving the country's finances were being taken by Prime Minister Mr. Nguza Karl-Bond. — Sapa-Reuters
Big squeeze: Zaire banks run out of money

KINSHASA - Four banks in Zaire, already struggling with a virtually paralysed economy, have halted cash withdrawals because of a chronic shortage of banknotes.

Signs displayed in the Banque Commerciale Zairoise, Banque de Commerce Extérieur, Citibank and Nouvelle Banque de Kinshasa yesterday read: "Because of a lack of liquidity our desks are closed until further notice."

Other banks have kept up draconian limits on withdrawals, sometimes as low as 250,000 zaires (about R3.55) at a time.

"The persistent lack of notes is pushing the Zairean banking system to total suffocation," one senior banking source said.

The economy of the huge central African country has slid deeper and deeper into disaster since army-led looting last September killed 250 people and devastated several cities.

With investor confidence at rock bottom, Zairens are not depositing money so banks have no ready cash.

Some investors are giving bank tellers bribes of 10 percent to issue them with more than the permitted ceiling.

For months the government has been churning out tons of new notes, fuelling inflation estimated at between 3,500 and 4,000 percent, but most of the money ends up on the thriving black market.

The currency had plunged to 170,000 zaires to the dollar (US) by the start of this month, compared with 4,000 zaires a year ago. — Sapa-Reuters
Refugees flee to the Mountains of Moon

BUNDIBUGYO (Uganda) — Driven out of Zaire by fighting, more than 50,000 people have fled into this remote corner of Uganda to seek refuge behind the Ruwenzori mountains — the Mountains of the Moon.

The refugees say there is near-anarchy in eastern Zaire where government forces are hunting rebels of the Congo Youth Liberation Army.

They say the soldiers, who have received no pay for months, are devastating villages and stealing everything.

The eastern area of Zaire is 2,000 km from the capital Kinshasa and has rarely shown signs of effective administration.

It is best known as home to some of the few remaining families of mountain gorillas.

Today, with Kinshasa in ruins after prolonged riots and the Zairean economy sliding deeper into chaos, analysts say the situation in the east is deteriorating.

"There appears to be no effective government over large areas there," said a Western diplomat.

Chief Simanu Gademe says he joined the refugees flocking into Uganda when soldiers raided the farm where he and his six wives and 24 children lived.

The soldiers, who arrived in two armoured troop carriers, raped one of his wives, looted his homestead and set fire to 12 huts, he said. — Sapa-Reuter.
These into Uganda

30,000 Zairens

Source: 30/4-92

BUNDUUGO,
AFRICA BRIEFS

Konane's election assured

Mali's main opposition leader, Alpha Omare Konane, a key figure in the uprising which toppled military dictator Moussa Traore, coasted towards victory this week in the second round of Mali's presidential elections which saw only 16 percent of eligible voters turn out. The former teacher won 70.71 percent of the vote cast. His rival, Tiaoula Mamadou Konate, won 29.29 percent, according to provisional official results. The trial of ex-president Traore on corruption charges will start on April 30. He will stand trial with 30 members of his government, including his former defence and interior ministers and army chief of staff.

Senegal, Mauritania resume ties

Senegal and Mauritania re-established diplomatic ties broken off three years ago after a border dispute over grazing rights in August 1989 sparked bloody riots between the mainly Arab Mauritanians and black Senegalese. Human rights groups say that at least 40,000 black Mauritanians were forcibly expelled to Senegal and whole villages razed by Mauritania's Arab-run army during the clashes.

Mobutu praises conference

Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko says he is confident that the much-hailed national conference will bring about peaceful political change. "The work under way at the conference will allow a significant advance in the democratisation process," he said. In conciliatory terms, he praised the chairman of the conference, Catholic Archbishop Moussengwo Pasi, who has been one of his most vocal critics.

Cabinda grenade attack

A grenade tossed into a crowded market wounded 24 people last week in the city of Cabinda, capital of Angola's oil-rich northern province. The attack comes amid spiralling violence, as guerrilla groups battle for independence from Angola. Last month, separatists from the Front for the Liberation of the State of Cabinda (FLEC) raided Cabinda Airport, killing nine government soldiers and destroying 10 buses belonging to the Cabinda Gulf Oil Company, which operates Cabinda's oil fields.

Angola's opposition party splits

A leading Angolan opposition party, the Democratic Renewal Party (PRD), split in two this week, effectively destroying its chances at the country's first multi-party elections in September. Joaquim Pinto de Andrade, former honorary president of the PRD, and his supporters resigned after alleged vote rigging for a new executive at the party's national convention at the weekend.

Mugabe urged to sack cabinet

The fighters who won Zimbabwe's independence urged President Robert Mugabe to sack his entire cabinet. He was raked over the coals on Saturday when he addressed the inaugural meeting of the Zimbabwe National War Veterans Association, made up of former fighters from Mqabae's Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (Zanla) and rival Joshua Nkomo's Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (Zipra). Numerous fighters stood up to tell Mugabe their grievances: no jobs, no land, no training, no money, no influence. They charged Mugabe's cabinet ministers were just lining their own pockets and loading the civil service with relatives and supporters from their own regions.

Compiled by Mark Huband in Abidjan and The Guardian staff.
KINSHASA — Zaire's punch-drunk currency rallied slightly against the US dollar yesterday as money-changers hedged orders to get off the streets, banking sources said.

One dollar was being sold for 150,000 zaires on the parallel market, compared with 180,000 last week. The official bank rate firmed from 150,000 last week to 130,000 yesterday.

Officials blamed last week's slide of the local currency on the proliferation of street dealers and the circulation of new 500,000 zaire bills.

The black market was effectively legalised by the governor of Kinshasa last Saturday and licensed dealers set up shop as agreed in the city's botanical gardens.

— Sapa-Reuter.
Closer to Zaire 1972

A ZAIRE-SOUTH Africa Business Association has been formed to promote trade and business links. The association says SA has traded with Zaire since the early 1960s. Zaire pioneered the opening of international relationships between SA and the rest of Africa. SA's first African trade mission was opened in Kinshasa and Zaire was the first country to lift all visa restrictions on South Africans.
Companies set up trade forum with Zaire

A non-profit-making association has been formed with the help of several SA and Zairean companies to promote trade between the two countries.

Backers of the Zaire/SA Business Association (Zeba) include Premier Milling, National Sorghum Beer, and Banque Commerciale Zairoise.

Zeba will be chaired by National Sorghum Beer's CEO Mahale Mayanele.

Founder Jeremie Kalonji said the association would serve as an official trade link between Zaire and SA.

MEREDITH JENSEN

"They have always been dealing together, but no official organisation has existed to facilitate trade between companies," he said, adding Zeba that aimed to organise conferences that would attract businesspeople from both countries.

"Potential for trade between SA and Zaire "could be unlimited," he said.

"Zaire is well known for its mineral and agricultural resources. With an SA partner, we could feed Africa."
Zaire-SA group to foster business

THE Zaire-South Africa Business Association has been formed with the aim of promoting and fostering trade and industry between the two countries. The association has been made possible through an initiative by a group of South African entrepreneurs and their Zairian counterparts.

A spokesman for the association said that SA had been trading with Zaire since the early 60’s and had played a pioneer role in the opening of international relationships between SA and the rest of the African continent.
Press gets off its knees in Africa

The slavish image is slowly changing, reports Cindy Shiner from Kinshasa
Mobutu's men go on looting spree in central Kinshasa

KINSHASA - Men of Zaire's civil guard, a security force considered loyal to President Mobutu Sese Seko, went on a looting spree in central Kinshasa, national radio reported yesterday.

The armed men, protesting over non-payment of their salaries, held up shopkeepers and traders at markets in Kintambo and Matonge districts on Saturday stealing clothes, beer and other goods.

Soldiers later restored order, the radio said.

The Egyptian-trained civil guard is a paramilitary police force commanded and mostly manned by Mobutu loyalists, many of whom are from his Equateur region, diplomats said.

Looting led by soldiers last September pushed Zaire to the brink of disintegration. The economy has not recovered and most of the 15,000 expatriates who fled abroad have not returned. - Sapa-Reuter
Ultimatum to Zaire

Major foreign oil companies are threatening to lay off up to 80% of their Zairean employees unless the government reverses its expropriation of company assets.

About 1,000 people could lose their jobs in Zaire last month. Petro-Zaïre, the state-owned oil company, seized the stocks and took over petrol stations.

Petro-Zaïre said it wanted to keep the price of fuel down and that it would make up for losses.
Africa Watch reports on continuing human rights violations in Zaire

Mobutu set on keeping power

OVer two years ago, on April 24 1990, President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire publicly announced that his country would move towards a multiparty democracy. Mr Mobutu had formerly ruled Zaire for 25 years in highly authoritarian fashion.

More than two years on, Mr Mobutu and his coterie of security chiefs are still determined to hang on to power at all costs, adopting only a facade of democratic reform. They continue to violate human rights with impunity.

However, Zairian citizens have shown themselves determined to defy their abusive government.

The last two years have witnessed an unprecedented outpouring of public political activity and criticism of government policies. Independent political parties, newspapers and human rights groups have all been active, and the National Conference, reluctantly convened by Mr Mobutu, has refused to follow his dictate.

This has culminated in the resolve of Bishop Laurent Mbanda, and the conference he heads, to challenge Mr Mobutu's continuing monopoly on the appointment of Ministers by naming a new government, this month.

At this crucial moment, it is timeous to assess the record of Mr Mobutu's last two years.

There have been "transition" governments, but no transition. Mr Mobutu has tried to split the opposition with offers of government posts and handouts of money. After many provocations, Mr Mobutu finally accepted to convene a National Conference in August 1991; in December he dissolved it, and only agreed to its resumption after unprecedented popular protest.

Two important events indicate both what has changed in Zairian society, and what has failed to change in government circles. The first was the massacre at Lubumbashi University on the night of May 11-12 1990, in which an unknown number of students were killed when security forces went on the rampage. The killings caused an outcry in Zaire.

The second event was the march of up to one million Christians in Kinshasa and other major towns on February 16 1992. The march was organised to protest against the dissolution of the National Conference, and call for its immediate resumption.

Security forces levelled their guns and opened fire on the peaceful protesters; at least 33 people were killed. However, the opposition was not deterred.

These have not yet been the "only" abuses during the last two years: opposition leaders have been harassed and detained — one "disappeared" in January this year, newspapers closed down, and killings by the military remain routine.

At the heart of Mr Mobutu's strategy for retaining power are the security forces. The National Army is small and ineffective; by contrast, four specialised security services are well equipped and all-powerful.

These secretive, unaccountable organisations have been responsible for most of the abuses against the opposition, and remain the greatest threat to the prospects for democracy.

President Mobutu was helped to power and maintained there-by the US during the height of the Cold War.

In 1990, Congress cut off US economic aid in reaction to the appalling human rights record. However, the Bush Administration has continued to regard Mr Mobutu as a friend.

The reality is that Mr Mobutu is the chief source of instability and lack of a genuine transition. The Administration should give its full backing to the National Conference in its efforts to challenge the dictator's authority.

This is a summary of a three-page report by the Human Rights organisation Africa Watch.
Ethnic killings in Mali

FOUR people were killed and 200 fled their homes in northern Mali in an outbreak of racial conflict between black and "white" groups. The past year tensions have built up between Mali's various ethnic groups, especially between black Africans and the Arab population. Radio Liberte, based in the capital Bamako, said blacks in the Saharan city of Gao launched a broad attack against Arabs, Moors and Tuaregs.

Mobutu challenged

The chairman of Zaïre's National Pro-Democracy Conference asserted he had full authority in the troubled central African state, directly contradicting claims by President Mobutu Sese Seko. Catholic Archbishop Monsengwo Pasinya said on Belgian television, that he did not agree with Mobutu, who has ruled Zaïre with an iron fist for 27 years and now challenges the conference's authority. "I will tell him (Mobutu) the conference is sovereign, because the whole of the nation is represented there," said Archbishop Monsengwo. The debate over authority was academic, he said, because the current crisis in Zaïre meant something had to be done.

Liberian clashes continue

NEW fighting has broken out in western Liberia between fighters loyal to rebel chief Charles Taylor and a rival militia, Ulimo. Local newspapers reported heavy shelling from both sides as Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia and Ulimo fought each other in the Cape Mount area west of the capital, Monrovia. Some of an estimated 3 000 Liberians who fled the area said the two militias had confiscated all food supplies and civilians went in fear for their lives.

the UN was secretly financing his rival, self-styled President Ali Mahdi Mohammed. The observers had arrived in Mogadishu this week to prepare the ground for a larger group that is to monitor the ceasefire between the warring factions in the Somali capital.

Banda defends detention record

MALAWI Life President Hastings Kamuzu Banda publicly defended his government's record of detentions of political opponents. The 82-year-old Malawi leader addressed the nation to mark the country's 28th independence anniversary on July 6. Banda said detention in Malawi had been used to protect national security and not to abuse human rights, as Malawians and international critics have charged.

"To ensure that the critics no longer exploit our detention practices to tarnish our human rights image, I have given instruction that all subsequent detainees should be charged and tried in an open court. Where this is not possible, I will appoint a special tribunal headed by a High Court judge to which a detainee can appeal against his or her detention," Banda said.

UN men threatened

FOUR United Nations military observers were threatened with expulsion from Somalia by a warlord, Mohammed Farah Aideed, who controls much of the battle-scarred capital, Mogadishu. Aideed claimed
Lumumba kicked out of Zaire

DAR ES SALAAM — Emilio Lumumba, the son of Zaire's assassinated first prime minister, Patrice Lumumba, has been expelled from Tanzania where he has been living in exile. Government officials said yesterday that Lumumba was expelled after it was discovered that he had "connections with political groups opposed to Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko." — Sapa-APP.
New proposals

KINSHASA - Compromise proposals to lead Zaire to multiparty rule have been presented to the country's pro-democracy conference. - Sipa-Reuters
Zaire may become Republic of Congo

BRUSSELS — Zaire's national conference voted yesterday to change the country's name to the Republic of Congo, Zairian news agency AZAP reported.

The national conference has been meeting to chart a course to democracy for the central African country, which has been ruled by President Mobutu Sese Seko since 1965 — five years after the former Belgian colony won its independence.

The conference also voted to revert to the former flag, motto and national anthem which were replaced by Mobutu when he changed the country's name from Congo to Zaire in 1971.

Zaireans see the current name as a powerful symbol of Mobutu's vice-like grip on power.

AZAP, monitored in Brussels, said the changes were passed by 1,172 votes to 592.

The move to change the country's name could cause some confusion, given that the name Congo is used by Zaire's northwestern neighbour. — Sapa-Reuters.
**Zaire reverts to Republic of Congo**

The national conference discussing the path to democracy in Zaire voted on Tuesday to change the country’s name back to the Republic of Congo. President Mobutu Sese-Seko, who has ruled the country for 27 years, changed the name to Zaire in 1971. The conference also voted to revert to the former flag, motto and national anthem.
Zaire's new leader pledges rule of justice

KINSHASA — Zaire's new prime minister, opposition stalwart Etienne Tshisekedi, promised huge crowds of cheering supporters on Saturday to bring democracy and justice to the crippled country.

"We are going to install the rule of law where justice exists," he told a jubilant crowd of about 12,000 people massed outside his Kinshasha party headquarters.

In a defiant challenge to President Mobutu Sese Seko, delegates at Zaire's national conference named Tshisekedi to lead the country to multiparty elections within two years.

"The country has seen a lot of speeches. Now we have been given the chance to take action. This action is what will count," Tshisekedi, Mobutu's most formidable adversary, said after his election as interim premier on Saturday.

Tshisekedi told supporters he would name his government next week after talks with political parties and interest groups.

Greek nets control of Pravda

MOSCOW — Millionaire Greek publisher Yannis Yannikos had bought a controlling share of former Communist Party newspaper Pravda, Itar-Tass news agency reported last week.

Yannikos is bailing out the ailing newspaper through his firm Steel Light. His family runs the Greek publishing house Akadimos, which specialises in books from the Soviet Union and Cuba.

Cameras for New York ATMs

NEW YORK — The city's bankers have been given 18 months to install surveillance cameras and other security devices on their 1,038 automated teller machines, under a city ordinance signed last week.

The measure, which bankers say will cost them up to $125m a year in maintenance, follows 743 ATM robberies over a two-year period.

Boost for battered rouble

MOSCOW — The battered rouble was given a vote of confidence at the weekend as Ukraine's top banker said he favoured using the currency and the president of Kazakhstan pledged full support for it.

Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev said the rouble should be placed above national interest and he would propose moves to revitalise it.

World Bank reassures Africa

HARARE — World Bank president Lewis Preston has assured African countries that no finances of the bank will be diverted from Africa to other parts of the world, notably Eastern Europe.

"There is no reason to expect that we will not be able to continue our existing programmes in Africa," he said at the weekend.
New premier pledges rule of law for Zaire

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In a defiant challenge to President Mobutu Sese Seko, delegates at Zaire’s national conference named Mr. Tshisekedi to lead the country to multiparty elections within two years.

Mr. Tshisekedi said he would name his government this week after talks with political parties and interest groups.

His priority is to rescue the economy, which has virtually ground to a halt.

President Mobutu said late on Saturday he would co-operate with Mr. Tshisekedi. The announcement was preceded by a statement from his minister of communications saying a commission had been set up to write a new constitution and organize elections within eight months.

This would effectively bypass the national conference, and allow Mr. Mobutu to use his personal fortune, reputedly in the billions of rands, to win a new term as president.

Opposition leaders, who control the national conference, say it will take 18 months to organize elections because Mr. Mobutu has allowed the country’s infrastructure to collapse. They also want time to root out Mobutu cronies in the government who could manipulate the election.

Mr. Mobutu has repeatedly said he would never accept Mr. Tshisekedi, but in recent days he told diplomats that rather than confront him he might organize early elections. — Sapa-AP-Reuters.
Mobutu rejects new premier

KINSHASA — Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko refused yesterday to endorse the election of Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi, heralding a period of stormy cohabitation with the radical opposition leader.

President Mobutu's refusal will not stop Mr. Tshisekedi from taking office because of an accord he struck earlier this year with national conference chairman Archbishop Monengwa Fashinya.

President Mobutu had 48 hours to sign an ordinance ratifying Mr. Tshisekedi's election by the national pro-democracy conference on Saturday morning. But the deadline expired without the decree being signed.

Conference delegates said President Mobutu was also refusing to sign a "transitional charter" drawn up by the conference to replace Zaire's current constitution, paving the way for multiparty elections.

The conference's choice of Mr. Tshisekedi to replace Nguza Karl-Bond was a direct challenge to President Mobutu, still clinging to power after 27 years.

A former top government figure, Mr. Tshisekedi revolted against the regime in 1989 and is now regarded as the president's most implacable foe. He was briefly appointed premier last October but was sacked after calling Mr. Mobutu a "human monster".

President Mobutu initially appeared to accept the nomination with good grace, but the latest developments suggest he is far from ready to accept the diminished role the national conference is lining up for him.

Mr. Tshisekedi has started talks with political parties and interest groups with a view to naming a transitional government.
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Ethnic strife threatens Zaire

ZAIRE is in danger of becoming Africa's Yugoslavia, torn apart by ethnic strife, former prime minister Ngouza Karl-L-Bond has warned. Ngouza made the claim this week after visiting the south-east province of Shaba, where at least eight people have died in clashes between his Lunda tribe and newly-elected Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi's Luba tribe.

Travellers from the copper-rich region, formerly known as Katanga, reported seeing terrified Lubas gathering at railways stations, ready to flee north to their Kasai homeland.

Former premier Ngouza, emerging as one of Tshisekedi's most dangerous foes since resigning last week, accused "certain politicians in Kinshasa" of fanning ethnic tensions between Kasai tribesmen and their Katanga hosts.
Zaire gets new rulers

KINSHASA - Zaire's new prime minister, Mr. Etienne Tshisekedi, has named a 21-member government, picking little-known newcomers and avoiding the most hardline opponents of President Mobutu Sese Seko.

A presidential decree, confirming the list, was read on State radio at midnight on Saturday.

No Mobutu supporters were appointed to the transitional government charged with guiding Zaire to free elections and ending Mobutu's 27-year grip on power.
What hope for Third Republic?

President Mobutu's acceptance of the National Conference's choice of Etienne Tshisekedi wa Mulumba as Zaire's new Prime Minister, with the right to appoint his own Cabinet, marks a breakthrough for the democratic process in the country; but the question remains: can the old dictator and the young democrat remain harnessed together for the final achievement of a freely elected parliament?

Mr Tshisekedi got 70 percent of the vote of the 2,800 delegates at the National Conference against the 27.7 percent cast for his main opponent, Dr Thomas Kanza.

Mr Tshisekedi's home base is Kwala-Kwinbu, and Dr Kanza's is in the capital area around Kinshasa, peopled by the Bakongo. His father was a distinguished leader in the struggle against Belgian colonial rule and was a member of the early Kasavubu government. It remains to be seen whether the two will agree to work together.

Dr Kanza spent much of Mr Mobutu's long rule in largely voluntary exile, opposed to the Zairean president.

Mr Tshisekedi, at an early stage of his career co-operated with Mr Mobutu and a cloud hangs over his role during the time of the abduction and murder of Patrice Lumumba.

However, since 1989 during the brief honeymoon period when Zaire still had an elected parliament, Mr Tshisekedi had been a thorn in Mr Mobutu's side. He was a member of what came to be known as the Gang of Seven in the Legislative Council when he took up the cudgels in favour of establishing a democratic constitution.

He was one of the founders of the Union pour la Democratie et le Progres Social (UDPS) which waged a losing battle against Mr Mobutu's decision to turn Zaire into a single-party state, ushering in the Second Republic — the republic of Mr Mobutu's autocracy. He was one of two UDPS members arrested in 1965, charged with sedition, and after refusing to appear at his trial, was jailed for 18 months. After his release he continued his opposition to Mr Mobutu, but the UDPS became weakened by splits. His record entitles him to play a key role in the transition from a Zaire ruthlessly and corruptly ruled by Mr Mobutu to a democracy.

Mr Tshisekedi's first act as Prime Minister was to appoint a commission to consider opportunities for free elections to be held in no more than eight months' time.

Mr Mobutu, in accepting the appointment, promised him his "trunk collaboration for a transition which the people want to be peaceful so as to lay the foundation of a thriving and democratic Third Republic." But he made no mention of the National Conference's decision that the Third Republic should abandon the name of Zaire bestowed on the country by Mr Mobutu, and return to its name of the Congo Republic.

Under the principles adopted by the National Conferences for a democratic constitution, the president will be shorn of his executive powers and will assume the functions of the Head of State of a parliamentary democracy. Mr Mobutu has announced his intention of running for office for another period as president.

It remains to be seen whether, if elected, he is capable of presiding, with emasculated power, over a democratic country.

The best hope that this may be possible is his admission that Zaire's economy is in desperate straits and that its only hope of recovery lies in persuading the international community that it will remain politically stable.

The big threat in the difficult months lying ahead, while elections are being organised, remains the role of the security forces. The loss of Mr Mobutu's patronage will diminish their role. It would be surprising if they remained passively on the sidelines during the transition period.
EXCLUSIVE

SA dogs of war rush to aid Mobutu

By JOCELYN MAKER

ZAIRE's embattled President Mobutu Sese Seko is recruiting South African mercenaries to protect him against an uprising in his country. [TIMES 29/9/12]

In a bizarre replay of the mercenary involvement in the Congo in the 60s, two detachments of mercenaries have left for the troubled Central African state.

A third is due to leave within a week. The number of men involved will be about 160.

The commander of the top-secret operation has been identified as Colonel Jan Breytenbach, fueling speculation that it might be the legendary Colonel Jan Breytenbach, commander of the now-disbanded 32 Battalion.

Colonel Breytenbach was unavailable for comment yesterday.

Mr Bob Watson, codenamed Golden Eagle and identified by the Sunday Times source as the adjutant of the Johannesburg office of the unit, yesterday confirmed he was a mercenary. He declined, however, to speak about "the operation".

Recruitment has apparently taken place in Durban and Johannesburg. The offices of the outfit — calling itself the "Compagnie Internationale" after the first mercenary group that served in the Congo between 1961 and 1963 — are in Johannesburg.

Unstable

Recruits are offered $12 000 a month and there are provisions for death and disability payments.

A source involved in the recruiting of the mercenaries describes their task in Zaire as "guarding mines and other installations from attack and preventing or putting down, if necessary, internal strife."

The mercenaries are to be deployed in Zaire's copper-rich Shaba province, formerly known as Katanga. The province is endemically unstable and has seen four attempts at
Zaire spends $15m on cars

KINSHASA — The government of former Prime Minister Ngouza Karbi Bond spent about $15m in state money on vehicles during the first half of 1992, according to an audit conducted by the new government of impoverished Zaire.

The worst offender was the prime minister’s office, which spent almost $5m on limousines and four-wheel drive vehicles, followed by the defence ministry, which spent nearly $3m, and the finance ministry, which used about $2.5m from the state coffers to buy cars.

The office of President Mobutu Sese Seko spent about $3m, according to the report.

The most popular cars were Mitsubishi four-wheel drives and Mercedes-Benz limousines.

The ministries and the president’s office spent from five to 20 times as much as had been allocated for vehicle purchases, the audit noted. — Sapa-AFP.
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The mercenaries are to be deployed in Zaire’s copper-rich Shaba province, formerly known as Katanga. The province is endemically unstable and has seen four attempts at secession since the Congo became independent in 1960.

Most recently it has been the site of fierce tribal fighting. President Mobutu, meanwhile, is in a precarious position. Widespread riots in his country recently forced him to concede to elections.

Vital

Information obtained by the Sunday Times indicates that the mercenary force will act in support of the security services of the major mining companies which have lucrative operations in the province.

A batch of mercenaries, many of them former Z.S.A. and South African Special Forces men, have reportedly been sent to Inga Dam in Shaba Province (code-named Paradise), charged with responsibility for protecting the vital hydro-electric plant from rebel attack. A number of Angolans and Mozambicans are also reportedly serving in the mercenary ranks.

The Sunday Times source says a Major Chadwick (code-named Sunray) has been involved in liaison with the Zairian government over the deployment of the mercenaries. His link man has been General Malambo, head of Zairean Elite Forces.

A Barclays Bank account has been opened in

WEDDING BELLS... presenter David

Nutty’ David to tie the knot

By SHARON CHETTY

TELEVISION personality David Hall-Green and fiancée Marsha Retief are to marry next month in St George’s Anglican church in Parktown, Johannesburg.

David, who presents Good Morning South Africa, and corporate communications executive Marsha got to know each other after he moved into her Sandton townhouse complex two and-a-half years ago.

“It wasn’t love at first sight or instant attraction,”
Mercenaries linked to Libyan assignment

Mercenaries who are being sent from South Africa to Zaire to protect President Mobutu Sese Seko against an uprising in his country are believed to be the same men who were to be sent to Libya to train shock troops for Colonel Muammar Gaddafi.

A senior military source told The Star the men had been recruited to go to Zaire after an operation in Libya was shelved when the UN Security Council decided to maintain embargoes against Libya last month.

After the Libyan operation was aborted, a Johannesburg-based company called Campagne Internationale obtained the Libyan recruitment lists and set up the Zaire operation. Colonel Jan Breytenbach, formerly commander of the disbanded SADF 22 Battalion, who is believed to be the leader of the operation, was unavailable for comment last night.

A Sunday newspaper report yesterday said two detachments of mercenaries had left for Zaire and another was due in a week. Their duties would be to guard mines and other vital installations from attack and to squash any internal rebellion.

The SADF and Department of Foreign Affairs last night denied any involvement in the operation. — Staff Reporter.
Furore over name change

Zaire to be known as Congo?

ABIDJAN - Zaire's National conference has again voted to change the name of the country back to Congo, a decision calculated to enraged President Mobutu Sese Seko.

Zaire television, monitored by the British Broadcasting Corporation, said the name change was included in a document approved by the conference on Saturday.

The document, which also provides for changes to Zaire's flag, national anthem, currency and official language, lays the framework for a new multi-party constitution.

Delegates sparked a showdown with Mobutu in August when they first voted in favour of abandoning the name Zaire, adopted by Mobutu in 1971 as part of an African "authenticity drive".

Mobutu is bound to view the document as a symbolic rejection of his rule. - Sapa-Reuters.
KINSHASA — The US dollar, under pressure from the Deutschmark, the franc and the yen, is even sliding against the zaire.

On Monday a US dollar fetched 360,000 zaires on the black market compared with 810,000 last Friday and 2.1 million the previous Wednesday.

Household goods prices plunged simultaneously. A sack of rice that had sold for 60 million zaires could be had for 20 million.

Zaire's currency went into a tailspin a year ago when army-led riots devastated the economy and the government began printing container loads of notes to keep up with inflation.

Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi, elected six weeks ago by Zaire's national conference, said last week he would limit funds available to the Bank of Zaire.

— Reuters, 2/1/82
PARIS — The tiny oil-rich Cabinda Enclave in Zaire has declared a total general strike this week to demand total independence from Angola. Production is at a complete halt.

The move followed last week's lightning visit there of President José Eduarido dos Santos. The Paris daily newspaper Liberation's correspondent Stephen Smith accompanied him.

This tiny territory of 7,000 sq km and 150,000 inhabitants produces two-thirds of Angola's oil.

Luanda has always claimed Cabinda, but two independence movements, Frel and Fac, have mobilised about 2,000 guerrillas to demand independence.

Liberation commented: "Cabinda's demand comes at just the very moment when Angola, after 16 years of civil war, desperately needs Cabinda's oil revenue for reconstruction."

Mr dos Santos was forced to abandon plans to address locals. None turned up at the airport to meet him.

Instead he held talks with the local governor, who reported that he had "almost been lynched by mutinous Angolan soldiers a few weeks ago.

Catholic bishop Dom Paulinho Fernandes Madeira handed over a list of villages razed to the ground and their inhabitants killed.

President dos Santos was told he will eventually have to negotiate with Frel-Fac leaders Henrique Tiago WZita and Tiburcio Luemba.

Unita leader Dr Jonas Savimbi has sent word that he favours giving Cabinda a wide measure of autonomy.
Parliament surrounded
TROOPS and paramilitary police "surrounded" Zaire's parliament building with tanks and armoured cars yesterday, apparently to protect a rebel session of the country's ousted national assembly, witnesses said. (358)
Zaire's national conference dissolved the pro-Mobutu parliament six weeks ago, but defiant deputies said they would meet yesterday to draw up a definitive constitution, a task the conference is supposed to perform.
Mobutu moves to defuse crisis

KINSHASA — President Mobutu Sese Seko has called on all Zaire’s political groups to meet to defuse a developing crisis pitting his supporters against reformist Prime Minister Ettienne Tshisekedi. (355)

“The time has come to seek together the ways and means to achieve a much desired national reconciliation,” Mobutu said in a statement read on radio and television.

Tshisekedi has been given the task of guiding Zaire to multiparty democracy but, in a challenge to his authority, troops under Mobutu’s command briefly surrounded parliament on Monday to protect a rebel session of Zaire’s national assembly.

The assembly, dissolved six weeks ago by a national pro-democracy conference, wanted to reconvene to debate a new constitution, a task the conference is supposed to perform. Western allies Belgium and France have expressed concern about rising tension in the central African state. — Sapa-Reuters.
Zaire - 31/10 - 4/11 1977

IT IS ON-AGAIN, off-again for the face-off between Zaire's new Prime Minister, Mr Etienne Tshisekedi, and the entrenched President Mobutu Sese Seko.

After sending troops to surround the central bank in the capital, Kinshasa — a move to thwart Tshisekedi's attempt to replace the bank chief, a Mobutu loyalist — Mobutu issued a call for "national reconciliation" earlier this month.

The president dispatched the soldiers after Tshisekedi charged the bank's governor with responsibility for the
disappearance of $5 million (about R14 million) from the national treasury during the last week of September.

Foreign donors have said they will not resume any aid flows to Zaire until they are assured that Mobutu’s access to the national funds has been blocked.

The 62-year-old leader is believed to have diverted millions — perhaps billions — of dollars for his personal use and to reward loyalists.
Zaire, SA aiding Unita

THE ANGOLAN government yesterday demanded that Unita disarm immediately to avert a resumption of full-scale civil war and accused Zaire and South Africa of aiding the rebels.

The ruling MPLA said in a statement marking the 17th anniversary of Angola's independence, that Unita was plunging the country back into devastation. "Unita must immediately desist from all its military movements and be disarmed."

It said a new government must be formed on the basis of the September election results which Unita leader Jonas Savimbi had rejected as fraudulent.
500 Zaireans flee

KAMPALA - Nearly 500 Zaireans have crossed into western Uganda to escape government soldiers in the eastern district of Benti, a senior United Nations official said yesterday.

Ahmed Farah, Kampala representative of the UN High Commission for Refugees 26/11/92

Refugees, said the refugees had arrived at the remote Ugandan border town of Bundibugyo. The refugees were quoted as saying Zairean government troops had opened fire on civilians in a new wave of violence sweeping the country. Uganda is already home to about 5,000 Zairean refugees.
Shock diamond smuggling report

KINSHASA — A confidential report prepared for Zaire's government costs diamond smuggling with official complicity at more than $200m a year, say well-informed sources.

The sources said the report, which details names, places, dates and the different channels used for the illegal traffic, would be published soon.

"Official" diamond exports are valued at some $100m a year, while production is worth four times that, the report says. The estimated 1992 budget of the central African country is some $850m.

Most of the authorised diamond houses were involved in the smuggling, the sources said. Implicated by the report are the Lebanese and Pakistanis who run Zaire's diamond trade, as well as justice officials, senior military officers, the civil guard and customs staff. The transitional government is headed by Etienne Tshisekedi, named by Zaire's pro-democracy national conference.

On September 25, the government ordered the closure of two diamond houses accused of carrying out fraudulent operations with the help of staff at the Bank of Zaire. — Sapa-AFP.
Zaire, soon a second Somalia?

US warns world community to act before it is too late, reports Colin Legum

OPINION
Mobutu under fire

BRUSSELS - Belgium joined the United States in strongly condemning President Mobutu Sese Seko's reluctance to transfer authority to Zaire's transitional government. 

Sapa-Reuter and Sapa-AFP (35%)
'Confiscate Mobutu's properties'

STRASBOURG — The European parliament demanded yesterday that Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko's properties in Belgium and France, and those of his family, be confiscated.

This "measure of conservation" would be taken pending information to be included in reports on misappropriation of public funds and elimination of political opponents in Zaire.

The EC deputies also invited the European Commission, governments of EC member states and the United States to take all appropriate measures to isolate Mobutu and his military, political and diplomatic support.

The request was particularly directed to France and Belgium, which have both funded Zaire, a former Belgian colony.

The EC parliament said it considered that Mobutu's recent attitude had created a risk of engendering civil war in his country.

The EC move follows a declaration in early December supporting beleaguered Zairean Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi, who was locked in a power struggle with Mobutu before the president sacked him.

Mobutu accused the United States, France and Belgium of interfering in his country's domestic affairs.

He said they did not have a mandate from the UN or OAU organisation of African Unity. — Sapa-AFP.
Famine after floods

NAIROBI - Up to 180,000 people in north-east Kenya are in urgent need of food supplies because floods have cut roads there.

Kenya radio yesterday quoted the District Commissioner at Garissa as appealing for an airlift to move food to areas cut off after several weeks of heavy rain.

The local famine relief committee estimated that 180,000 people were at risk as it was not possible to transport food supplies to feeding centres.

The radio said the Kenyan army was being asked to organise an airlift.

RPP rules Djibouti

DJIBOUTI - The ruling party of President Hassan Gouled Apildon swept to victory in Djibouti's first multiparty election. Results of Friday's parliamentary election in the small Red Sea state showed the People's Rally for Progress (RPP) won nearly 75 percent of the vote.

Mobutu riots toll

KINSHASA - Authorities in Kinshasa said three people died in a day and night of street protests against President Mobutu Sese Seko in the Zairean capital. The Zairean Human Rights League said five people were killed while an opposition newspaper reported eight deaths.

Gaddafi's forecast

NICOSIA - Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi said North Africa was doomed and its people must eventually move to other Arab countries or at least acquire water from their neighbours.

Traore case break

BAMAKO - A Malian court trying ex-president Moussa Traore for "blood crimes" has adjourned the case until January 4.

Lawyers said defendants needed a rest over the holidays.

MPLA troops on alert

LUANDA - Angolan government troops were put on general alert last Saturday and ordered to respond with full military force as Unita rebel troops were reported advancing on the central region.

Rebel forces were building up around Malange, a provincial capital 350km east of Luanda, and Cuito, 300km further south, Angolan state radio reported.

Military spokesman General Higino Carneiro said: "Regional commanders have been ordered to respond aggressively to any offensive military manoeuvre by Unita."

The military alert came as US Assistant Secretary of State Mr Jeffrey Davidow began a second day of shuttle negotiations between the government and rebel leaders, trying to resolve the crisis that has pushed Angola to the brink of civil war.

Government and rebel troops have been at an armed impasse since Unita leader Mr Jonas Savimbi accused the government of rigging multiparty elections in September. - Sapa-AP.
Zairean troops mutiny

TROOPS mutinied in the central Zaire town of Kisangani, arresting the regional governor and going on a looting spree; military sources and residents said yesterday. Residents arriving in Kisangana said soldiers from the Chinese-trained 41st Brigade started systematically stripping the town, 1200km northeast of the capital, on Sunday night.
Mutinous soldiers loot officers’ homes in Zaire

KINSHASA (Zaire).—Mutinous soldiers in the northern city of Kisangani, angry over not receiving pay, looted the homes of officers.

The unpaid soldiers mutinied on Monday in Kisangani, about 1,290 km northeast of the capital Kinshasa, when they didn’t receive wages due to them on Sunday.

They also looted the homes of civilians and stores in Kisangani, a decaying city of 346,000 on the Congo River.

It was unclear if there were any casualties or if the soldiers would be punished.

“The situation is on its way back to normal,” said Tele-Zaire, citing the defence minister. That report was not independently confirmed.

Unpaid soldiers in September and October last year went on a looting spree throughout the country, causing hundreds of millions of dollars in damage and forcing the evacuation of 15,000 foreigners. At least 100 people died in the melee.

Soldiers in Zaire’s regular army are poorly paid and often go for months without receiving their wages.

Many live in tenement-style military homes in the capital with their families.

Troops from the Special Presidential Division and the Civil Guard are better paid, better armed and are more loyal to President Mobutu.

The army command recently warned soldiers against fraternising with Zaire’s politicians, fearing opposition leaders will win their loyalty so they can lead a popular uprising against President Mobutu.

Most of Zaire’s troubles have been centered in Kinshasa as opposition leaders try to pressure long-time authoritarian President Mobutu Sese Seko to abide by a two-year-old promise to relinquish power to a democratically elected government.

But he has indicated no intention of relinquishing power. — Sapa-AP.
UGANDA: Inhabitants Fleeing into Zaireans Live in East Zaire: 14 Home, 5000 Malawians and 30,000 Refugees Reported in Eastern Zaire

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Wednesday December 23, 1992 SOWATAN
ZAIRE - GENERAL

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By CRIP WOULDER LAMAN
Orphans of Zaire's Cleansing Process
Zaireans put Jo'burg back on world map

Proof that South Africa is once again part of the African continent can be found in the number of Zaireans flocking to Johannesburg, reports Justin Pearce:

Deeper in the underground shopping centre in Hillbrow, a vociferous argument is going on — in French.

The angry voices are echoing out of a tiny shop, where the woman behind the counter is debating a point with a visitor.

The argument continues at full throttle as a customer walks in to browse around the richly-coloured printed fabrics. The cloth, some of it priced at R100 for two metres, has been brought by the shopkeepers from their homeland, Zaire.

The sound of French voices on the streets of central Johannesburg is becoming more and more common as Zaireans flock to the city to escape from political instability at home — make some money.

The irony in seeking political stability in a country like South Africa is not apparent to the new immigrants. However bad things may be here, they are much worse in Zaire.

There has been no census of the Zairean community in Johannesburg, but they are estimated to number several thousand.

Bertim Shamamba came to complete his masters degree in mathematics at the University of the Witwatersrand after President Mobuto Sese Seku closed the university where Bertim had been studying in Zaire.

Moreover, the Zaireans seem isolated from the realities of life as they are experienced by most black South Africans.

Bertim and his brother Philipe have never been to Soweto. Like most of their compatriots in Johannesburg, the Shamamba brothers live in the inner-city flatland of Hillbrow and Berea, where the Group Areas Act is already a distant memory.

They say they have made contact with black and white South Africans, and have not encountered any racism. Nevertheless, the Zairean community remains a close one, linguistically isolated from the rest of Johannesburg life. Newcomers fresh off the plane from Kinshasa can find a home and support from other Zaireans until they have established themselves and learned some English.

The brothers agree that they are better off in South Africa than in Zaire. They make about R200 a day at their stall in the flea market outside the Market Theatre. Their wares include masks, musical instruments, traditional weapons (not the Inkatha variety), and wooden carvings. Most prices are in the region of R70.

Philipe says most of the articles are between 40 and 100 years old. Boldly carved and unpolished, the wooden items are continents away from the glossy curios normally sold in souvenir shops. More ornamental are the knives which look as if they once had a ceremonial function, the blades delicately engraved and the handles decorated with animal fur.

Philipe, who hopes to enrol at Wits to study business management, imports the goods himself, buying them in the villages of Zaire and bringing them by air to Johannesburg.

South Africa's borders and laws were once this continent's own iron curtain. Now the activities of the Zairean traders are one way in which Johannesburg is slowly establishing itself as a city of international significance. In this sense at least, Africa has come back.
Doctors working in Kinshasa say they counted at least 50 bodies, of civilians, soldiers and foreigners, at hospitals in the power-struggle between soldiers loyal to President Mobutu and pro-democracy troops.

PARIS. — Three hundred French and Belgian paratroops are ready to aid a mass exodus of 5,000 whites from Kinshasa, following 48 hours of rioting by mutinous black soldiers.

From Abidjan, Ivory Coast, it is reported that rampaging troops have killed the French ambassador in a machine-gun attack on the French Embassy.

At least 50 people have been killed, including at least seven foreigners, according to doctors, diplomats and businessmen. A businessman who requested anonymity said that soldiers warned residents to stay off the streets after 8pm, claiming a curfew had been ordered and violators would be shot.

A small contingent of French troops arrived by late afternoon and the gunfire had died down, the businessman said in a telephone interview.

Looting troops clashed with presidential guards trying to restore order. Belgium said the fighting had evolved into a power-struggle between soldiers loyal to President Mobutu and E.L.C. officers and troops backing a pro-democracy movement.

"It seems we are heading for a new confrontation within the army," said Foreign Minister Willy Claes of Belgium, the former coloniser of Zaire.

Soldiers revolted on Thursday when they were paid in the 30,000 zaire notes President Mobutu began printing recently.

The money symbolises President Mobutu's refusal to surrender power to the transitional government headed by his arch-enemy, Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi. Mr Tshisekedi has urged people to refuse to accept the money, saying it is worthless.

Western donors have supported Mr Tshisekedi, bluntly telling President Mobutu to stop robbing the treasury and saying aid will not be resumed until he hands power to the transitional government. Aid was cut after troops rioted throughout Zaire in September 1991, forcing the evacuation of more than 20,000 foreign nationals and virtually shutting down the official economy.

More than 100 people died in the 1991 unrest, but no foreigners.

Yesterday doctors from the Belgian branch of Doctors Without Borders working in Kinshasa said they counted at least 50 bodies, of civilians, soldiers and foreigners, at the capital's main hospitals. Their report was passed to reporters by spokesman Gerda Dossier.

Ms Dossier said three of the dead at Galiema hospital were foreigners. She had no details, but other sources in Kinshasa said they knew of seven foreigners killed, including two Frenchmen, two Lebanese, two Belgians and an Italian.

Ambassador Philippe Bernard was hit twice in the stomach when he rushed to his office window during an attack on the embassy on Thursday. He died in "a burst of automatic gunfire" directed at the embassy, French Defence Minister Pierre Joxe said.

Terrified civilians stayed at home while wealthy Zaireans were trying to flee the country on private planes and across the Zaire River to Congo.

The poorly-armed mutineers were no match for forces loyal to President Mobutu.

The army's Kokolo camp in Kinshasa, where the infantry-led mutiny began, was completely encircled by loyal troops, as was the office of Mr Tshisekedi.

No word has been heard from Mr Tshisekedi or his key ministers since the fighting started.

President Mobutu was out of harm's way in his inland palace at Gbadolite, more than 1,600km from Kinshasa, presidential sources said.

The South African Department of Foreign Affairs has warned travellers to stay clear of Zaire following the outbreak of violence.

Sapa-Reuter/AFP.
Foreigners killed in Zaire riots

KINSHASA. — Rioting Zairean troops have killed and wounded foreign nationals — including the French ambassador.

As the riots continued into their second day yesterday, Belgium and France sent troops to protect their citizens in the capital, where 45 people have been killed.

About 10 French marines crossed the Zaire river to Kinshasa from Brazzaville in the Congo hours after Belgian Prime Minister Mr Jean-Luc Dehaene announced that Brussels would fly in troops to evacuate its nationals.

The medical aid organisation Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF, Doctors Without Borders) said its staff had counted 45 dead and 131 wounded in five Kinshasa hospitals.

Earlier the MSF team reported "numerous bodies" lying in streets of the capital, while diplomats said the situation remained "very tense".

Radio Zaire said yesterday Kinshasa was "being laid waste" with "looting everywhere and occasional deaths".

The shooting erupted on Thursday but had abated in the city centre by midday yesterday after troops loyal to President Mobutu Sese Seko gained the upper hand, leaving the mutineers running amok in the eastern industrial suburbs.

However, shots rang out again in the city centre about 3pm.

French Defence Minister Mr Pierre Joxe said in Paris that ambassador Mr Phillippe Bernard, 61, had been killed in his office by a spray of automatic fire.

A Zairean staff member also died in the shooting at the embassy.

A French national working at the Uteko textile factory compound was shot dead by mutineers who demanded money and threatened to loot the premises, said a witness.

A long-time Italian resident, Mr Albert Maelle, was also killed. — Sapa-AFP
France, Belgium step in

ABIDJAN (Ivory Coast) — Belgium and France sent troops yesterday to protect their citizens in Kinshasa, Zaire, from rampaging troops who killed the French ambassador in a machine-gun attack on the French Embassy.

At least 45 people have been killed, including at least seven foreigners, according to doctors, diplomats and businessmen. Soldiers warned residents to stay off the streets after 8 pm, claiming a curfew had been ordered and violaters would be shot, said a businessman who requested anonymity.

A small contingent of French troops arrived late afternoon, and the gunfire had died down, the businessman said in a telephone interview.

Looting troops clashed with presidential guards trying to restore order. Belgium said the fighting had evolved into a power struggle between soldiers loyal to President Mobutu Sese Seko and troops backing a pro-democracy movement.

"It seems we are heading into a new confrontation within the army," Mr. Foreign Minister Willy Claes of Belgium, the former colonizer of Zaire.

Soldiers revolted on Thursday when they were paid the 5 million zaire notes Mobutu began printing recently. The money symbolizes Mobutu's refusal to surrender power to the transitional government headed by his arch-enemy, Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi.

Tshisekedi has urged people to refuse to accept the money, saying it is worthless. Western donors have supported Tshisekedi.

Yesterday doctors from the Belgian branch of Doctors Without Borders working in Kinshasa said they counted at least 45 bodies of civilians, soldiers and foreigners at the capital's main hospitals.

The team was not able to assess how many bodies were on the streets because it was still not safe to drive around. They also counted 130 wounded in the capital's five main hospitals.

Three of the dead at Galissima hospital were foreigners. Other sources in Kinshasa said they knew of seven foreigners who were killed, including two Frenchmen, two Lebanese, two Belgians and an Italian.

Ambassador Philippe Bernard was hit twice in the stomach when he rushed to his office window during an attack on the embassy on Thursday. He died in a burst of automatic gunfire.

Third of the dead at Galissima hospital were foreigners. Other sources in Kinshasa said they knew of seven foreigners who were killed, including two Frenchmen, two Lebanese, two Belgians and an Italian.

Another Frenchman was shot by troops ransacking the textile factory where he worked, an Italian by soldiers looting his home.

France sent 150 marines to Brazzaville, a 15-minute ferry ride across the Congo River from Kinshasa, and diplomats said more were on the way.

Belgium announced it was also sending troops, who would cross the river to Kinshasa and evacuate its 1500 nationals in Kinshasa.

Hundreds of foreigners sought refuge in embassy compounds and the Intercontinental Hotel in the residential area most diplomats live in.

Most Americans in Kinshasa were bunkered down in their homes, a diplomat reached by telephone said.

Belgian troops stationed in Kinshasa evacuated dozens of nationals to their embassy.

Belgium emphasized that its troops were not interfering in Zaire's internal affairs, and would concern themselves only with an evacuation.

Claez said there would be no military intervention to "put things right" in the nation of 34 million people.

It is reported from Pretoria that South Africa's Department of Foreign Affairs has warned travellers to stay clear of Zaire following the renewed outbreak of violence there. The department said in a statement the situation in Zaire and especially its capital, Kinshasa, was unsafe and visits to the area were "not advisable" until the situation became clearer. — Own Correspondent, Sapa-AP.

Second day of rioting by mutinous Zairean soldiers.
NEWS IN BRIEF

Belgians evacuated from Zaire

BRAZZAVILLE — Up to 300 foreigners who escaped from riots which began on Thursday in the Zaïrean capital Kinshasa were on their way to Europe yesterday in a Belgian evacuation.

The 300 expatriates, mostly Belgian, were ferried across the Congo River from Kinshasa on Saturday in President Mobutu Sese Seko's personal luxury riverboat after Belgian troops had earlier arrived in Congo, saying they were prepared to rescue citizens from the looting and rioting in Kinshasa.
Mobutu, Belgium in war of nerves

KINSHASA — Zaire’s strongman president, Mobutu Sese Seko, was engaged in a war of nerves with Belgium today about troops sent to neighbouring Congo to evacuate foreigners from Kinshasa.

Mobutu’s military chiefs, in a clear warning to Belgian troops — 400 arrived on Saturday and another 200 are said to be on the way — not to risk a landing from across the Congo river in Brazzaville, yesterday declared the riverside area of Kinshasa an “operational zone”.

Diplomatic sources said they thought a flare-up of gunfire on Saturday night was sabre-rattling by troops of Mobutu’s elite Special Presidential Division (DSP), who crushed two days of bloody riots last week by mutinous soldiers and civilians.

But Belgian Defence Minister Leo Delcroix said Brussels was willing to use military force if necessary to pull out Belgians.

“If there are difficulties with one of our compatriots we will do the necessary,” he warned.

No Belgians have been reported among the at least 65 people killed in the riots but some have been wounded.

A night-time curfew was in force in Kinshasa. Sporadic shooting was heard last night.

Eighty French paratroops crossed the river yesterday to guard the French embassy. — Sapa-Reuter.
Zaire toll tops 1,000

KINSHASA—At least 1,000 people have been killed in riots in Zaire's capital, Kinshasa, said the transitional government today.

"The estimates we've received allow us to state that there have been at least 1,000 dead," Jean-Joseph Mukendi, a close aide of Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi, told reporters.

Aid workers have confirmed at least 65 deaths since Thursday, when mutinous soldiers started an orgy of looting and killing.

Belgian Foreign Minister Willy Claes said yesterday that at least 300 people had been killed.

Belgium evacuated 400 frightened foreigners by boat to neighbouring Congo yesterday. More than 1,000 foreigners have left Zaire in Belgium, French and other operations since the riots began.

Mukendi, speaking for Tshisekedi's government, said most of the dead were soldiers mowed down as elite troops loyal to President Mobutu Sese Seko moved in to crush the revolt.

"There are lots of soldiers missing at roll call," he said.

Many were killed in reprisals and the bloodshed was continuing, he added.

Mobutu and Tshisekedi are locked in a power struggle over multiparty reforms which would end the president's 28-year grip on power.

Violence has mounted in the past 18 months due to political conflict and the near total collapse of Zaire's economy since riots in late 1991.

In a statement read on state television last night, Mobutu blamed Tshisekedi for the riots and implied he was guilty of treason.

The soldiers ran amok when they were unable to spend wages paid in new five-million Zaire banknotes, which are boycotted by opposition supporters.

Tshisekedi, elected last August by a pro-democracy conference, has declared the notes are inflationary and not legal tender.

Mobutu said in a statement: "Anyone who deliberately whips up mistrust of his country's currency, or discourages investors, or encourages disturbances, is guilty of high treason."

The president said Tshisekedi's supporters had intimidated traders into refusing the notes — Zaire's highest denomination, but worth less than 50.

Sporadic shooting could be heard in Kinshasa for the fifth night, although the city was quiet during yesterday's daylight hours.

An informal curfew keeps residents behind closed doors after dark.

Many have lost everything they own in the rioting and looting. — Sapa-Reuters.
Meetings banned in Kinshasa

KINSHASA. — The governor of Zaire's tense capital banned all political meetings and public gatherings yesterday after riots in which at least 63 people died.

Kinshasa appeared quiet but bursts of rifle fire and the dull boom of heavier weapons were heard throughout Sunday night across the sprawling city of three million people.

An orgy of bloody looting exploded last Thursday, led by soldiers angry at being paid in new banknotes made worthless by an opposition boycott. President Mobutu Sese Seko's elite DSR presidential guard mowed down rioters in the streets to restore tenuous order after 48 hours, but tension remains very high.

Mr Mobutu is locked in a power struggle with the opposition.

At least 400 Belgian paratroops have arrived in the Congolese capital Brazzaville, just across the river from Kinshasa, hoping to evacuate Belgian nationals, but Mr Mobutu has denied them permission to enter Zaire. Several dozen French troops are already in Kinshasa to protect French citizens, with Mr Mobutu's blessing. — Sapa-Reuters, Telegraph
Zaire calm shattered by gunfire

KINSHASA — Heavy shooting has again broken out in Zaire's capital, just as life appeared to be returning to normal after riots that cost at least 80 lives.

Rifle fire erupted from several parts of the sprawling city on the Congo last night.

It was punctuated by the deeper sound of machineguns. Glowing red tracer bullets streaked across the night sky like fireworks.

Much of the firing appeared to come from the Kokolo barracks, south-west of the city centre.

It houses soldiers who ran amok in the capital last Thursday and Friday, looting homes, shops and warehouses after being paid in banknotes they said were worthless.

The DSP, elite troops loyal to President Mobutu Sese Seko, crushed last week's riots mercilessly, leaving bodies littering the streets, and diplomats said they had carried out reprisal killings since then.

Mr. Jean-Joseph Mukanzi, a close aide of Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi, said yesterday that at least 1,000 people had been killed, most of them soldiers. The French ambassador was killed last week.

The transition government, which opposes Mr. Mobutu, has virtually collapsed and Mr. Tshisekedi has gone into hiding.

The Paris daily Libération reported from Kinshasa today that the son of Mr. Frederic Maliba, chairman of the Union Saorée, the main opposition group, was killed and two other sons seriously wounded when their home was hit by a bazooka rocket fired by the DSP.

President Mobutu is at his palace at Gédolite, 2,000 km from Kinshasa.

The Paris daily, Figaro, reported that a young woman with two small children who arrived from the Congo yesterday said: "We lost everything in riots two years ago and fled the country, but returned and rebuilt our lives.

"But on Friday our villa was looted six times, when soldiers took everything, including our wedding rings. Nothing was left, and then they burned down the villa."

Other refugees arriving in Paris told similar stories of terror and looting. — The Argus Foreign Service and Sapa-Reuter.
Zaire's interim govt in appeal for help

KINSHASA — Zaire's transitional government has appealed for military intervention by Belgium, the US and France to restore "order and security", claiming rioting by army troops left more than 1,000 dead.

An official of the government of Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi, which was sacked in December by President Mobutu Sese Seko but has refused to step down, phoned the appeal to foreign journalists late on Monday. The plea was signed by transitional-government Foreign Minister Pierre Lumbi.

The figure of 1,000 deaths was much greater than the 500 victims reported by the Zairean Human Rights League or the 300 or more dead reported by Belgian Foreign Minister Willy Claes in Brussels.

The transitional government also rejected responsibility for the riots, saying the Mobutu regime was "solely to blame."

Earlier, a spokesman for Mobutu, who has ruled mineral-rich Zaire with an iron hand for 27 years, blamed the Tshisekedi government for the outbreak of the riots, which started when the regime paid soldiers in new banknotes that traders refused to accept.

The trouble sparked an exodus of foreigners.

The country's high council, one of the transitional political bodies, reportedly tried in vain to meet on Sunday and again on Monday. Some sources said it was unable to draw a quorum, though others said the military had blocked it from meeting.

The council's head, Laurent Mosengwo, went on radio yesterday to appeal for calm and urged the military and the politicians not to make the situation worse.

Claes said that according to the Belgian embassy in Kinshasa no one was in charge in Zaire, though the capital's streets were under military order.

Although signs of life returned to Kinshasa's administrative district yester-
I say blood on guard's clothes.

New battles Shatter Zaire

KINSHASA – Henry

NEWS
Zairean mutineers hold out in barracks

KINSHASA — Heavy gunfire shook central Kinshasa yesterday in fighting that was believed to have pitted President Mobutu Sese Seko's elite guard against mutinous troops who are holed up in barracks.

After the violence, some shops and stores opened and minibuses and taxis began to ply routes in working-class districts, but the main state-owned bus service was not running.

Transport stopped at the barricades erected around the "high security" zone that presidential guards have established in the city centre after at least 300 people died in days of rioting.

Some sources said the shooting around the Camp Kokolo barracks, which broke out overnight on Tuesday and lasted into the early hours of yesterday, came as the elite special presidential division sought to have mutinous soldiers lay down their arms, but others said rioting troops were still at large.

Military chiefs refused to comment on the clashes, but it was clear the guard unit did not yet have the situation under control.

An hour of shooting, which was accompanied by the firing of flares, died down around 10.45pm, but automatic weapons fire was heard again around 2am.

Meanwhile an authoritative source said Archbishop Laurent Mosengwo, head of a High Council of the Republic first set up in 1991 to bring in multiparty democracy, said Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi had kept the council "informed of his steps to reshuffle his government."

Mobutu last month sacked the cabinet headed by Tshisekedi, his arch-rival, telling the premier to form a new government of "broad national union." Tshisekedi refused to comply, but received an ultimatum from the high council to present a new team. The country has been without a government for two months.

Zaire is currently run by a "college" of senior civil servants in the different ministries.

Political circles said yesterday that difficult bargaining was under way between the president, the prime minister and the High Council and no new government was likely to emerge for several days. Tshisekedi would have to include Mobutu supporters in his team after troops loyal to the president restored order in Kinshasa, the sources said.

The city descended into anarchy when regular soldiers mutinied on January 28 after they were paid in new banknotes that Tshisekedi declared not to be legal tender, making traders reject them.

Belgium yesterday grounded a chartered Liberian World Airlines DC-9 that had been due to fly tons of the controversial new banknotes from Ostend to Zaire, diplomatic sources said. — Sapa-AFP.

Zambia wants investment

LUSAKA — Finance Minister Emmanuel Kasonde is expected to announce an austerity budget tomorrow, cutting government spending to the bone in a bid to curb inflation.

The inflation rate, currently 200% a year, is thought to be peaking.

Zambia is trying to lure foreign investors to revitalize its moribund economy, offering its copper riches as the main attraction.

President Frederick Chiluba has in his 14 months in office begun dismantling 27 years of state control of the economy. 8/10/93

He has liberalized foreign exchange controls, ended food subsidies and launched a programme of selling off state-owned companies. 4/21/93

Chief among them is Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines Ltd (ZCCM).

Revitalising ZCCM, where productivity has suffered under state management, is the single biggest step Zambia can take towards easing its foreign exchange shortage.

The shortage, along with burgeoning money supply, has stoked inflation. Sapa-Reuters.
Death toll mounts in Zaire

KINSHASA (Zaire). - The death toll is mounting in fierce fighting between President Mobutu, Sese Seko's rival, and his presidential guards and mutineering soldiers.

A European diplomat said fighting at the airport was followed by more violence when rebellious soldiers tried to storm the broadcasting centre in Kinshasa and were repelled by presidential guards.

Opponents of Mr. Mobutu said that fighting had claimed the lives of at least 1,000 people, mainly regular army troops, since soldiers rioted last week.

The unrest was sparked when soldiers, at the behest of Mr. Mobutu's main rival, Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi, refused to be paid in new 5-million Zaire notes which they said were worthless and which shopkeepers would not accept.

Mr. Tshisekedi, head of the transitional, pro-democracy government forced on Zaire by Western nations, said the new currency would feed hyperinflation. The matter has become a power struggle between pro-Mobutu troops and soldiers supporting Zaire's democracy movement. — Sapa-AP.
Zaire clashes ease, but crisis continues

KINSHASA — Zaire’s latest outburst of killing and looting appears to have eased, but there seems no easy end to the central African country’s grave political crisis.

Kinshasa was mainly calm yesterday after a fresh surge of shooting on Tuesday night — apparently a mixture of looting and clashes between rival groups of soldiers and intimidatory firing into the air.

The capital is creeping back to what passes for normal life in this unstable and impoverished country after riots started last Thursday, when soldiers angry at being paid in controversial new banknotes ran amok in an orgy of looting.

Death toll estimates range from at least 50 to more than 1,000 but most analysts say several hundred were killed, mostly soldiers mown down by elite troops loyal to President Mobutu Sese Seko.

Medical and diplomatic sources said soldiers shot dead three market traders when they refused to take new notes.

Many residents fear there will be more violence as Mobutu and reformist Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi remain locked in a struggle over political changes threatening the president’s 32-year grip on power.

Tshisekedi, one of Mobutu’s longest-standing enemies, was elected by a pro-democracy conference last August.

Mobutu previously named him premier in late 1991 but dismissed him within a week because he refused to swear an oath of allegiance.

The Speaker of the parliament, Archbishop Monsengwo Pasinya, said yesterday he would press on with his mediating role, although many analysts say there is now too much bad blood between the two adversaries for any real compromise.

“We need a real government as soon as possible, which can provide all the means to end this situation and take charge of administering the state,” he told reporters. “They (Mobutu and Tshisekedi) have to cohabit. We need dialogue.”

The envoys of the United States, France and former colonial power Belgium told Mobutu yesterday the only way to end the crisis was to invest full power in Tshisekedi.

The three countries have cut all but humanitarian aid to Zaire in protest at Mobutu’s human rights record and foot-dragging over reforms.

As Zaire drifts without a clear central authority, the economy plunges deeper into decay and hungry citizens grow increasingly desperate.

Many look to foreign powers for help, including military intervention. The arrival of 600 Belgian paratroops in neighbouring Congo, to help evacuate foreigners fleeing the riots, sent shivers of expectancy through the city. — Sapa-Reuters.
Pressure mounting on Mobutu
INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Mobutu’s men repel attack by rebel soldiers

Sowetan 5/2/93

KINSHASA - Presidential guards at the state broadcasting centre repulsed an attack by rebel soldiers late on Wednesday, hours after fighting at the airport had claimed the lives of 45 people.

Opponents of President Mobutu Sese Seko said fighting had claimed the lives of at least 1,000 people, mainly regular army troops, since soldiers rioted last week.

The unrest was sparked when soldiers, at the behest of Mobutu’s main rival, Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi, refused to be paid in new 5 million Zaire notes - currency shopkeepers would not accept.

Tshisekedi, head of the transitional, pro-democracy government forced on Zaire by Western donors, said the new currency would escalate inflation.

The matter has become a power struggle between pro-Mobutu troops and soldiers supporting Zaire’s democracy movement. Mobutu has called for a new government, fuelling opposition charges that he was plotting to use the unrest to unseat the transitional government.

His troops sealed off central Kinshasa and earlier reportedly attacked opposition party strongholds and army camps. Access to those sites was barred on Tuesday.

Mutineering soldiers battled Mobutu’s elite guard in the Matuto area near the airport and 45 people were killed. The rebellious soldiers also tried to storm the broadcasting centre but were driven back by troops loyal to Mobutu.

Looting has been reported by troops in eastern Zaire. Hundreds of peasants there have fled into neighbouring Uganda.

However, Belgium has announced that the situation had calmed down enough in its former colony to allow for the recall of most of the 550 paratroops sent to Brazzaville, the Congolese capital across the river from Kinshasa, to evacuate Belgians.

Zaire’s economy has been ravaged by corruption and mismanagement, and many blame Mobutu who has ruled this central African nation for 27 years. - Sapa-AP.
Allies plan ways to get Mobutu out

BRUSSELS — Senior US, French and Belgian officials met behind closed doors yesterday to decide how to put pressure on Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko to relinquish power to an interim government.

Diplomats said the meeting would discuss Zaire’s isolation if Mobutu continued clinging to power, as indicated by Belgian Foreign Minister Willy Claes recently to the European Parliament.

The meeting came after Zaire’s three main creditor nations strongly rebuked Mobutu after troops ran riot in Kinshasa, beginning a week of violence that left hundreds dead and forced more than 2,000 foreigners to flee.

But from his retreat at Ghadolite in northern Zaire, Mobutu lashed back at the three yesterday, saying Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi was the cause of the trouble.

“They want to condemn the fireman on behalf of the arsonist,” Mobutu said, in his first statement since the latest crisis.

He blamed the Belgian Socialist Party for backing Tshisekedi’s Union for Democracy and Social Progress.

The unusual lingers when troops were paid with a new banknote Mobutu ordered into circulation but which Tshisekedi rejected as not legal tender.

Traders refused to accept it and soldiers went on a looting spree.

The government said more than 1,000 people died.

“The special presidential division of elite troops cracked down ruthlessly on the militarists, rounding them up and sealing off the administrative part of Kinshasa.”

Mobutu accused Tshisekedi of endangering the internal security of the state by calling on people to turn down the five-million Zaire ($2) banknote and threatening external security by calling on foreign military forces.

The government had on February 1 called on Belgium, France and the US to send troops to restore order.

Yesterday’s talks were called by Belgium, Zaire’s former colonial power.

Chairing the talks was Wilfrid Joenen, head of the Africa desk in Belgium’s foreign ministry.

The American delegation was led by US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Herman Cohen.

France was represented by its top foreign ministry official for Africa, Jean de la Sabliere.

“We do not expect decisions. It is a brainstorming session. We will discuss the global situation — security, politics, everything — and our options for the future,” an informed diplomatic source said.

A message to Zaire said the crisis was caused by “a lack of co-operation by President Mobutu with the interim government and the non-transfer of powers to it.”

The three countries said they were concerned for the safety of their nationals.

Diplomats, who asked not to be named, said one option to put pressure on Mobutu could be blocking his assets abroad, estimated to be worth billions of dollars. Sapa-AFP.
'West must send troops to Zaire'**

KINSHASA — President Mobutu Sese Seko's main rival has come out of hiding to urge foreign military intervention, as Western pressure mounted for Mobutu to surrender his 27-year monopoly on power.

Senior officials from the United States, France and Belgium met yesterday in Brussels, Belgium, to consider ways to further isolate Mobuto economically and politically.

On Wednesday, the three nations demanded Mobutu transfer power to Etienne Tshisekedi, his arch-rival and head of a transitional government Mobuto was forced to accept under pressure from Western aid donors.

Mobutu called the officials yesterday by satellite phone from his remote ancestral home in Ghadolite to reject the latest Western demands.

Pressure has been building against Mobutu since last week, when rioting by troops over pay led to a outbreak of fighting with Mobutu's presidential guard. The unrest developed into a confrontation between forces loyal to Mobutu and pro-Tshisekedi troops. — Sapa-AFP.
Zaire - the rot spreads

LESS THAN two years after the terrible riots of September and October 1991 that devastated Zaire's larger cities, the army has once again marked the Mobutu regime's slow agony with its bloody signature. Looting and bursts of gunfire - which on January 25 cost the life of the French ambassador to Zaire, Philippe Bernard, 62, killed as he sat working at his desk in his fourth-floor office in Kinshasa - give a disastrous, but true idea of the degree of rot reached in this country which is 1½ times as large as France and has been deprived of any direction by the stupid obstinacy of its president, Mobutu Sese Seko.

This is a rerun of the violent mutinies that wrecked the towns of Kisangani, Goma, and Rolwezi last December, but this time it is happening in the very centre of the capital. The exasperation of the soldiers, who have not been properly paid for months, clearly shows the tragic helplessness of Etienne Tshisekedi's "transitional government". Since his nomination last August, the prime minister, who comes from the political opposition and therefore has good standing among ordinary people but is intensely disliked by the president, has been watching his authority being steadily eroded by the interventions of an army whose senior staff is still largely loyal to Mobutu.

Towards the year-end Mobutu announced that Tshisekedi's ministers had "resigned". Members of the High Council of the Republic (HCR), commissioned by the National Conference to keep a check on the president and the government, also bore the brunt of Mobutu's wrath. On December 14, elite troops of the special presidential division barred access to the People's Palace where the HCR was due to meet. The latter was quick to react.

Holding Mobutu responsible for "paralyzing institutions at every level" and accusing him of "high treason", the HCR instituted proceedings in the supreme court less than a fortnight ago with the object of having the head of state stripped of his authority. The current rioting in Kinshasa may not be unconnected with that decision.

With his financial clout severely curtailed, President Mobutu has for the past two years been reduced to the risky policy of printing more and more paper money. The days of runaway corruption in every sphere are over because there is no hard currency left. Isolated in his "empire", trapped in his own image, the man in the leopard skin cloak has only the abreda of an army to maintain himself at the head of a phantom state. Under attack from the world community, he would doubtless have stepped down long ago if a real alternative solution were available in Kinshasa.

(January 99)
Mobutu rival stands firm

KINSHASA: Zaire's Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi refused to step down yesterday as his stand-off with President Mobutu Sese Seko escalated.

"The higher interests of the country demand that I retain my post," he said. "Each day that goes by sees the misery of the Zairian people deepen. We must continue the pressure to bring Mobutu into the democratic process." The Zairean head of state called in a televised address to the nation on Friday for the High Council of the Republic to propose a new prime minister because of "the unfitness of Tshisekedi." 7/14/85 7/15/85

The address was a "diversionary tactic" by Mobutu, "who wants to divert attention from his isolation," Tshisekedi said. -- Foreign Desk
Lone Mobutu rejects pleas by ex-backers

KINSHASA - President Mobutu Sese Seko is refusing to hand over power but remains isolated in his ancestral village 10 days after a mutiny he says was fanned by the opposition.

While there is no sign that Mobutu's opponents have the muscle to overthrow him, his main rival remains free to hold news conferences denouncing him.

The former Cold Warrior has refused demands by his former Western allies that he step aside for his arch-enemy, Etienne Tshisekedi, prime minister of the transitional government pending elections.

A year ago Mobutu would have fired Tshisekedi, who was imprisoned for criticising him in past years.

This time Mobutu urged the transitional parliament to replace his rival, making the appeal in a speech recorded on Friday on his estate in Gbadolite, 1,200 kilometres north-east of Kinshasa.

Pressure Mobutu

Tshisekedi told Associated Press: "My government and I are still here and call on the Zairian people and the West to continue the pressure on Mobutu to put an end to this foolishness and to respect the will of the people."

The transitional parliament is unlikely to surrender to Mobutu's demand.

The president may be right that Tshisekedi encouraged the latest violence, which may have claimed 1,000 lives.

Military sources say that unlike riots in September 1991, when unpaid soldiers went on a rampage, regular army troops this time refused to be disarmed by Mobutu's presidential guard.

Again the riots started over the issue of pay. Soldiers refused to accept five million zaire notes Mobutu had printed in Europe. Tshisekedi said the money was worthless and most shopkeepers followed his call to refuse the bills.

By the weekend most businesses were taking the notes. With inflation at several thousand percent and a shortage of smaller bills, merchants said they had no other choice.

United States, French and Belgian diplomats met to discuss new ways to force Mobutu to resign. Some sources said seizure of Mobutu's cash and chateaux in Europe might be considered.

The president has reportedly taken special care to hide his accounts. — Sapa-AP.
Mobutu orders prime minister's prosecution

KINSHASA — President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire fired reformist prime minister Etienne Tshisekedi on Saturday and gave orders for him to be prosecuted on "state security" charges arising from recent rioting in the capital.

In a statement broadcast on television on Saturday the presidency said Mobutu had signed two decrees relieving Tshisekedi of his functions and charging the state prosecutor with the task of starting legal proceedings against him for "breach of state security".

A spokesman for the interim parliament — which will take charge of the government and ordering a "broadly representative national unity government" to be set up in its place.

Tshisekedi ignored the order, saying he was answerable only to the high council.

On Thursday, Mobutu said in an interview Tshisekedi was guilty of undermining "internal state security" by urging people to refuse a new five-million zaire banknote (worth $5) and of harming "external state security by calling on foreign troops for assistance".

A week ago, soldiers paid with 5000 000-zaire notes rioted in Kinshasa after merchants refused to accept the notes. Between 300 and 1000 people are estimated to have died in the spree of looting and violence.

The 5000 000-zaire banknote was issued in December by the Bank of Zaire whose governor, Nyembo Shabani, a Mobutu loyalist, refused to step down despite being suspended by Tshisekedi in October. Tshisekedi said the note would aggravate already skyrocketing inflation.

After the rising which erupted in Zaire on January 28, Belgium, France and the US, Zaire's main creditors, pressed Mobutu, who has ruled for nearly 30 years, to hand over power to an interim government led by Tshisekedi. Last Monday, Tshisekedi's government appealed to these three countries, who have strongly backed democratic reforms in Zaire, to intervene militarily to restore "order".

The high council will meet again tomorrow, when it will respond officially to Mobutu, its spokesperson said. — Sapa-AFP.
Party ending for 'mighty' Mobutu

WHEN Joseph Desire sought to Africanise his name in 1972 he wanted a moniker to suit his position as absolute ruler of Zaire. He chose Mobutu Sese Seko Koko N'ombu Waaza Banga.

It translates as 'the all-powerful warrior who, because of endurance and an inflexible will to win, will go from conquest to conquest leaving fire in his wake'. He often refers to himself more simply as Le Timonier, the helmsman, Le Redempteur, the redeemer, and Le Messiah, the Messiah.

His opponents, however, call him 'the human monster'.

No matter what he is called, President Mobutu is the undisputed strongman of Zaire, ruling the country for 27 years by decree, patronage and, when necessary, brutal repression.

He was born in 1930 to a mission cook and an escaped harem girl in the Belgian Congo province of EQUATORIEN.

Thrown out of a mission school for spraying a teacher with ink, he was recruited into the Force Publique, Belgium's colonial army, where he reached the highest permitted rank, senior sergeant.

In 1958, he joined the Congo Freedom Movement and launched his political career.

By 1960, he was the head of the army, a position from which he dismissed both the prime minister and president of the newly independent state.

There is increasing international pressure on the president of Zaire to retire. ROBERT BLOCK reports on the self-proclaimed 'Messiah'.

The West has often watched in amazement at the economic and political mismanagement that reduced Zaire to a wretched, grinding poverty. While his people clamour for bread, President Mobutu wastes mouthfuls of roasted quail back with Taittinger champagne. He has found many imaginative ways to spend the R15 billion he has salted away during his reign.

It is rumoured that every other week he flies his hairdresser from New York to Kinshasa to give him a trim. At one time or another he has owned 11 chateaux in Belgium, building on the Avenue Foch in Paris, a residence in Nice, a villa in Switzerland and a Spanish castle.

When not holed up in Gbadolite, the sleepy village of his birth which he has transformed into the "Versailles" of the jungle, he spends his time incommunicado, steam-boating up and down the Zaire River in a colonial riverboat.

President Mobutu was considered a bulwark against communism, and it suited Washington to turn a blind eye to his excesses.

But, sadly for Mobutu, these days may be over. With the end of the Cold War, the "all-powerful warrior" has outlasted his usefulness and the United States no longer appears willing to indulge him. — The Independent News Service.
SA diplomats' wives evacuated from Zaire

By Gerald L'Ange
Star Africa Service

South Africa's most embattled diplomatic mission, the liaison office in riot-plagued Kinshasa, is braced for more trouble as tensions remain high in the Zaïrean capital.

The wives of the diplomats manning the office have been evacuated as a precaution and only the head of the mission, Herman Hannekom, and another officer, Le Roux Geldenhuys, are holding the fort.

The women were escorted this week across the Zaïre River to Brazzaville in the Congo to await a flight out. The decision to evacuate them was taken after rioting had erupted again in Kinshasa earlier this month.

The South African diplomats and wives locked themselves in their homes when the rioting broke out on January 28.

The next day Hannekom hired an armed escort to bring the other members of the mission staff to his residence as troops loyal to President Mobutu Sese Seko battled dissident troops. The soldiers had gone on the rampage after being paid with new currency.
Troops keep parliament out of palace

KINSHASA - Troops dismissed him. He has widespread popular support and is backed from abroad, including the US, France and Belgium.

But Mobutu controls a vast fortune, key institutions like the central bank, and the loyalty of elite army units.

Strongman Mobutu “sacked” his arch-enemy Etienne Tshisekedi as premier at the weekend.

The reason for the blockade by scores of soldiers was unclear.

Mobutu had accused Tshisekedi of failing to broaden his cabinet and destabilizing the country in the weeks before the collapse of his government.

He told the legislature to nominate another premier or he would “take matters into his own hands”.

Tshisekedi, elected in August by a national pro-democracy conference, says Mobutu has no right to
Mobutu's order rejected

KINSHASA — Zaire's interim parliament yesterday rejected an order by President Mobutu Sese Seko for Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi to step down. Mobutu sacked Tshisekedi on Friday.
Mobutu signs treason trial order on sacked PM

President Mobutu Seke Seko of Zaire has signed an order ordering the dismissal and trial for treason of the transitional prime minister, Etienne Tshisekedi.

Earlier Mr Mobutu said he would sack Mr Tshisekedi for provoking soldiers to a murderous riot through Kinshasa by his declaration that high denomination bank notes used to pay them were invalid.

Mr Tshisekedi, however, repeated his refusal to accept that President Mobutu has the authority to dismiss the country’s prime minister. He again called for greater foreign efforts to depose Mr Mobutu and foreign troops to guarantee the continuation of democratic reforms.

Last week the United States, Belgium, and France met to consider new ways to force Mr Mobutu to cede power, but focused on economic pressure.

The chairman of the opposition dominated interim parliament, Archbishop Laurent Monsengwo Pasinya, said he was trying to mediate between the rival leaders. Mr Mobutu could not simply be pushed aside.

"The recent events are very serious. We are in a very bad situation and we need as soon as possible a real government that can provide for the people," he said. "We are trying to get a meeting with Mr Mobutu. We have proposals to put to the prime minister and the president to end the crisis. They have to cohabit."

The archbishop said the confrontation between troops and Zaire’s rival leaders did not mark a collapse in the transition to democracy. Until 10 days ago Kinshasa had been free of riots, killing and looting for 18 months.

After the riots that left hundreds dead and many homes and businesses looted, Mr Tshisekedi said he would simply ignore President Mobutu. But with the security apparatus in the president’s hands, that will be difficult.

Mr Tshisekedi was appointed prime minister over Mr Mobutu’s objections in August. Before the president ordered his dismissal, the prime minister was already making clear Mr Mobutu would not be allowed to dictate to the government.

"He never named me so he can’t sack me," he said.

"If Mr Mobutu doesn’t want to involve himself in the process of transition to democracy, that process will still continue to the end, whatever the cost," the prime minister said.

At their joint meeting, America, France, and Belgium warned President Mobutu that he was bringing ruin on Zaire, and that there was no hope of recovery unless he stopped blocking reform and conceded control to Mr Tshisekedi’s rival administration, put in place by a national conference to oversee a democratic transition. President Mobutu’s allies dismissed the demands as interference.

Western options under discussion are to freeze President Mobutu’s huge overseas fortune, to recognise only decisions by the Tshisekedi arm of government, or to bring in the United Nations, on the grounds that it should help resolve the crisis before Zaire collapses into complete anarchy. The latter would almost certainly require a UN role.

The military option is bottom of the list, diplomats say. The 600 Belgian paratroops, a few hundred yards across the river from Kinshasa in the Congo, were sent to safeguard the evacuation of foreigners from Zaire.

Mr Tshisekedi’s request for troops might provide the basis for a legal intervention, but Belgian domestic politics probably precludes the use of force. The Belgian public, weary of their country’s seemingly interminable interference in Zaire, are thought unlikely to favour a long-term commitment.

By Chris McGreal in Kinshasa
Cobalt and Lightning

THE ZAIRE crisis is now the supreme irony of all African ironies. Three Western powers — the US, France, and Belgium — are putting the squeeze on President Mobutu to "stop obstructing democracy". They urge him to transfer powers to the transitional government of Prime Minister Tshisekedi, now formally sacked by the president, who wants him put on trial for treason. The Western action should nevertheless be the culmination of a sustained effort by the international community to remove a dictator whose affronts to human dignity fully match those of Saddam Hussein. The real motive is much more down to earth. After close on 30 years, the emperor has become expendable. The tyrant who only two years ago received a fulsome letter from President Bush thanking him for his support in the Gulf War is destined for the scrap heap of the cold war.

The reports from Brussels, as Mobutu's chief international backers schemed a strategy to overthrow him, were commendably free from new-world-order cant. Belgian Zaire specialists explained Mobutu had now become "internationally counter-productive". The issue was cobalt and other strategic metals, not a new constitution. Mobutu's financial greed and political folly were regarded as a serious threat to "already dwindling supplies of metals deemed crucial to Western strategic interests". The high-minded approach to international politics tends to slip closer to the Third World ground where the real struggles take place. If the word neo-colonialism may be allowed, it would fit perfectly here. The US, Belgium, and France are not just any old three Western powers. The first two backed Mobutu all the way as a base for the destabilisation of his neighbours. The third provided a useful refuge for ill-gotten funds and safe houses.

The Zairian opposition includes several figures who were previously involved with Mobutu. But it does offer some way forward in a changing African climate. Zaire has fallen further apart while Mobutu hung on. In March last year, the State Department African chief, Herman Cohen, still claimed that Mobutu was "enthusiastic for democracy". Belgian pressure and the renewed violence next door in Angola (with UNITA using ill-gotten diamonds to buy Zairian military support) have now brought Mr Cohen to Brussels. Perhaps Mr Clinton will find it easier to ditch a friend of George Bush. It is just a pity it is happening 28 years too late.
Two chiefs, but Mobutu's still boss
KINSHASA — Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko is likely to name a new prime minister within the next 48 hours in defiance of the interim parliament, a source said. The High Council of the Republic has rejected Mobutu's dismissal of reformist Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi.

*World news reports — Page 4*
Zaire army chief orders riot probe

KINSHASA. — Zaire's new army chief of staff has ordered a commission of inquiry into last month's rioting by mutinous soldiers.

General Eluki-Monga, appointed last Wednesday, said witnesses and victims should come forward to give evidence against soldiers who took part in the rampage of January 28 and 29 in which hundreds are thought to have been killed.

"This commission is charged with receiving all accusations, written or verbal, all information regarding members of the military who have committed theft, rape, murder or other acts," the state radio said last night.

It did not say what proceedings would be brought against suspects nor what action would be taken against those found guilty.

Zaireans and foreign residents were sceptical of the army's will or ability to clean itself up. — Sapa-Reuters.
Defiant Mobutu says he served Zaire well

NEW YORK - Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko said he had performed an enormous service for his people and would never leave power under pressure, Time magazine reports in its Monday issue.

"I have rendered my country and people an enormous service," Mobutu, 63, told Time magazine during an interview at his palace in his hometown of Gbadolite.

"They owe me everything!"

Asked, then, about holding elections, he said: "I plan to. I would win them. If I ever leave power it will be only in conditions of beauty, never under pressure."

He is surrounded at all times by heavily armed troops and has remained impervious to the growing clamour among 35-million Zaireans for an end to his autocratic rule, according to Time.

"If my people need me," Time quoted him as saying, "I can certainly remain in power for another five, 10 or even 20 years," said Mobutu, who has been president since 1965.

Asked about economic and diplomatic sanctions that have been threatened by the administration of US President Bill Clinton, he said "I am the latest victim of the Cold War, no longer needed by the US".

He was believed to hold a US$500 million personal fortune built on a network of private businesses, the pilfering of public resources and skimming foreign aid funds that had flowed into the country, Time said.

Yesterday, meanwhile, Zaire's interim parliament, locked in a power struggle with Mobutu, postponed a crucial meeting and political sources said its leaders were trying to avert a showdown with him.

Reformist Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi had been expected to present parliament, the High Council of the Republic (HCR), with a new government at the postponed meeting.

The new cabinet was intended to defuse the power struggle between the HCR and Mobutu over Tshisekedi, who has been fired by Mobuto but refuses to go. Tshisekedi has been urged to bring Mobutu supporters into his cabinet.

Soldiers guarding Tshisekedi's official residence were withdrawn overnight, in what appeared a move to reduce his official status and play on his nerves.

The HCR meeting was postponed for 48 hours as parliamentary leaders held talks on ways to avert a showdown. - Sapa-AP-Reuters.
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The new Cabinet was intended to defuse the power struggle between the HCR and Mobutu over Tshisekedi.

Political sources said it was to have gone some way to satisfying Mobutu's demand that his supporters be represented in a broad coalition government.

The HCR has rejected Mobutu's dismissal of Tshisekedi but urged the premier to compromise by bringing Mobutu supporters into his Cabinet.

But Mobutu said there could be no deals on the government while Tshisekedi was in office.

The source said Mobutu would go ahead and name a new prime minister unless the HCR did so.

Soldiers guarding Tshisekedi's residence were withdrawn overnight. — Sapa-Press
KINSHASA — Zaire's new army chief of staff has ordered a commission of inquiry into last month's rioting by mutinous soldiers.

General Eluki Monga, appointed last Wednesday, said witnesses and victims should come forward to give evidence against soldiers who took part in the rampage of January 28 and 29 in which hundreds are thought to have been killed....
Peacekeepers to hold Angola crisis summit

LISBON. — The troika of states guaranteeing the Angolan peace accords — Portugal, Russia and the United States — is to meet here on Tuesday to discuss the Angolan crisis.

"The observers will analyse the development of the situation in Angola and study the position they should take as part of their mission," a Foreign Affairs Ministry statement said.

The troika has extended until today the deadline issued to Unita last weekend to set a date for peace talks between itself and Luanda.

Patience with the rebel movement is wearing thin after Unita refused to accept the results of UN-monitored elections last September. — Sapa-AFP.

Zaire’s premier faces the sack

KINSHASA. — Zaire’s interim parliament resumes its search for a new government for the crisis-stricken country today amid reports that it could sack prime minister Etienne Tshisekedi.

The High Council of the Republic (HCR), the interim parliament created to smooth Zaire’s transition to democracy, met in plenary session yesterday but failed to agree a solution to the political crisis gripping the country.

No official statement was released but a source close to the HCR said there was growing support for moves to sack Mr Tshisekedi.

However, no decisions had been taken and intense horse-trading between the various factions within the HCR was continuing late last night said the source.

Earlier this month, 300 people died when troops mutinied over receiving wages in large denomination banknotes, part of a power struggle between President Mobutu Sese Seko and Mr Tshisekedi.

Informed political sources say the virtually unanimous support that existed for Mr Tshisekedi after Mr Mobutu first tried to sack him last December has all but evaporated, with the HCR now evenly split on the premier’s future. — Sapa-AFP.
Mobutu fights tooth decay

PARIS: Embattled Zairean President Mobutu, seeking to defend his country and facing opposition and international demands to hand over power after 26 years of rule, is in France, for what is officially described as "dental surgery".

Western powers are looking at ways to freeze Mobutu's assets, including large deposits in Switzerland and properties in France, the officials said. — Foreign Desk
PARIS — A huge motorcade roared through the streets of the tiny principality of Monaco yesterday, escorting President Mobutu of Zaire to his dentist. The entire 150-strong Monaco police force was mobilised, in addition to a 300-strong protective force of French police who halted at the border. They were guarding against any trouble along the 7km route to Monaco from Mobutu's luxury chateau at Roquebrune-Cap-Martin.

The chateau is built on a spur of land jutting from the Riviera coast between Monaco and Menton, beside the Italian frontier. It is valued at about $100 million and is only a 30-minute drive from Nice airport.

The Zaire embassy in Paris, aware of rumours in the Western world that Mobutu had fled his embattled country, issued a statement saying: "He has come to visit his dentist!"

The presidential Elysee Palace has been flooded with calls from abroad asking: "Has Mobutu asked for political asylum, and will you grant it?"
Mobutu and his entourage not hastening home to Zaire

There is a growing belief that the last of the great African despots has fled the continent for permanent exile abroad. Ostensibly, President Mobutu of Zaire has come to the French Riviera for some dental treatment, but few think he will ever return to his riot-torn country.

President Mobutu is holed up in his palatial pink marble Villa del Mar in Roquebrune-Cap Martin overlooking the Mediterranean near Monaco. At the weekend, he was accompanied by a six-car, 15-man escort for treatment of a gumboil, but all the signs are that he will stay put and enjoy the luxury lifestyle to which he has become accustomed.

Food riots are breaking out daily in Kinshasa, the capital as unrest mounts in the army. Western diplomats believe the president may have decided to escape alive while he could.

Mobutu, whose name means all powerful, is one of the world’s 10 richest men and is said to have a personal fortune of $3.5 billion (about R16.5 billion) — more than Zaire’s entire national debt.

He enjoys a lavish existence, regularly hiring a Concorde for family outings. It is rumoured that every two weeks he pays about R14 000 to fly his hairdresser from New York to give him a trim.

His wife went on a personal shopping trip through Monte Carlo and Cannes last month... and flew home with 10 tons of luggage.

President Mobutu’s personal fortune includes prime property in a dozen countries. His favourite appears to be his Villa del Mar. He also owns in Paris a huge 800 sq m flat at 20 Avenue Foch known as “millionaire’s row”.

In addition, Mobutu has immense investments in South Korea, Brazil, and half-a-dozen African countries, including Senegal and Central African Republic.

The Zaire leader, now 63, is often pilloried in the Western media as a “walking strongbox”. Yet in the ’60s, army sergeant Joseph-Desire Mobutu, son of a hotel cook, was the father of three with little more than R50 in his pocket.

His immense fortune naturally stems from his nearly three decades in power, starting really in 1973 when he seized the assets of all Belgian firms in Zaire.

Mobutu never writes cheques, even for gigantic sums of money, preferring high currency banknotes which are carted about for him in suitcases. He is surrounded by an entourage of 1 000 secretaries, aides and servants who supply him with all his needs 24 hours of the day.

There are always 15 bodyguards in attendance, at home or overseas.

Unlike many African leaders, Mobutu has remained totally untainted by any sex scandal tales. There are not even any rumours of blonde dolly birds or sex orgies.

The West is calling for his resignation after a quarter-of-a-century of looting of his potentially mineral rich country. Today, a five-million Zaire banknote is worth less than R2.

— Star Foreign Service.
Zairean troops cordon off parliament

KINSHASA - Truckloads of troops sealed off a meeting of Zaire's transitional parliament yesterday, witnesses said.

Panic broke out inside Kinshasa's People's Palace conference hall where the parliament, the High Council of the Republic (HCR), was sitting.

The armed soldiers carried placards saying "aid yes, interference no" and "HCR, what do you want the head of the army to do?"

Their purpose was not immediately clear.

Zaire's three main Western donors - the US, France and Belgium - are debating how to force strongarm president Mobutu Sese Seko to concede multiparty reforms stalled for the last three years.

The three nations have expressed support for the opposition-dominated HCR.

Mobutu recently changed his army chief of staff, bringing in presidential loyalist Gen Etuki Monga. The former chief, Makie Liyako, was popular with regular troops who recently fought pitched battles with Mobutu's elite guards.

It was not clear to which unit of the army the protesters belonged.

The HCR faces a dilemma after Mobutu sacked Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi, recently saying he caused army riots last month in which hundreds died. - Sapa-Reuters.
Troops block Zairean parliament

KINSHASA. Hundreds of heavily-armed troops blocked a meeting of Zaire’s transitional parliament and as night fell, they refused to allow 200 delegates to leave.

Members of the High Council of the Republic (HCR) were held prisoner in a row over controversial new banknotes and in protest against a reformist constitution.

The soldiers said they wanted the opposition-dominated legislature to approve the use of new banknotes which sparked riots last month in which hundreds died.

The five-million-zaire notes were issued by President Mobutu Sese Seko last December but outlawed by opposition Prime Minister Mr Etienne Tshisekedi, who said they were inflationary.

The so-called “cursed note” is widely boycotted. — Sapa-Reuters.
21 die in Zairean vendetta

KINSHASA — Elite Zairean troops shot dead 21 people to avenge the death of a comrade, Western diplomats said yesterday. Witnesses said members of President Mobutu Sese Seko's feared special presidential division conducted the revenge raid on Kingasani after residents, enraged at the killing of a local man by a soldier, hacked a guardsmen to death.

Wife freed as ransom paid
**Armed soldiers block Zaire’s parliament**

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Zaire’s three main Western donors — the United States, France and Belgium — are debating how to force strongman president Mr Mobutu Sese Seko to concede multi-party reforms stalled for the last three years.

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Mr Mobutu recently changed his army chief of staff, bringing in presidential loyalist General Eluki Monga. The former chief was popular with regular troops who recently fought pitched battles with Mr Mobutu’s elite guards.

The huge central African country is in deep political and economic crisis. The HCR faces a dilemma after Mr Mobutu sacked reformist prime minister Mr Etienne Tshisekedi three weeks ago, saying he had caused army riots last month in which hundreds died.

He told the HCR to name a new premier to replace Mr Tshisekedi, who has Western support. Mr Tshisekedi, elected last year by a pro-democracy conference, says Mr Mobutu has no right to fire him.

Diplomats say members of Mr Mobutu’s feared Special Presidential Division killed 21 people on Monday on a rampage of revenge after residents in Kinshasa’s Kinshasa suburb killed a guardsman. — Sapa-Reuter
Zaire MPs spend second night under army siege

KINSHASA.—Members of Zaire's transitional parliament spent their second night under army siege in a row over banknotes which sparked riots last month.

Some 400 members of the High Council of the Republic (HCR) were trapped in Kinshasa's People's Palace conference centre last night, and soldiers showed no sign of letting them go.

Hundreds of troops blocked off the building after midday on Wednesday while the HCR was in session, and demanded it approve the use of new five-million-zaire banknotes worth less than $2.

The notes, issued by President Mobutu Sese Seko, are banned by reformist Prime Minister Mr Etienne Tshisekedi and are almost impossible to spend. Troops paid in the new notes went on a looting rampage in Kinshasa last month in which several hundred people were killed.

The siege has not been violent so far, but witnesses said the tone hardened yesterday.

Soldiers stopped food being sent into the building and let in only limited drinking water provided by the Red Cross. Sick and elderly delegates were not allowed to leave.

The soldiers, many accompanied by wives and children, have rotated on and off the siege in three shifts so far. They said they would keep up the blockade until a solution was found to the banknote row, which has crippled Kinshasa's economic life.

The United States said yesterday it would hold Mr Mobutu responsible for the lives of members of the transitional government being held captive in Kinshasa.

"We call on President Mobutu immediately to instruct his military commanders to release the High Council and allow the transition process to continue," the US State Department said in a statement. — Sapa-Reuters.
Russian planes based at Mbabatho airport may be transporting Avrocor weapons to Angula via Zaire.

By GAVIN EVANS, DAVID ZARING and EDDIE KOCH

Russian Antonov transport planes, based at Bophuthatswana's Mbabatho airport, are being chartered by Avrocor to ferry arms to Zaire and other African countries, according to a senior official in South Africa's Department of Civil Aviation.

There are fears that these arms are finding their way to Unita forces fighting pitched battles with government troops in Angola.

The Weekly Mail this week visited the airport and found an Antonov 12, with a capacity of 17 tons, parked and ready for use. The aircraft had just returned from a trip to Kasakela, Zaire.

Another senior source in the aviation industry, who asked to remain anonymous, said: "There are a lot of operations out of Mbabatho airport. Funny things are happening there. There are a lot of Antonovs flying into Zaire."

Another Antonov operator, who asked to remain anonymous, said: "There are a lot of operations out of Mbabatho airport. Funny things are happening there. There are a lot of Antonovs flying into Zaire."

Asked about the cargo on these flights, the source said: "You can use your imagination, but it's obviously arms.

Avrocor spokesman Henry Abdell yesterday acknowledged that the state-owned armaments company was involved in the sale of arms and other equipment to African countries, but unauthorised.

Avrocor has denied that the Russian-made Antonovs based at Mbabatho have been used for this purpose.

Avrocor spokesman Henry Abdell yesterday acknowledged that the state-owned armaments company was involved in the sale of arms and other equipment to African countries, but unauthorised.

Avrocor operates a fleet of Antonov 12 aircraft, which it claims are used for "humanitarian aid".

But the disclosures by the South African civil aviation officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity, and the report that "regular nightly flights from Mbabatho airport of Antonov transport planes" were made to south-western Zaire with the purpose of supplying arms to Unita.

The evidence indicates that the Antonovs flying out of Mbabatho belong to a company called Africa Aeroflight. A source close to the firm confirmed that the Antonovs seen at Mbabatho this week had been flying to Zaire. He denied it had been chartered by Avrocor and said it was flying "on a purely commercial mission" and had returned to Mbabatho "because it developed technical problems."

The spokesman added that he had heard of another Antonov, not owned by Avrocor, which was doing "non-commercial work for Lansen's, maybe for Armacor."

Bophuthatswana's Civil Aviation Director, Derek Laughton, claimed the homeland had given permission for the Antonovs to be used for "military and other official duties and mercy missions to Sudan, Ethiopia and Mozambique, and the United Nations!

Ten Africa Aeroflight-owned cargo aircraft had flown in and out of Mbabatho since May 1992, using Russian crew and equipment.

Mr Laughton said his company was not cheap but "not energy-efficient."

He did not explain how the notoriety of the Antonovs flying out of Mbabatho airport could be "at south for the UN, not for the South African government!

Comment from the UN's World Food Programme for flying relief aid to famine-stricken parts of Africa was not available at the time of going to press.

Africa Aeroflight was given permission to use Mbabatho airport by Rowan Creijo, Minister for Defence, State Affairs and Civil Administration in the Bophuthatswana government.

Mr Laughton confirmed that C130 cargo planes, "chartered by mining companies and aid agencies", had flown from Bophuthatswana to Angola before last year's elections.

The Africa Aeroflight spokesman, a Russian called Black who refused to give his surname, said his company was working closely with the UN and the Red Cross, and that they had four planes in Mozambique.

South Africa's Department of Foreign Affairs said it was "aware of any unauthorised flights to Angola."

According to the South African civil aviation officials, the Antonovs are given landing rights and parking by the Bophuthatswana government, and are being chartered directly by Avrocor and by other African countries to fly Antonov-produced arms out of the country and to other African countries.

"This is not only to Avrocor because it means their arms are being transported by Russian aircraft, which are less conspicuous. Their crews are always waiting on standby. Because they are based in Bophuthatswana, they don't need South African work permits or South African pilot's licences, and we have no jurisdiction over them." He would not say to which African countries the arms were being ferried.

The route passes over Bophuthatswana, Botswana and northern Namibia, and does not include South African airspace, allowing the South African government to claim ignorance of these operations.

Mbabatho airport is fast gaining a reputation for being a gun-running centre. The Weekly Mail reported last year that international gunrunners had chartered a Ugandan Boeing 747 to fly Avrocor weapons into Yugoslavia and that the plane had landed at Mbabatho to pick up the cargo.
Zairean troops lift siege

KINSHASA — Zairean troops yesterday lifted a three-day siege of the interim parliament, saying legislators now understood soldiers' pay grievances. Armoured vehicles and infantry left the makeshift parliament building where they had imprisoned about 100 legislators and staff in a row over banknotes. — Sapa-Reuters
More pressure on Mobutu

BRUSSELS — Two powerful Belgian political parties urged the UN yesterday to intervene to force Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko to cede power. Belgian government sources said the United States, France and Belgium, the biggest aid donors to Zaire, may hold further talks next week on ways to pressure Mobutu into respecting the democracy-building process in Zaire.
Kaunda’s son arrested in emergency crackdown

LUSAKA.—Major Wezi Kaunda, a son of former Zambian president Dr Kenneth Kaunda, was among seven people arrested today in connection with an alleged coup plot, Zambian Foreign Minister Vernon Mwaanga said here.

Mr Mwaanga said President Frederick Chiluba had declared a limited state of emergency to deal with a plot he said involved radical members of the opposition United National Independence Party (Unip).

Mr Chiluba’s Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) ousted Dr Kaunda and his Unip in elections in October 1991.

Mr Mwaanga said the state of emergency announced on state radio and television last night was “based on advice the president received from defence and military chiefs and also from the cabinet”.

President Chiluba said the move was necessary because “the threat to our young democracy is real”.

Pointing to the influence of “foreign help”, he also said relations with Iran and Iraq would be reviewed.

A covert plan by the former ruling United National Independence Party, leaked to the Press last week, reportedly seeks to make Zambia ungovernable by inciting economically crippled Zambians to rise against the government through riots, strikes and the incitement of unemployed youths.

The plan, code-named “Zero Option”, had been linked to Mr Wezi Kaunda. — Sapa-Reuter-AFP.
BRAZZAVILLE — At least 146 Zaireans drowned while being expelled from neighboring Congo in one of the world’s worst river ferry disasters, Congolese police sources said this week. The tragedy happened as hundreds of Zaireans being expelled from Congo as illegal immigrants were jostling to get on a Zairean ferry carrying them back to Kinshasa. — Sapa-Reuters
A week's diamonds of war

The Weekly Mail, March 6, 1935.
Zambian opposition held over 'coup plot'

LUSAKA. — Zambian police arrested at least 10 opposition officials — including Mr. Kenneth Kaunda's third son, UNIP security chief Major Wazi Kaunda — yesterday, hours after President Frederick Chiluba declared a state of emergency over an alleged opposition coup plot.

Foreign Minister Mr. Vernon Mwaanga said information from members of the main opposition United National Independence Party (UNIP) questioned by police "indicated the funding for the operation is being obtained from Iraq and Iran."

An Iranian embassy spokesman denied any covert activity in Zambia.

UNIP president Mr. Kabby Musokotwane told a news conference police had detained six national leaders and at least four junior officials from the party. — Sapa-Reuters
Mobutu
seeks
home
in Cape

By DIANA STREAK

EMBATTLED Zairean
president Mobutu Sese
Seko spent several days in
Cape Town recently look-
ing for a luxury property to
add to the string of man-
sions he owns across the
world.

Mobutu left his strife-
torn country last month
when fighting broke out
over food shortages, worth-
less new currency and the
president’s resistance to
multi-party reforms.

He is said to have a per-
sonal fortune of R35-bil-
lion, much of which he is
alleged to have taken from
Zaire’s state coffers.

Luxury

A spokesman for Seeff
Residential Properties —
which, sources said,
showed several luxury
homes to Mobutu —
declined to comment on his
search for a Cape home.

However, the Sunday
Times has established that
Mobutu was shown several
luxury properties in Hout
Bay and Llandudno.

He expressed a “keen
interest” in one house with
a R1.4-million price tag.

Sources confirmed that
a group of Zaireans, includ-
ing Mobutu, spent several
days in Cape Town, but left
without buying any prop-
erty. “No deal has been
signed yet, and negotia-
tions are continuing,” the
Sunday Times was told.
KINSHASA - This week will be a decisive one for Zaire with the opening today of round-table talks to try to end the long-running power-struggle between President Mobutu Sese Seko and the reformist transitional regime.
Zairean delegate to UN attacks Mobutu

GENEVA: In a move which stunned many observers, a Zairean delegate to the UN Human Rights Commission this week accused President Mobutu Sese Seko of blocking moves towards democracy and encouraging widespread atrocities.

"The human rights violations are just a symptom of dictatorial forces which refuse to accept majority law and the legitimate aspirations of the people," Mr Jean-Joseph Mukendi told the S3-nation commission.

Mr Mukendi, a senior aide to Zairean Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi, also urged the international community to send human rights monitors to Zaire and to increase pressure to oust the dictatorship.

Western officials present in the meeting room said the speech caused a sensation. One German diplomat said it appeared to be an indication that President Mobutu's fall from power was imminent.

Meanwhile, the head of Zaire's interim parliament, Archbishop Monsengwo Pasinya, met President Mobutu at N'Sele, east of Kinshasa, on Friday in fresh moves to ease the country's chronic political crisis. No details of the talks were available. — AP
PARIS — France has turned down a request by Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko to enter the country. French officials did not say why Paris had denied a visa to Mobutu, who had planned to be in the country next Monday and Tuesday. He has a residence on the French Riviera and visited the country last month.
KINSHASA — Zaire has two rival Prime Ministers after President Mobutu Sese Seko carried out his threat to dump pro-opposition Premier Etienne Tshisekedi. A "political conclave" convened by Mobutu but boycotted by the Sacred Union opposition alliance, named Faustin Birindwa as Prime Minister.
France poised for huge conservative victory

PARIS — France is set to sweep the Socialist Party from government and elect a giant conservative parliamentary majority in a two-round general election beginning on Sunday and launching a new bout of left-right "cohabitation."

Opinion polls forecast the centre-right Union for France (UFP) alliance will win about 46% of the popular vote and 400 or more of the 577 national assembly seats. The Socialists are expected to win barely 20% and about 100 seats, a crash of historic proportions from their 37% and 269 seats in the previous general election in 1988. The communists, with around 9%, could keep up to 20 deputies.

After a dull campaign dominated by gloom over rising unemployment and public anger over finance scandals, the only suspense surrounds the scale of the right-wing victory.

Jacques Chirac’s Gaullist Rally for the Republic (RPR) and the Union for French Democracy (UDF) of ex-president Valéry Giscard d’Estaing stand neck and neck in the polls. Socialist President François Mitterrand, who has vowed to serve out his term until 1995, is likely to pick the next prime minister from the larger of the two parties, although the constitution gives him a free hand.

The conservatives are committed to large-scale privatisation of state-owned banks, insurance firms and industrial companies, as well as introducing some competition into public services such as tele-

communications, electricity and railways.

If, as seems probable, the RPR comes out just ahead, former finance minister Edouard Balladur, 63, a courteous conservative with a managerial style, is favourite to be prime minister.

Chirac has said the idea of returning to the office in which Mitterrand outfoxed him in 1986-88 chills his spine, although he has not totally ruled it out.

If the UDF tops the poll, former president Valéry Giscard d’Estaing, 67, has made clear he would not shun the job. Another possible UDF candidate is François Leotard, 59, a charismatic centrist with presidential ambitions.

All the main contenders have vowed to maintain a strong franc and build even closer relations with Germany.

But under pressure from militant farmers, the UFF has set the stage for an EC crisis by vowing to insist on renegotiating last year’s EC agriculture policy reform and tear up a US-EC draft accord on transatlantic farm trade.

Chirac has gone as far as to threaten an "empty chair" boycott of community meetings to press French demands.

Outgoing Prime Minister Pierre Bérégovoy’s prestige as the man who whipped inflation has been tarnished by 3-million unemployed, 10.5% of the workforce, and by criticism of an interest-free loan he accepted from a financier later charged with insider trading. — Sapa-Reuters.

Mobutu’s move ‘his last chance’

KINSHASA — President Mobutu Sese Seko’s appointment of the opposition figure Faustin Birindwa as prime minister is seen as a last chance to resolve his long-running power struggle with Zairian pro-democracy forces.

The appointment would have to be confirmed by the High Council of the Republic, or interim parliament, before it was accepted nationally and abroad, sources said.

So far the council has stood behind Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi, whom Mobutu dismissed early last month after a confrontation between his government and soldiers provoked a mutiny in Kinshasa.

Birindwa, 50, a founder of the anti-Mobutu Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDSP), was chosen at a meeting of Mobutu’s "political conclave" of 195 regional representatives, political allies and public institution delegates.

Birindwa said he would begin negotiations to form a government "from the UDSP and the Holy Alliance" — a reference to the overall umbrella opposition grouping.

Birindwa was expelled from the UDSP on March 1 for failing to support Tshi-


sedi sufficiently and for "flirting" with pro-Mobutu forces.

Sources said Birindwa might succeed in bringing opposition heavyweights into his government as Tshisekedi had disappoint-

ed his supporters.

He would have to convince the leaders of Holy Alliance that his govern-

ment would pursue the original goal of the council, transforming Zaire into a multiparty democracy, said political analysts.

Birindwa was not likely to be seen by Zairians in the street as Mobutu’s latest stooge, analysts said, as his record of opposition to the president was impres-

sive. In contrast to all the other opposition leaders, including Tshisekedi, Birindwa has never taken part in a government formed by Mobutu’s Popular Revolutionary Movement party.

But the council is known for sticking strictly to constitutional and legal principles. It has so far refused to take part in any meetings of the political conclave, demanding instead a face-
to-face meeting with Mobutu.

If the HCR does not give its blessing to a Birindwa cabinet, the world will have to choose which government to recognise.

Last month the US, France and Belgium, Zaire’s biggest creditors, told Mobutu he had to hand over "all his powers" to the Tshisekedi government for the transition process to continue. — Sapa-APP.

"Unorthodox but always sober."
KINSHASA — A Zairean soldier killed a woman market trader with a hand grenade on Monday when she refused to accept the controversial Zaire banknote in payment, state TV reported.

President Mobutu Sese Seko introduced the banknote in December. His rival, Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi, declared it invalid. Since then it has been widely boycotted by private businesses, and the few prepared to accept it do so only at about a third of its face value.

"Troops who received what has become known as the "cursed note" in their January pay packets went on a rampage of looting and killing.

— Sapa-Reuters
Brutal struggle for Angola’s oil town

IT WAS an unusually frank admission for an Angolan general: the kind of thing you might hear from a battle-weary foot-soldier, only to draw outright denials from the military hierarchy. But General Eusebio Brando Teixeira, commander of Angola’s northern region, casually commented that in the week-long battle for the foreign-run strategic oil facilities at Soyo his men took no prisoners.

It was policy. “In this war, nobody’s interested in taking prisoners. There’s no room for it,” the general said.

Another officer said there had been three Unita prisoners but all had died of their wounds. Gen. Eusebio’s view finds sympathy among those who endured Unita’s two-month occupation until government forces recovered the town last weekend. The physical evidence of the looting is still plain. But the abuses went beyond that.

Jono Barbosa, an oil worker, spent a week in hiding after Unita arrived before he ventured out when food stocks ran low. “We had a problem on my street when Unita thought we were hiding soldiers in civilian clothing. They threatened us. They said if we were lying they would kill us. Whenever these guys came they looked for the big wheels from the MPLA [government]. If you were known as an MPLA member and you were caught, they took you away. No one knows what happened to them,” he said.

Other residents said corpses were left on open land or dumped in the Congo. On the river bank, stray dogs fed on two rotting bodies. They appeared to be men in civilian clothes. One had raised his arm to protect his head, a futile last effort to deflect death.

Gen. Eusebio claims four white mercenaries are buried with Unita’s dead, and that Zaireans fought with the rebels before fleeing across the Congo to their homeland.

Soyo residents also point the finger at Zairean civilians, accusing them of collaborating with Unita and participating in the looting.

After the rebels fled, it cost some their lives. “Maybe they got in the way of the shooting, or they didn’t have documentation, or they didn’t speak our language,” said Mr. Barbosa. “There is a lot of resentment against them. The Zaireans were responsible for a lot of the looting and they were doing deals with Unita.”

Army officers are buoyant from their success, but it was not easy. The first attack nearly turned into disaster when communications failed during a joint air and sea assault by 120 men on a beachhead close to the main oil storage tanks. It was another five hours before the main force of 1,000 arrived. In the interim, the rebels overlooking the beachhead reinforced their position.

Soyo is quiet now. On display beside the wrecked weapons and the graves of their victims is the shift of allegiances since peace accords were signed nearly two years ago.

Standing at the entrance to the US-run Quinta Nova oil facilities are Angolan soldiers manning Russian tanks. Gen. Eusebio sees the absurdities. “You see, we saved this for Bill Clinton,” he said.
Zaire army blockades parliament

KINSHASA.—Paramilitary forces have sealed a conference hall where Zaire's transitional parliament was due to meet yesterday, preventing the meeting from taking place, witnesses said.

The parliament, the High Council of the Republic (HCR), is in conflict with President Mobutu Sese Seko. Each backs a rival prime minister.

Troops have been blocking the People's Palace, where the HCR holds its plenary meetings, since Monday night.

The HCR meeting had not started but it was not clear if anyone was trapped inside the cavernous Kinshasa building.

Zaire, which is mired in political and economic crises, now has two premiers, two governments and two parliaments.

President Mobutu appointed Mr. Faustin Binduwa as prime minister on March 29 after saying he had sacked opposition premier Mr. Etienne Tshisekedi, who was appointed by the HCR. — Sapa-Reuters
New violence in Zaire as soldiers shoot at opposition

BRUSSELS. — Soldiers loyal to Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko fired on supporters of Etienne Tshisekedi, the opposition leader who President Mobutu is trying to remove from his post as prime minister, Belgian news reports said.

At least 12 people were injured when presidential guards fired on a crowd outside Mr Tshisekedi’s house, Zairean opposition sources said.

Belgium’s RTBF television network reported that President Mobutu’s troops surrounded the house as Mr Tshisekedi called a meeting of his government, which President Mobutu refuses to recognise.

President Mobutu set up an alternative government in March, with its own prime minister, but western governments continue to recognize Mr Tshisekedi as premier.

Led by the United States, France and Belgium — the former colonial power — the West has put pressure on President Mobutu to allow democratic reforms and end his 28-year autocratic regime.

Tshisekedi advisor Mr Omer N’Kamba said the troops opened fire on people who gathered to hear news of the government meeting outside the prime minister’s residence in Kinshasa.

Mr N’Kamba said a leading aide to Mr Tshisekedi was wounded. Speaking in Brussels, Mr N’Kamba said he heard reports of the shooting by telephone from Kinshasa. RTBF said tear gas grenades had been thrown into Mr Tshisekedi’s home.

Mr Tshisekedi’s Communications Minister, Mr Lambert Mende Omalanga, appealed yesterday in Brussels for the United Nations to send a military force to keep the peace in Zaire.

Mr George Moose, US assistant secretary of state for Africa, is expected to hold talks on Zaire with Belgian officials in Brussels today.

Belgium, France and the United States are reportedly considering seizing President Mobutu’s considerable foreign assets and depriving the president and his supporters of visa rights.

Zaire has slid towards chaos as President Mobutu fights to hold on to power. — Sapa-AP.
Zaire, Belgium expel envoys

BRUSSELS — Belgium and Zaire expelled two diplomats from each other’s embassies in their capital cities yesterday, the latest move in a diplomatic feud between Belgium and Zaire’s President Mobutu Sese Seko.

STMT 21/4/93.
NEWS IN BRIEF

IBM reports $285m loss

ARMONK — Computer firm IBM yesterday reported a $285m loss for the first quarter, saying core mainframe computer sales were off significantly.

The deficit contrasted with its $2.5bn profit a year earlier, when it benefited from one-time gains of $1.8bn from an accounting change. Revenues slipped to $13.1bn, off 7% from $14bn in the 1992 quarter. While total hardware sales were off 10%, demand for IBM's personal computers remained strong.

Zaire rules out privatisation

BRUSSELS — Zairean Prime Minister Étienne Tshisekedi's government said yesterday it was against any sale of Zaire's state assets, including the key mining company Cencamines. Prime Minister Mende Onalanga said any transactions relating to a call for privatisation would be declared null and void.

Illness delays treason trial

MOSCOW — One of 12 men charged with treason in connection with the failed Soviet coup in 1991 was expected to spend at least two more weeks in hospital after falling ill last week, a court spokesmen said yesterday. Doctors said Alexander Vorobyov had been in intensive care to prevent a heart attack. An indefinite recess in the hearing was declared on Friday.

Call for 'Global No-Golf Day'

TKYO — A Japanese environmentalist group campaigning against golf course construction is calling for April 26 to be made "Global No-Golf Day". The Golf Course Problems Global Network is planning an international conference to stop destruction of forests to make way for golf courses and pollution from heavy use of herbicides and pesticides.

Clinton pleases fewer people, polls show


The answer, to the dismay of the youthful new intake of Democratic staffers in the White House, is that after three months in office, all of these former chief executives were more popular than President Bill Clinton is today.

Opinion polls might be dismissed as an unnecessary diversion from the task in hand. But Clinton records a dismal 49% approval rating three months into his term, lower even than Gerald Ford, when the first months of his administration were clouded by his unpopular decision to pardon Richard Nixon for Watergate crimes.

For Clinton, even more alarming than the low approval level are his "negatives", with 36% saying they actively dislike the way he is running the country.

Clinton exudes an energy and enthusiasm for the job which many find appealing. And yet the polling figures are bad, and getting worse.

"Clinton is gambling that people will like him enough that they won't mind that he's governing several degrees to the left of the way he campaigned," says Joshua Muravchik, of the American Enterprise Institute, a Washington think-tank.

Clinton ran his campaign explicitly as "a new type of Democrat" who rejected the old policies in favour of strong national defence and fiscal restraint.

He sanctioned executions in his home state of Arkansas and was photographed repeatedly with police officers to underline his "toughness on crime". It worked, and the previously unknown governor of an obscure state made it to the White House, albeit with only 43% of the vote.

Since then, Clinton has acted less like a southern centrist and more like an eastern liberal.

Clinton has already acquired the dangerous Carter-like habit of trying to do too much.

He tours the country promising a new forestry policy here, a new airline policy there. In his zeal to correct all of America's problems, he seems to be losing sight of the demand of the electorate - to get the economy moving and controlling the deficit.

Clinton's much-vaunted "stimulus" of $1bn of short-term spending to create jobs is stalled, victim of the very Washington gridlock which he promised to break.

It is too early to draw conclusions about the course of the next three years. But the beginning has been one of lost opportunities. — Daily Telegraph.
Zambia 1363
boots out 'bogus' SA operators

LUSAKA. — The Zambian government has revoked "self-employment" work permits of 17 South African companies for failing to prove their physical existence.

Department of Immigration spokesman Paul Mulu confirmed in Lusaka on Saturday only one out of 18 companies gazetted by the government, Soweto Oil Company, proved its existence.

The Zambian government last year gazetted 18 SA companies and issued them with self-employment work permits, but only one had since proved its existence.

"We want genuine and serious investors and not bogus operators," Mulu said.
Kaunda peace plea ignored

The Argus Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG.—Former Zambian President Dr Kenneth Kaunda exhorted ANC supporters at a memorial service in Benoni to bury ANC chairman Oliver Tambo in peace.

But when the service was over, about 200 mourners returning to Daveyton township stoned police vehicles and vandalised private cars, according to East Rand police.

The group dispersed after police fired rubber bullets, a police spokesman said.

Dr Kaunda, who became Mr Tambo's friend more than 20 years ago, told about 1,000 people at the Benoni City Hall to avoid a repeat of the violence at slain SA Communist Party leader Chris Hani's funeral.

"It is your duty to see to it that what Tambo fought and died for is accomplished," said Dr Kaunda.

He appealed to political leaders to speed up the negotiation process.

"There is no need for some leaders to waste time on petty issues and delay the establishment of a new government.

"Black people have suffered under apartheid for more than 300 years and it is time all South Africans fought for a government representative of all its people," he said.

But he said democracy would never be attained when there was no discipline in the country. He appealed to the youth to be disciplined and to act only on their leaders' instructions.

"Without discipline democracy will never be achieved," said Dr Kaunda.

He drew cheers from the crowd when he said: "Whoever does not believe in the coming freedom of black people in South Africa is a sell-out."
Jungle law prevails in Zaire clashes

KATANGA, the province whose failed attempt at independence saw United Nations troops sent to Zaire, then the Congo, in the 60s, is in the grip of new tribal warfare.

Bands of young Katangans armed with stones and machetes are forcing tens of thousands of members of the Kasai tribe — Zaire’s dominant group, but a minority in the province — to flee for their lives in Africa’s own brand of “ethnic cleansing”.

Kolwezi station bears witness to the unfolding tragedy. Tens of thousands of Kasais evicted from their homes are piling up, waiting for a train to carry them away from Katanga, now renamed Shaba.

The stench is strong ... a mixture of the excrement that lines the tracks, piles of rubbish burning with acrid smoke, oil and grease from the trains, and fresh blood as some young Kasais slaughter a dog to eat.

At least 1,000 Kasais have arrived at the station each day since the latest attacks began three weeks ago. Armed Katangans told the mostly Kasai workers at the Gecamines, the national mining company, to leave or face death. They burned 80 houses to confirm their threats. So far 11 people have been killed.

The victims at Kolwezi railway station cling to their belongings, bitter that no one seems to know or care about them. They live mostly under sacks and scrap-metal shelters, or crammed into a vast trackside warehouse.

Most of the intimidation is carried out by the youth group of Uferi, a Katangan political party. The group is led by the Katangan politician Mr. Ngou Karl I Bond, a former opposition Prime Minister who has since re-aligned himself with President Mobutu.

When Mr Bond was replaced as Prime Minister last August by Mr Etienne Tshisekedi, a Kasai, the Katangan Kasai celebrated “their” victory.

Their optimism was short-lived, as militant young Uferi pursued their claim to Zaire’s richest province in a chilling repeat of the declared succession in 1960.

Just days after the new Kolwezi attacks began, government-controlled television reported that production had doubled since Katangans had taken over the mines.

In Likasi, 23 percent of children near the railway station are suffering from malnutrition.

Of the 50,000 people waiting for a train, two or three die each day from disease and starvation — 8 The Telegraph, Lon-
Corrupt Zaire ‘out of control’

When two beers and a sandwich cost you 66 million zaires at Kinshasa’s leading hotel, you need a wheelbarrow rather than a wallet to carry your money around.

The Zaireans do not actually use wheelbarrows, but they do use big shopping bags when dealing in the local currency. When possible, they employ foreign currency, preferably American dollars.

With the local currency, the zaire, worth about 2.7 million to the dollar, it can become extraordinarily cumbersome to carry around. To give a relatively modest tip to the hotel porter, for instance, you have to hand over about four million of them, and that makes a lot of banknotes.

These insights into the situation on the ground in Zaire were brought back by Johannesburg-based Newsweek photographer Mark Peters, who recently went there on an assignment.

“The place is out of control,” he reported. “Corruption is everywhere and there is virtually no law and order. The only thing that prevents the country from sliding into a Somalia situation is that food is available from the crops that grow plentifully in the countryside.”

Peters and other travellers returning from Zaire report that the local currency has lost almost all value, at least in Kinshasa, the capital. Shopkeepers there refuse to accept the new five-million zaire note printed by President Mobutu Sese Seko to pay his troops.

It is accepted, however, by traders in Lubumbashi, about 1400 km away, the main city in southern Zaire, and this has led to a bizarre practice: some Kinshasa residents are said to fly with suitcases full of the Z5 million notes to Lubumbashi, where they change them into more acceptable denominations and then fly back.

Development has virtually come to a standstill in Zaire and even government is a dubious affair, with two rival Prime Ministers functioning simultaneously: Etienne Tshisekedi, recognised by the opposition Sacred Union movement and by most Western countries, and Faustin Birikine, appointed by Mobutu after he “sacked” Tshisekedi.

Despite pressure from the opposition and Western powers, Mobutu refuses to resign and allows a democratic government to replace his autocratic rule. He is said to spend most of his time on his palatial yacht, cruising up and down the Zaire river, with brief spells at his palace at Gbadolite. He can move about only with a strong military escort, according to reports from Zaire.

Foreign airlines no longer fly into Kinshasa and most visitors enter the country from Brazzaville, across the Zaire River in neighbouring Congo. They either cross the river on the ferry or take the river-hopping flight operated between the two capitals by a local air company.

Peters reports that when a traveller who chooses the latter method disembarks at Kinshasa airport, he is met by a mob of Zaireans fighting to carry his bags, escort him through customs and immigration or rob him — whichever seems the best option of the moment.

Officials at the airport openly demand bribes before agreeing to process passports or pass baggage through customs.

If the traveller emerges relatively unscathed from the airport, he still has to run a gauntlet of crooked taxi drivers and robbers to get into town. Experienced or influential travellers hire agents and guards — at considerable cost — to get them through these formalities and hazards.

In Kinshasa Peters visited the hospital, which he found in an appalling condition — "a relay station to hell". There was no electricity and what had been an operating theatre was being used as a toilet.

"Everywhere Peter went he wasimported and clutched at by beggars, prostitutes and pickpockets.

"The one thing one must avoid at all costs," he says, "is to end up in jail because that could be a horrendous, possibly fatal, experience."

The Star’s Africa Service reports on a country that has lost its way
Clinton bars Mobutu's officials from America.

WASHINGTON. — United States President Bill Clinton has barred Zairean officials linked to President Mobutu Sese Seko from the US.

The state department said yesterday that Mr Clinton had issued a decree excluding officials who have been collaborating with President Mobutu to prevent a transition to democracy in the African country.

The decree also excludes Zaireans who have benefited from President Mobutu's antidemocratic policies. Family members in both categories are also barred.

The proclamation, similar to an arms embargo imposed on Zaire in April, "is a sign that the administration will not conduct normal business with President Mobutu so long as he thwarts a transition to democracy in Zaire". — Sapa-AP.
Zaire forces 500,000 Kasaians out of homes.
Zaire's refugee problem mounts

By VICTORIA BRITAIN
HALF a million Kasaian refugees have been forced from their homes amid anarchic conditions in Shaba province in southeast Zaire, according to aid agencies, which forecast an imminent famine.

At least 100,000 people — and perhaps many tens of thousands more — will be on the move from central Shaba before the end of July, according to Oxfam's representative there. They will join the tens of thousands who trekked out of the province towards Kasai on foot or in packed trains after the harassment of Kasai people in Shaba began last November with houses being burned, property confiscated and a number of people killed.

The massive exodus has come in several waves as ethnic tension has been ignited by a discredited government which has been rapidly losing control over recent months. Thousands camped for weeks or months at stations waiting for trains, which for a while stopped running.

Shaba, formerly Katanga, is the mineral-rich province which tried to secede from what was then the Belgian Congo in the 1960s, giving the United Nations its first taste of failed peacekeeping in Africa.

The current chaos in the area is closely linked to the war in Angola. Military units loyal to President Mobutu Sese Seko are now based in the province, from where they infiltrate into Angola to support Unita's offensive in the north of the country.

The government of Faustin Birindwa, set up by President Mobutu to counter the opposition prime minister, Etienne Tshisekedi, has reportedly decided to move the Kasaian from the makeshift camps at the stations by the end of next month and force even greater numbers to leave Kolwezi and other towns in Shaba.

Aid officials report that one train a week, packed with about 3,000 people, is leaving Kolwezi for Kasai. "They are cramming to bursting with people on wagon roofs and in a sorry condition," according to witnesses.

Oxfam also quotes Zairean Red Cross officials accompanying the trains as reporting up to 50 deaths per train, mostly from asphyxiation.

The local government is hiring trucks to move the people, and for the first time central government is paying for the rail transport to clear Shaba of Kasaian, the aid officials say.

Oxfam reports that those who have already reached Kasai will face a serious food problem well before the usual famine period, of September to December. Many of them were in poor physical condition even before their long trek. The whole province was already under severe stress, with the linked political and economic crises pushing prices up even higher than in the capital Kinshasa.

Other aid agencies working in the area include Medicines Sans Frontieres, Unicef, Caritas, World Vision, and the Mennonite Central Committee.

A UN mission, including assessment experts from the World Food Programme and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, has been postponed indefinitely because of Zaire's political stalemate with two competing governments.

"Anything that might come from that source, if ever, is going to be too late," Oxfam sources said.

Fearing that the crisis is close to becoming completely out of hand, Oxfam has taken the lead in a vacuum of organisations. It has urged the Belgian government to release the UN stocks of food and other tools held in the embassy in Kinshasa so the Kasaian can grow food, and appealed to the Overseas Development Administration and the European Community for food and funds for transport. — The Guardian News Service
President De Klerk did not oppose economic reform. An elaborate welcome awaits first SA head of state to visit Zambia.
'3 000 Zaireans massacred'

KAMPALA. - At least 3 000 people have been massacred in Zaire's eastern Kivu province after a visit to the region by Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko, says Zairean rebel spokesman Muhammad Nasur.

Mr Mobutu visited North Kivu last week after reports that some 2 000 people had been killed in the province during three months of ethnic violence, Radio Zaire said.

Mr Nasur, who said he received his information from a Zairean rebel group in Bukavu, claimed Mr Mobutu had at first sent 140 Presidential Guard troops to try to stop the fighting, but 110 of them were massacred during the clashes.

On learning that his forces had been wiped out, Mr Mobutu sent in more reinforcements.

"When they arrived at Masaka and Ruchuru, they opened fire at anyone in sight, killing at least 3 000 people," said Mr Nasur. International aid agencies here were unable to confirm the claim. - Sapa-AFP.
Chiluba is pressing ahead with exploiting trade and development opportunities that other Frontline leaders do not want to grasp until they get the all-clear from the ANC.

He is prepared to recognise Mr. De Klerk as the present head of state of South Africa and to deal with him rather than wait for Nelson Mandela to fill the post.

The Chiluba government's links with the ANC are far more tenuous than were those of the Kaunda government. While the ANC leadership was still in exile, it made its headquarters in Lusaka and was strongly supported by Dr. Kaunda, who formed close ties that continued after his defeat, as was shown by his prominent part in Mr. Mandela's birthday party in Johannesburg recently.

During the election that brought Mr. Chiluba to power his party was angered by the open support given by the ANC to Mr. Kaunda and his Unip. This has not made it any more difficult for the MMD government to have open dealings with Pretoria.
Mobutu hangs on as Zaire slides further into chaos

Two governments, two parliaments and a worthless currency, but the same head of state.
Frédéric Fritsch reports from Kinshasa

ONLY A FEW kilometres of muddy waters separate the Republic of Congo from Zaire. The river is both a border and a precious tie for two countries sinking deeper into crisis.

In Zaire the state has practically ceased to exist. When the launch which serves as a ferry touched shore at Kinshasa, the capital of Zaire, it was stormed by a mob of porters, hawkers selling all kinds of goods and middlemen.

These men, who are a godsend for the traveller in a hurry, have succeeded in making themselves indispensable. They know who's who in the administration, the policemen and the customs officials. For a few zaires, they will whisk their clients from one office to another, indicating whom they should pay off and how much for fulfilling once routine formalities.

The river port of Kinshasa is a source of fabulous income for those lucky enough to be "working" there. Since rioting broke out in Kinshasa in January, western commercial airlines have stopped calling; insurance companies rate it too dangerous.

So the ferryride from Brazzaville has become the only way to enter Kinshasa.

Corruption has become an institution everywhere and is maintained by the distribution of thousands of CFA francs and dollars. Nothing works any more in Zaire. The administration exists only in the form of thousands of state employees who have not been paid for a long time.

Soldiers and policemen and generally all those possessing weapons have turned to milking the capital's residents. The uniform and the Kalashnikov have replaced the cheque book.

Houses are looted day after day and families stripped of everything they own by unscrupulous and unpaid soldiers. The city's traffic policemen enjoy a guaranteed income: the destruction of the regulations, even if spurious, leads to an on-the-spot fine.

Long gone are the days when it was good to live in Kinshasa. The residential ghettos have become highly dangerous and nobody ventures out after nightfall. Surviving has become an adventure here.

The Zaireans have developed a whole system for getting by. What else can they do in a country where the street price of a packet of cigarettes is $10 million? When well-to-do people eat out, they take with them bags stuffed with banknotes to pay bills.

In 1967 when President Sese Seko Mobutu created the Zairian currency, the zaire was worth $2. By 1990 the dollar was worth 2530. Last month a single dollar was trading for 24 million in the unofficial market.

The devaluation shows the sorry state of the economy. A report issued jointly by the Banque du Zaire and the National Institute of Statistics notes that the economy stopped growing and began falling early in the eighties.

There was negative growth of 1.2 per cent in 1982 and 10.6 per cent in 1992. Inflation, which was running at 100 per cent in 1983, rose to 3333 per cent by 1992. "It could come close to 10,000 per cent this year," predicts Edouard Mamboi, vice-chairman of the opposition Union des Démissaires Indépendants (UDI) and economy minister in Etienne Tshisekedi's government.

In 1990, the country could still count on foreign earnings totalling $760.7 million. But by 1992, this had dwindled to $270.7 million. Zaire's foreign earnings taken as a whole have dropped by two-thirds in the space of two years. Geologists, the country's biggest hard currency earner, produced some 425,000 tonnes of copper in 1989 in its vast Shaba mines in the southwest. By 1992 the output had tumbled to 137,000 tonnes.

Only 33,000 tonnes of copper were mined in the first four months of this year. The company, which has long been financing Zaire's economy, can no longer cover its costs and is reported to be close to winding down. The World Bank considers Gécamines would need $1 million restart.

The mining company is bringing the country no more than $5 million a month, which is less than the earnings from the oil sector ($8 million).

Diamonds are still earning Zaire $30 million a month. But most of the diamonds mined are taken out through illegal channels organised at the highest levels of government with the complicity of Middle Eastern merchants, and earn nothing for the country.

A potentially rich country, Zaire has piled up a $10 billion foreign debt and is now bankrupt.

"Only 20 per cent of government spending is covered by receipts, the rest is covered by printing more money," said the UDI vice chairman.

"Zaire is printing banknotes. It's the only state industry that still works," Zaire will not be able to climb out of the economic mire into which it has sunk without substantial foreign investments and help from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.

But there can be no economic reconstruction without first sorting out the political situation. But such is the political confusion that even those who have Zaire's interests at heart don't know how to go about it.

The shattered country has two governments, two parliaments, a worthless currency and still the same head of state, Mobutu Sese Seko. But he, who has been president since 1965.

More machine-like than ever, General Mobutu is firmly hanging on to power and has succeeded in halting a democratization process that he himself set in motion on April 24, 1990.

On the one hand, the legitimate government headed by Etienne Tshisekedi is supported by the people and the West, while the other government led by Faustin Birindwa theoretically has no legitimacy and is not recognised abroad, but occupies the ground.

Tshisekedi, democratically elected last year with an overwhelming majority by the Sovereign National Conference (SNS), is officially recognised by the High Council of the Republic (HCR) and the provincial parliament set up by the CNS.

TYWB doesn't recognise Birindwa, who was appointed on March 17 by President Mobutu. It was he and Tshisekedi who formed the United Front to oppose Mobutu's regime.

But, like many of the opposition's leading figures, he was won over by the president.

The upright and uncompromising Tshisekedi, who still symbolises Zaireans' expectations, is standing by the president.

"The country hasn't been governed for years," he said. "We're calling for civil disobedience to depose Mobutu to become involved in the democratic process defined by the CNS."

He added that on one side there were "the people and the forces favourable to change" and on the other "Mobutu who's clinging to power."

Speaking at his prime ministerial office, Faustin Birindwa said that in four months he had restored confidence in the country.

He is planning a referendum on the new constitution. It was to have taken place at the end of July, but will not now be held before the end of September at the earliest. Legislative and presidential elections are expected to follow it before the end of the year.

But Tshisekedi refuses to countenance elections. "There won't be any, because people don't want them," he declared.

Zaireans, who are too busy eking out an existence, have finally become tired of this political cut and thrust. It is also exacerbating western countries, which are working behind the scenes to encourage the emergence of a third way and looking around in Zairean politics for an acceptable figure.

For the moment, however, neither side wants to hear of a third man. "I'm with the people in the struggle against the dictatorship," Tshisekedi keeps saying. And Birindwa insists: "It's an insult to think there are two governments in this country. What right does the West have to consider a third way when I have been appointed by the head of state?"

Hamstringing the political system's paralysis can only help Mobutu who is entrenched in his Ghadafi stronghold where he likes to give the impression of being above party politics and disdainful of western pressure.

A European diplomat accredited to Kinshasa recalled an old African saying: "When elephants fight, it's the grass that suffers." Zaireans know it too. They live in increasingly precarious conditions and are beginning to despair of ever seeing things improve.

(July 21)
LUANDA. — The Angolan government said today it could not give any "credibility" to Unitas leader Jonas Savimbi's reported call for an unconditional ceasefire.

Deputy Foreign Minister Joao Miranda said on state radio that the government was used to Dr Savimbi's "empty promises". "Jonas Savimbi must order his troops to cease fighting immediately and Unitas must put an end to its hostile propaganda," said Mr Miranda, responding to reports that Dr Savimbi had called for an unconditional halt in the resurgent civil war.

Mr Miranda said Unitas should order its troops to stop fighting and agree to sign the Ceasefire protocol, a draft peace pact between the two sides drawn up last May.

Meanwhile the government said it had repelled Unitas rebels from central areas of the city of Cuito, where military sources say 14,000 people have been killed in a seven-month siege.

Hundreds of people have been killed since the rebels began a new push against Cuito last week and state radio said that today alone Unitas fired 1500 artillery shells into the city of 250,000 people. — Sapa-Reuters.

1500 Zaireans flee renewed fighting

KAMPALA. — At least 1500 Zairean refugees have fled into Uganda after renewed clashes between Zairean government troops and rebels in eastern Zaire, said the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) representative, Ahmed Farah.

The fighting between government troops and Peasants and Workers Movement (MOP) rebels had claimed at least 129 lives on the government side, he said.

Rebel spokesman Muhammed Nassuf said yesterday that clashes between the government and the rebels were continuing.

He said many civilians had been killed, but did not give details. Thousands of other Zaireans fleeing the fighting were on their way to Uganda, he added. — Sapa-AFP.
Mobutu 'blocking solution'

Brussels — The government of Zairean Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi yesterday blamed President Mobutu Sese Seko for the failure of a negotiated end to the political crisis in the country.
World Bank considers increased disclosure

WASHINGTON — The World Bank will consider proposals today to give outsiders more say in how it hands out tens of billions of dollars each year, bank officials say.

The proposals — designed to expand the amount of information the bank makes public about its loans — range from the establishment of a $13m public information centre to publication of secret documents.

But a coalition of US environmentalists and bank critics have charged that the proposals do not go far enough. They want the Clinton administration to press the bank to open its operations further than is currently proposed.

The coalition argues that the World Bank proposals will not result in the public having a meaningful say in how the organisation is run.

Both sides in the dispute agree that greater public disclosure will enhance the effectiveness of the bank's loans by giving those who will be affected by its construction projects a voice in the process.

But the bank believes that it must also be careful not to jeopardise relations with borrower countries by releasing confidential information.

An earlier proposal that would have led to the bank obtaining blanket approval from borrowers for disclosure of information has been dropped following objections from some of those same nations.

Instead, the bank will give borrowers a chance to review reports that are to be made public so that they can identify confidential issues that should be kept secret.

Besides considering proposals for more public disclosure, the bank's board will also hold a preliminary discussion on the establishment of an independent inspection panel to handle complaints about the organisation's loans. US environmental groups have, however, criticised the bank for not going far enough and for not giving the panel enough power.

— Saps-Reuter.
'Campaign of murder in Zaire'

□ Anarchy, says Amnestý

ABIDJAN (Ivory Coast).—Amnesty International has accused the dictators of Zaire of orchestrating a campaign of murder, imprisonment and torture to keep power in the central African country, which has collapsed into virtual anarchy.

"Zaire is sliding inexorably towards a total breakdown of law and order and the government is using the country's worsening political and economic situation as an excuse for appalling human rights violations," the London-based human rights group said in a statement.

The organization accused dictator Mobutu Sese Seko of killing "hundreds, perhaps thousands of civilians" since 1990, when he began backing away from promises to institute democratic reforms.

It accused Mr Mobutu's security forces of causing the disappearances of hundreds of people and jailing political opponents, including Joseph Olenga Nkoy, a US-raised Zairian who leads the youth wing of the opposition movement.

Mr Mobutu has ruled Zaire, a nation of 35 million people, since 1965. Under pressure by unrest, he appointed an opposition-led government in 1990, then tried to dissolve it and has since appointed a government of his supporters.

Zaire now has two governments, one a Mobutu puppet regime and the other led by longtime opposition figure Etienne Tshisekedi, who most nations recognize as prime minister even though he wields little actual power.

The Amnesty report accused Mr Mobutu's forces of subjecting political prisoners to whippings, mock executions, mutilations, electric shocks and rape.

It said 12 men, women and children were slaughtered by Mr Mobutu's elite presidential guard on February 22 to avenge the death of a security officer by a group of civilians.

Most Western nations have cut off all aid to Zaire, the world's largest producer of diamonds. — Sape-AP.
Mobutu forces 'on killing spree'

LONDON — Zaire’s security forces have shown “ruthless brutality” in murdering or torturing thousands of civilians and opposition members, Amnesty International said in a report published yesterday.

The country was “sliding inexorably towards a total breakdown of law and order” with Mobutu Sese Seko’s government using the country’s worsening political and economic state as an excuse for “appalling human rights violations”.

Since 1990, violence by the security forces and Mobutu’s other supporters has escalated,” the human rights watchdog organisation said.

“Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of civilians have been executed extrajudicially by government troops or killed by what the authorities claim are ‘unknown gunmen’. Others have simply disappeared.

“Zaire is facing its worst human rights crisis since the end of the civil war in the early 80s, marked by ruthless brutality of government security forces ... who have murdered or tortured thousands of civilians and members of the peaceful political opposition,” Amnesty said.

Political and ethnic violence has racked the central African nation, where a national democracy conference involving Mobutu supporters and opposition parties grouped in the Holy Alliance has frequently stalled since it began in 1991.

Mobutu has refused to recognise the sovereignty of the conference. Zaire has two prime ministers, since Etienne Tshisekedi, the president’s arch-rival whom he was forced to appoint partly under foreign pressure last August, refused to go when Mobutu sacked him in February.

“On February 23 this year some 52 unarmed men, women and children were reportedly shot dead and many others severely injured by members of President Mobutu’s elite presidential guard,” Amnesty said.

Members of the security forces suspected of opposition sympathies had been treated “even more brutally, held in secret detention centres, subject to electric shock, whipping, stabbing, mock executions, sexual assault”. — Sapa-AFP.
Amnesty Blows Whistle on Zaire

Amnesty has been continuing for three years to call for the release of all political prisoners, including members of the Inter-Libreville Movement and members of the Zaire Labor Movement. The organization has been working to ensure that the government respects the rights of prisoners and that their cases are handled fairly. Despite these efforts, many prisoners remain in custody, often without access to legal representation or appropriate medical care.

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Zaire is violating arms ban

UN arms embargo goes into effect
Zaire buries the victims of hatred and expediency.
Zaire to start paying state salary arrears

KINSHASA — Zaire's government, acting to pacify unpaid troops, said yesterday it would start paying its 600,000 state employees and soldiers up to one year's salary arrears from today.

Government spokesman Ngongo Luwono said new banknotes would be circulated to make the payments.

In January, soldiers went on the rampage and hundreds of people were killed when traders refused to accept new notes.

Zaire's army, estimated at more than 100,000 men, was owed three months' salary by Wednesday. Soldiers were last paid on August 20 for July.

Arrears for civil servants and workers in state-owned companies ranged from eight to 18 months.

Unpaid soldiers have regularly run riot in Zaire to protest about the non-payment of salaries. — Sapa-Reuters.
Zaire leader marks takeover

KINSHASA. — Marshal Mobutu Sese Seko yesterday celebrated the 25th anniversary of his rise to power — but many Zairians were not likely to share his joy.

At the age of 35, the then-Mr. Joseph-Desire Mobutu overthrew President Joseph Kasavubu on November 24, 1965, and became president in January 1966, six years after the independence of the former Belgian Congo.

Until 1990, Mr. Mobutu exercised unbroken one-party rule by his People's Movement of the Revolution. He still has a firm grip on the reins, despite allowing Zaire to become a multi-party democracy in April 1990 and setting up a multi-party national conference on sovereignty in August 1991. They call him the Leopard, after his leopardskin pillbox hat, and he shares the big cat's ability to rip his opponents to shreds.

Adored by some, reviled by many more, he has never left indifferent the many visitors who have come to his door.

Nowadays, the West is keen to dump Mr. Mobutu, or at least to force him to accept the democratisation he has stubbornly resisted. — Sapa-AFP
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ZAIRE - GENERAL

1994 - 1995
Zairean troops seal off home of Tshisekedi

KINSHASA. — The home of Etienne Tshisekedi, arch-foe of Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko, was surrounded by troops as a strike called by opponents of the regime was won, wide support, an opposition spokesman said.

Troops surrounded and sealed off Mr Tshisekedi's Kinshasa home early yesterday, according to former Tshisekedi government communications minister Lambert Mende.

Kinshasa streets were deserted yesterday in answer to an appeal from Mr Tshisekedi for a strike to protest against Mr Mobutu's dissolution of rival parliaments.

Frequent gunfights in the capital on Tuesday night also helped clear markets and close shops. Volatile working-class districts were reported to be quiet.

Mr Tshisekedi has been in a year-long standoff with Mr Mobutu following his refusal to step down as prime minister when the president dismissed him in October 1992.

Mr Tshisekedi was foisted as premier on the reluctant Mr Mobutu by a national conference in 1991. — Sapa-Reuters.
World Bank abandons Zaire

KINSHASA — The World Bank had decided to close its office in Kinshasa from today, a spokesman said yesterday, adding that Zaire had been declared insolvent.

The decision would mean the cancellation of all outstanding credit lines.

The official said the French West African country's debt with the bank stood at $212.9m, 112.194.

Financing had first been suspended last July, when an envelope of about $170m was still available.

The World Bank is involved in financing various projects in Zaire, notably in infrastructure and water-purifying.

The official said a liaison office would remain in Kinshasa under the auspices of the UN Development Programme. — Sow-AFP.
Zambia critical of SA trade

LUSAKA. — The Zambian government is to address what local manufacturers have criticised as a trade imbalance between Zambia and SA, Zambian Commerce and Industry Minister Dipak Patel said.

Zambian manufacturers have complained of unfair competition with heavily subsidised imports from South Africa and Zimbabwe, urging the government to intervene.

In a television interview on the weekend, Patel conceded that South African imports were heavily subsidised.

"The government would act prudently to address this trade imbalance between Zambia and her trading partners," he said, but cautioned "this will not be done at the expense of fair competition."

Patel said South Africa exported goods worth R12bn against Zambia's R450m, because Pretoria subjected Zambian goods to high and stringent taxation. — Sapa/2-9-84

Zaireans flee to Uganda to escape fierce fighting

KAMPALA — About 7,000 refugees have fled to Uganda from Zaire in the past five days to escape fierce fighting between government forces and rebels seeking to overthrow President Mobuto Sese Seko.

Ugandan Local Government Minister Stephen Chebrot said refugees were still arriving by the hundreds in villages near the western town of Bundibugyo.

"Local authorities in Bundibugyo have sought help as they cannot cope with the situation. We sent an assessment team two days ago and I am going there right now," said Mr Chebrot.

Relief officials in Kampala said 75 percent of the refugees were women and children.

The New Vision, a government-owned daily, said the refugees were fleeing eastern Zairean villages where the army and Parti Liberation Congolais (PLC) guerrillas have been battling since January 22.

A relief official with the World Food Programme said communications with areas of Zaire near the Uganda border had been cut off.

The relief official said the refugees would be moved to join other Zairean refugees.
Where 100 families rule and 40 million oblige.

The Way Zaire is

Kinhansa

Down from
Reports Hodget
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The Upheaval News

In January, the new government will present a new National Budget. The government plans to increase spending in education and health. The budget will also include measures to combat poverty and reduce inequality.

The current government has been in power since 1960. Under President Mobutu Sese Seko, the country experienced significant economic growth and political stability. However, the government's policies were criticized for favoring a small elite at the expense of the majority of the population.

The new government is promising to tackle these issues and to promote social and economic development. It is expected to implement a number of reforms, including the privatization of state-owned enterprises and the introduction of new tax laws.

The government has also pledged to improve the country's infrastructure, particularly in the areas of roads and health care. It has also announced plans to expand the country's mineral and agricultural industries.

Despite these promises, many people remain skeptical about the government's ability to implement these reforms. The country's history of corruption and mismanagement has led to a lack of trust in the government's ability to deliver on its promises.

Nevertheless, the government is determined to carry out these reforms and to improve the lives of the country's citizens. It is hoped that these changes will bring about a brighter future for Zaire.
Abortions outnumber Russian babies.

More towns fall to rebels in Rwanda

A Nairobi spokesman contacted by telephone from Nairobi said he could confirm the Byumba capture but there was not enough information to comment on the other claims.

"Yes, I can confirm (Byumba), I have seen the reports of our observers," he said, adding that there had been sporadic artillery and small arms fire in Kigali yesterday morning in the eastern part of the city.

The spokesman asked not to be identified by name.

The official Rwandan army admitted earlier this week that a column of around 1,000 RPF reinforcements passing through the Byumba region had managed to link up with the 600 RPF soldiers stationed in Kigali under the terms of an earlier peace agreement.

Ruhengeri, about 30 kilometres northwest of the capital, would be a psychologically important prize for the rebels because it is the hometown of the late president Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Mysterious crash
Habyarimana's death in a mysterious April 6 plane crash triggered an orgy of tribal slaughter in which tens of thousands of people were killed... and 400,000 Rwandans fled.

Militant Habyarimana supporters from the president's majority Hutu tribe massacred members of the minority Tutsi group that dominates the rebel movement. Army officers also accused the rebels of revenge killings... - Sapa AFP.
Pressures against him but...  

Mobutu’s still firmly in control of Zaire

Four years ago, an extraordinary fashion change swept Zaire. Overnight, women swapped African prints for trousers. Men, after decades of wearing a stiff “ahvent” jacket buttoned to the throat, donned Western suits, T-shirts and ties.

“People would wear ties with anything—over a T-shirt, with nothing underneath if necessary,” remembered an expatriate. “The point was, to show that you owned one, it was a political gesture.”

The trigger for the sartorial revolution was a speech in April 1990, by President Mobutu Sese Seko, who since seizing power in 1965 had controlled every aspect of life in Zaire, from what to wear—the obacoat—to how to address your neighbour.

Despite a ground-breaking national conference, two rounds of army pillaging, the collapse of the country’s copper-mining industry, virtual secession of the southern region of Shaba and the withdrawal of Western support, Mobutu is still there.

Optimists, convinced democracy is just around the corner, insist there has been a slow but steady erosion of his powers.

“The national conference changed something for ever in the national psyche,” said a member of the acting government. Suddenly, Zairians saw politicians get up on live television and accuse the president of the most unspeakable things.”

They point to the proliferation of opposition newspapers, the new freedom of speech and above all the new constitution, which grants Mobutu the power to “rule but not govern” and obliges him to consult on important policy decisions.

“If we can get a government in place with a prime minister who is respected here and enjoys international backing, then there’s no way Mobutu can keep violating the constitution,” said a businessman.

“The external climate has changed and for Mobutu outside support was always his trump card. He can no longer do what he wants, because he knows Zaire cannot get back on its feet without foreign aid.”

Pessimists say the constitution represents a surrender of many of the achievements of the national conference, with important clauses dropped from the final text.

Mobutu Sese Seko... can no longer do what he wants.

Asked whether they believed Mobutu would respect even this watered-down constitution, foreign diplomats in Kinshasa laughed cynically, pointing to a series of by-passed constitutions that trimmed Mobutu’s powers and were violated.

“Mobutu came into power in a particular way—by force—he has ruled in the same way, and that’s how he will continue to rule. He’ll do absolutely nothing to demonstrate his good faith,” says one.

Working in the president’s favour are the rivalries tearing the Sacred Union opposition coalition apart.

The formation of a transitional government to lead Zaire to elections has been delayed by bickering over whether radical leader Etienne Tshisekedi should be appointed prime minister or forced to give way to a central rival.

Political analysts say there is a good chance Tshisekedi will lose his bid for re-election and will do all he can to hinder the work of the transitional government, plunging Zaire into the same crisis as last year when rival governments competed for recognition and real decisions were taken in Gbadolite.

“There is one theory that views Mobutu’s April 24 speech as the first step in the overturning of democratic aspirations that had built up in Zaire, the subversion of a popular movement that was threatening him,” one diplomat said.

“If that’s true—by golly, it’s worked.”—Sapa-Reuter.
Centrist sweeps to power in Zaire poll

KINSHASA. — Centrist opposition leader Kengo Wa Dondo has been elected prime minister of Zaire, ending a five-month power vacuum that has kept this huge central African state locked in crisis.

The 59-year-old businessman, who has held the post twice before, won 332 ballots — a crushing 72 percent of the vote — in the transitional parliament. The nearest runner-up, former prime minister Lumumba Lukoji, trailed far behind with 78 votes.

Accepting his nomination, Mr. Wa Dondo issued a call for national reconciliation, implicitly acknowledging the damage wrought by the bitter rifts that have opened up between moderate and radical wings of the opposition before the election.

He called on the radical opposition, moderates and supporters of President Mobutu Sese Seko to work together to rebuild the country, saying he hoped to be the last prime minister of Zaire’s painfully prolonged transition to democracy.

The election met with the quiet approval of western diplomats in the capital, but disappointed the many Zaireans loyal to radical opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi.

“We have been betrayed,” said one office worker, voicing the feelings of many.

“Now we have another Birindwa,” he said, referring to discredited acting premier Faustin Birindwa, whose government was never recognised abroad.

Mr. Tshisekedi, who has claimed to be Zaire’s legitimate premier ever since he was voted in by the national conference in 1992, did not even feature on the final list of seven candidates presented to parliament.

He had effectively disqualified himself by refusing to register as a candidate for the post, simply demanding to be reconfirmed as premier.

As the votes were being counted inside the main hall of the people’s palace, Mr. Tshisekedi’s radical supporters in the Sacred Union opposition coalition were already dismissing the result as illegitimate and unconstitutional. — Reuter.
Mobutu and Mandela to meet today

Zaire could be key in Angolan conflict

SAPA and RODNEY VICTOR

Beleaguered Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko Mobutu could be the key to President Mandela's attempts today to resolve Angola's civil war, diplomatic sources said.

Mobutu, who rules his central African state with an iron fist and who has stubbornly resisted calls to surrender power to a democratic regime, is one of three African heads of government due to meet Mandela in Pretoria.

Diplomatic sources said Mobutu could face pressure to end his support for Jonas Savimbi's rebel Unita movement, which resumed the civil war in Angola when Savimbi refused to accept the outcome of elections in September 1992.

The sources said Mobutu could be pressured to trade support for Savimbi for moves to bring him out of the diplomatic freezer.

Mandela, in a statement announcing the summit, further highlighted the central role occupied by Mobutu.

The statement said the talks were to resolve the conflict "with specific reference to the issue of relations between Angola and Zaire".

Mandela has joined the UN-led attempt to end Angola's 19-year-old civil war at the request of UN mediator Alonine Blondin Beye who met the South African president in Cape Town last month.

Mandela's office confirmed that Mozambican President joaquim Chissano and Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos would also meet Mandela individually before a plenary session involving the four leaders.

Savimbi, who is waging a bloody conflict from his Huambo headquarters in southern Angola, will not be present for the talks.

Mobutu is expected to use his visit to convey to him the sentiments of the Pretoria summit.

Mandela said South Africa was prepared to live up to its responsibilities towards the UN, the Organisation of African Unity and other international agencies.

However, given South Africa's past military involvement in southern Africa, he has been anxious not to be seen to be continuing the heavy-handed attempts that marked his predecessors' regional initiatives.

PWV Premier Tokyo Sexwale interrupted a Cabinet meeting in Johannesburg yesterday to accept a memorandum from 1200 Zairean exiles protesting against today's meeting between Mandela and Mobutu, called to discuss the Angolan situation.
Group aims to make Zaire 'ungovernable'

KINSHASA.—Zaire's hard-line opposition has called for a nation-wide strike against the new government of Prime Minister Kengo wa Doneo.

"The country will be made ungovernable," Joseph Olenghakoy, an aide to rival prime minister and opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi, said after calling the strike for today.

Mr Tshisekedi says his dismissal as prime minister by President Mobutu Sese Seko was unconstitutional and has called many strikes in urban centres.

A strike in May was widely observed in Kinshasa and Mr Tshisekedi's home province of Kasai but a nation-wide strike on short notice could prove a test of his authority.

Mr Kengo's new government mixed supporters and opponents of President Mobutu and reflected a balance of different tribes and regions, a diplomat said in Kinshasa. — Reuter.

Mobutu supporters, critics in demos

PRETORIA.—Opposing Zairean political parties were kept apart by police in a noisy demonstration outside the Union Buildings, where the Angolan summit was held.

Police reinforcements were called when about 100 members of the Union for Democracy and Social Progress opposing the visit by Zaire president Mobutu Sese Seko arrived.

Members of Mr Mobutu's governing Movement Popular Revolution were already there, singing praises of their president.

The opposition sang anti-Mobutu songs as police moved in to separate the two groups. Posters referred to Mr Mobutu as a "killer" and accused him of ruling Zaire with a mixture of "cynicism and imperialism".

A memorandum was handed to an official of President Mandela's office, listing grievances "against the bloodthirsty regime of Mr Mobutu."
Zaire closes border in face of Rwandan refugee flood

KINSHASA. -- Zaire has closed its border to traffic from Rwanda, amid an influx of refugees from southwestern Rwanda, said officials here.

The move comes after refugees were reported to be pouring into Zaire at the rate of 30 a minute yesterday.

People are free to go from Zaire to Rwanda, but refugees will no longer be able to come out of Rwanda.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) policy is that governments should take in refugees fleeing conflicts.

Earlier, UNHCR spokeswoman Ruth Marshall said: "Generally, we ask governments to keep their borders open, but, in this case, we see no imminent threat to their safety or security in Rwanda.

On the contrary, we would see a threat to their safety and security if they crossed into Zaire in large numbers because conditions are so poor." Unconfirmed rumours had been circulating in the border areas that Zairean authorities would close the frontier amid an exodus by tens of thousands of mainly Hutu refugees fearing reprisals by the new Tutsi-dominated government in Kigali.

The eastern Zairean town of Goma was swamped by more than a million refugees last month.

The latest move comes as French troops began pulling out from a "safety zone" in southwestern Rwanda dominated by Hutus. The troops are to be replaced by UN soldiers.

UNHCR estimated 2,000 to 6,000 refugees crossed over to Zaire on Thursday, up from barely 300 a day last weekend.

It warned that Bukavu could not cope with a fresh wave of refugees to add to the 320,000 Rwandans already there. -- Reuter.
Relief as Zaire opens crossing

RUZIZI BRIDGE, Rwanda-Zaire border. — United Nations relief officials narrowly averted a bloodbath yesterday when they persuaded Zaire to reopen one of its crossings after Zairean soldiers fired over the heads of Rwandan refugees trying to storm the frontier.

The soldiers fired shots in the air shortly after dawn yesterday when a dense mass of young Rwandan men surged across a bridge that had been closed on Saturday.

At one stage some of the refugees armed with clubs buffeted a detachment of Ethiopian bluebersets who were manning the Rwandan side.

Waving machetes they shouted that the Ethiopians were stooges of the new government.

On the other side of the Ruzizi River the Zairean soldiers placed a heavy machinegun on the hill overlooking the bridge at midday.

In the early afternoon, after telephone calls to the Zairean government in Kinshasa, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees persuaded Zaire to open a second bridge eight kilometres downstream and help the refugees to a camp outside the border town of Bukavu.

By last night the situation appeared to be under control. Women and children from the 10,000 odd refugees encamped by the first bridge were to be transported in trucks to the second crossing. — The Telegraph pic London
Sleeping sickness returns to Zaire at record levels

KINSHASA. — Sleeping sickness, which kills if it is not treated, has reached record levels in Zaire, threatening to destroy entire communities.

Florent Ekwanza, head of Zaire’s Central Office for Trypanosomiasis, the group of parasite-borne diseases to which sleeping sickness belongs, said there were 11,444 new cases in the first six months of the year, nearly equal to the 11,884 new cases registered for the whole of last year.

“Last year’s figure was already the highest since independence in 1960,” Dr. Ekwanza said.

“The last time Zaire saw figures like these was in 1940. If nothing is done we’re going to be confronted with explosive and uncontrollable epidemics.”

“In one village we visited, 170 of the 240 people were affected. If we’re not careful, in another couple of years this village could disappear. Whole communities will be wiped out by a combination of sleeping sickness, AIDS and malaria.”

Dr. Ekwanza said that since detection levels were constantly falling, the real figure was certainly much higher.

“We estimate those at risk at 12 million but we can’t even check six percent of the population. The number of new cases each year could be as high as 80,000,” he said.

Spread by the tsetse fly, which thrives in both savannah and thick forest, sleeping sickness initially produces flu-like symptoms before attacking the nervous system.

Left untreated it may take 10 years to reach its final stage, but patients eventually always die of fatigue.

Before independence from Belgium, the disease had almost been eradicated in Zaire.

At independence the preventive system broke down. The disease has steadily spread since, encouraged by shrinking medical resources and a collapsing infrastructure. The real crunch came in the early 1990s when Belgium stopped co-operation with Zaire in protest at President Mobutu Sese Seko’s policies. — Sapa-Reuter.
Zairean coffee farmers too poor to fight disease

GOMA — A disease is ravaging Zaire’s robusta coffee crop and output for the 1993/94 year could be a third of last year’s level, industry experts said yesterday.

Zaire produced 1.79-million 60kg bags in the 1992/93 (October-September) year.

Farmers in the cash-strapped central African state cannot afford to treat trees suffering from trachemycroc; a deadly fungus that has spread across the robusta belt in Haute-Zaïre region. Zairean coffee output is 90% robusta.

The fungus was first noticed about three to four years ago, but little attention was paid to it because most growers had neglected their fields due to the collapse of an International Coffee Organization economic pact, which drove prices to historic lows.

The disease spread like a bushfire across the robusta belt, experts said.

Now high world prices have rekindled interest in coffee farming and most farmers are back on the fields they abandoned, but the magnitude of the disease has made it too expensive for them to treat it.

"It’s terrible. The fungus was noticed about three to four years ago but no one took any steps as the coffee market had gone down," one expert said.

"But with the return of good prices most farmers are back. For many it is too late, as the disease has destroyed their crop."

While Africa stands to make up to $2bn from high coffee prices this year, Zaire will not be among the leading beneficiaries.

In Zaire, the state offers no producer prices to farmers and no husbandry services.

Well-connected individuals set prices, buy coffee, and export it at a profit to neighbouring countries.

Prices for coffee, the second largest hard currency earner for this vast country, shot up in recent months on news that frost would cut Brazil’s output this year.

In the price boom of 1996, coffee earned Zaire a record $2bn and up to $1bn in 1997, but since 1989 earnings have dwindled to no more than $36m a year, officials at the Goma branch of the state-run Zaire Coffee Board said.

Colonial mismanagement, followed by civil war, corruption and inefficiency, have reduced Zaire to beggar-nation status.

Agriculture still accounts for about 30% of its Gross Domestic Product, but Zaire, which was once soil-sufficient in food, now imports more than 100,000 tons of food a year.

Sapa-Reuters
SA May Rehabilitate Zairean Lines

Transport rolling stock by leasing Zairean tracks.

THE STAR / TUESDAY JANUARY 10, 1995
KINSHASA. — Zaire's public water authority yesterday warned the capital's estimated five million inhabitants that tap water was no longer safe to drink because there was no money to buy sterilising chemicals.

In an open letter, Regideso chairman Mr Tshiongo Tshibinkubula wa Tumba appealed to his customers to settle $352 million in unpaid bills to allow the authority to build up new stocks of calcium hydrochloride.

He said a new delivery of chemicals, paid for by the Congolese government, was expected in the first half of March but in the meantime consumers should boil all drinking water. Officials at schools and hospitals were told to stop using their taps.

The water problem is just one symptom of the disintegration of Zaire's infrastructure. In the once-modern capital power cuts are a regular event, the public telephone system is on its knees, and main roads are visibly crumbling. — Sapa-Reuter
'Don’t drink the water'

Kinshasa — Zaire’s public water authority warned the capital’s 5 million inhabitants yesterday that tap water was no longer safe to drink because there was no money to buy sterilizing chemicals. People were urged to pay their bills. (358) 951 2195
Women want more recognition at work

By Thabo Leshilo

The traditionally male-orientated reward systems in many companies — such as time off to play golf — are flawed and discriminate against women, says a leading businesswoman.

The audience at the "Business woman of the 90's — Facts and Fiction" seminar, held in Midrand yesterday, also heard that most women managers were frustrated by the rigid, hierarchical management structures of most companies.

The breakfast meeting was hosted by Unisa's Graduate School of Business Leadership and the speaker was Trix Coetzter, financial director at Foodcorp and national winner of the Corporate Business Women of the Year for 1993.

She said that unlike men, women found recognition for their positive contribution to their companies as more rewarding than fat salaries.

"Money is not a measure of success. If, as men, you can give a little recognition to your female counterparts, it would do more than a fat pay packet."

She said the future prosperity of companies lay in encouraging initiative and leadership, rather than experience and management — a development that would favour women.

Coetzter challenged the notion that women have to prove themselves on a constant basis. "We have a problem with inequality and glass ceilings."

Women should fully exploit their strengths which included being cooperative, egalitarian, sensitive, honest, perceptive, organised and focused on detail.
Women for women's equality. I love being a member of an organization that is fighting for and working for equal rights for all women. The Women's Rights Movement is an ongoing struggle for social justice and equality. It is a movement that seeks to end discrimination against women and promote gender equality in all aspects of life.

The Women's Rights Movement began in the 19th century, with the suffrage movement, which worked to gain the right to vote for women. Since then, the movement has expanded to include a wide range of issues, such as equal pay, reproductive rights, and domestic violence.

As a member of the Women's Rights Movement, I have been involved in various activities, such as protests, rallies, and workshops. These activities have helped me to understand the challenges faced by women and have inspired me to take action to make a difference.

One of the most rewarding experiences of being a member of the Women's Rights Movement has been witnessing the progress made over the years. Women's rights have come a long way, but there is still work to be done. I am committed to continuing the fight and ensuring that women's rights are respected and protected.

In conclusion, being a member of the Women's Rights Movement has been a fulfilling experience. The movement's goals are noble, and I am proud to be a part of it. I believe that we can continue to make progress and realize a world where women are empowered to be their best selves.
Streetwise Mobutu is master of roads game

KINSHASA — Two years ago, the journey from Zaire’s port of Matadi to the capital took five hours.

Bored expatriates would head for Mbandaka, site of perhaps the world’s most unexploited beaches, for long weekends.

Nowadays the 350km trip can take anything up to five days.

It is a rattle-calling, exhausting obstacle course through lakes of orange slime and around huge canyons where the rain has swept away the road.

When Belgium granted independence in 1960 it left Zaire, a country the size of western Europe, with just 146 000km of roads. But they were in good repair.

Since then the network has steadily disintegrated in what many local inhabitants believe has been a deliberate ploy by President Mobutu Sese Seko to reduce the central African state to a handful of isolated city enclaves, cut off from the outside world and each other.

The Rwanda Patriotic Front’s rebel advance on Kigali would be impossible in Zaire. Take away the roads and a coup is that much harder to engineer.

Of the estimated 12 000km of road still in regular use, no stretch is more crucial than the Kinshasa-Matadi link and none has had more investment lavished on it.

The aging railway between the two cities is plagued by a shortage of spare parts and the few functioning locomotives are prey to bandits. So the dried fish, wheat and beer that form part of the staple diet of Kinshasa’s 5-million inhabitants must come by road in huge trucks that the road was never built for.

Meanwhile produce piles up in Matadi, dubbed the most expensive port in the world, as ships wait to be unloaded. Attention is focusing on the Mpoko bridge just outside the port, which shudders and sways as each lorry thunders past. A coffee trader says: “Once that bridge goes we might as well turn off the lights and go home, because the only way of getting produce into Kinshasa will be by air.”

But the demise of Route Nationale 1 has implications beyond the strangulation of the capital. Mobutu is pushing centrist prime minister Kengo Wa Dondo to stage elections in five months’ time, calculating that early polls will catch the opposition unprepared and give him his best chance to win a popular mandate.

The briefest sortie out of Kinshasa past settlements untouched by electricity, running water, television or radio, brings home the enormity of the task.

“How on earth can you stage polls with the roads in this state?” asks a diplomat. “You’d have to fly the ballot boxes in by helicopter. Even then it would take weeks for people to come in from outlying villages, if they ever got to hear about elections. Campaigning would be impossible and so would preventing massive fraud.”

— Financial Times.
Zaire expels foreigners

Kinshasa — Zaire's Prime Minister Kengo wa Dondo has signed a decree ordering as many as 135 foreign nationals to leave the country within 24 hours, national television announced last night.

Reports: Star Foreign Service, Reuters, Financial Times, AP and AFP
Zaire's public schools go public

Alain Shungu Ngongo in Brazzaville

African parents are taking over the running of a chaotic public school system from a Ministry of education they accuse of existing in name alone.

"It's the only solution if we want the children to carry on going to school," says Valentin Kadima, a primary school inspector.

Conditions in most schools are abysmal. Roofs leak, children sit on bricks or planks supported by stones that serve as chairs. Often the blackboards are made of cardboard or plywood hung on dilapidated walls.

Teachers who should be earning between four and 12 dollars a month depending on their seniority, like the rest of the country's civil servants, have not been paid for months.

"Today it is impossible to get statistics on the students and teachers. All the figures you will be given are made up. The state no longer exists in this country," Kadima says.

He has watched as teachers, tired of battling an unearcing system, have quit to seek alternative ways of making ends meet. "Do you think that if I were still a teacher I would have had the means with which to send my children to school?" one primary school teacher asked.

"I support my family by travelling between Kinshasa and Brazzaville ... (but) today I can do only a quarter of what I might have been able to do for them if things were normal."

Mineral-rich Zaire, four times the size of France, is destitute. Thirty years of dictatoral rule by Mobutu Sese Seko has left the central African country worse off in terms of infrastructure and standards of living than before independence.

Now parents anxious to educate their children are forced to take over the upkeep of schools and teachers at the urging of an ineffectual general schools' inspectorate.

"We can't be ashamed of talking about it, it's a reality," says Kadima's colleague, Felix Ntambe. "For us it is the only way to keep those teachers who are still willing to work."

Each school fixes its own fees which range from four to 50 dollars per term. As money paid by parents at times did not reach the teachers, many now pay them directly.

"This works, my teachers are paid regularly and are no longer complaining as they did last year," says Brigitte Mampasi, a schoolgirl. In the capital, these payments can be in cash or in kind, as parents themselves are either unemployed or have simply not been paid.

It is not uncommon to see children making their way to school carrying their books, as well as items like rice, flour, smoked fish and cans of petrol or oil and new or secondhand clothing.

"My parents have no money. As they want me to go to school, they provide a bit of rice or manioc with which to pay my teacher," says Antho Mwamba, a final year student.

"Sometimes I give my teachers clothes already worn by my father or my uncle.

However, in a city where the rent for a two roomed house alone is between 25 and 50 dollars, the strain among families to educate their children is intense.

To help out, students are forced to take odd jobs — when they can find them — or turn to petty trading.

"I go around the neighborhood selling cigarettes, boiled eggs or sweets. I get by," says a secondary school pupil. — IPS
Zaire, en route to democracy or a free-for-all?

Zaire has long been promised democracy and reconstruction with Prime Minister Kengo wa Dongo spearheading the latest drive to hold general elections in July.

But few Zaireans will believe it until they see it and Mr Kengo himself leaves room for doubt.

"The government introduced a draft law in December to create a national election commission," he said in an interview in his Kinshasa office overlooking the Zaire River.

"But it has not yet started its work. At the end of this month it will be able to tell whether there will be elections or not."

His transitional government, in office since June last year by the grace of President Mobutu Sese Seko, is due to be dissolved by July 9. Thereafter, the only structures likely to remain in place will be the judiciary and the office of the State President on which Mr Mobutu has had a dictator's grip for 30 years.

Observers believe the political battle will then return to the real stand-off between the "Mobutu political family" and the "radical opposition" of the pro-democracy movement led by Etienne Tshisekedi. Mr Kengo, a centre player on the political turf, will probably be sidelined, having served his purpose.

It is Mr Kengo's third turn as premier under Mr Mobutu, who is renowned for chopping and changing his cabinet. (Tshisekedi has also been prime minister twice.)

Mr Mobutu's relentless grip on power has been little affected by post-Cold War developments. He has been untouched by Zaire's intermittent four-digit inflation figures and by the flight of $21 billion (RT5.8 billion) after rioting broke out when unpaid soldiers looted Kinshasa in 1991 and inspired the proletariat to follow suit. Governance collapsed but the Mobutu institution prevailed.

No longer a pawn in the Cold War game, Mr Mobutu has had international opprobrium heaped on him for his poor human rights record, but to little affect. Ironically, recent crises in neighbouring Rwanda and Angola have provided him a political platform, used astutely when he showed a face at the Afro-Francophone Summit in France last November and turned up at the Angolan ceasefire signing ceremony in Lusaka soon thereafter. Now he is even on the guest list for Namibia's fifth independence celebrations on Thursday.

In Zaire, Mr Mobutu's "Movement Populaire de la Revolution" also appears to have made something of a comeback in the last three years. More and more people wear - apparently voluntarily - the "ponya" cloth emblazoned with his portrait and an increasingly popular view is that like him or not, without him Zaire could tip from its present random chaos into a full-scale state of civil conflict.

What has also perhaps protected Mr Mobutu's reign since the early 1990s is his promise of democratic reform. Its unsuccessful path has been littered with dual governments and duelling prime ministers but for five years, on paper, Zaire has been in the process of change. The end goal is a single constitution and an elected parliament.

But, on the ground, local authorities are virtually a law unto themselves and the gap between rich and poor is like that between the reality and the promise.

"Mr Kengo admits hard truths about his country's flaws. Bringing democracy and reconstruction to Zaire, he said, are one thing. "But what's most important is to change the mentality of the Zairois. That means their immoral ways, accepted as the norm, should disappear and make way for good spiritual values."

As an example Mr Kengo admitted that much of the country's diamond and gold resources leave the country illegally through its borders with nine neighbouring states, Angola, Congo, the Central African Republic, Sudan, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania and Zambia.

"Relations with neighbours are what they are and our means of control are what they are. As we have no means of control at present we cannot make problems with neighbouring countries. We are just trying to offer incentives to dealers to operate through the official channels," said Mr Kengo.

He noted sadly that at independence Zaire's gross domestic product equalled that of South Africa. Now he has massive expectations for relations between the two countries.

"We hope to benefit from the experience of dealing with South Africa, to become like South Africa ourselves," he said that Zaire would welcome investors to tap into its forests, agriculture, mineral wealth and hydro-electric potential, amounting to 100,000 mw alone at the Inga Rapids near Kinshasa.

"Today we are selling power from Inga to Zimbabwe, tomorrow to South Africa," said a hopeful Mr Kengo.

In the short period of his office, and with little time left now, Mr Kengo has been credited with having slowed inflation to about 25 percent.

Kinshasa has also seen some improvement since the pillaging of 1991. Some shops have reopened, workers cut grass on traffic islands and a handful of buildings have been painted, - the post office for example.

"Zaire could blow again," warned Kinshasa residents, remembering the fearful chaos of 1991 and seeing a potential repeat in the fact that civil servants, unpaid for eight months now, have been on strike recently.

But, perhaps too, the delicate balance that contains Zaire's chaos and keeps the lid on the time bomb is the acute memory of life after the 1991 free-for-all. Harder than ever and much more expensive.
Zaire's illicit diamond traffic enriches diggers and dealers but does nothing for the country.

**TJIPAPA (Zaire) — Where the jungles stretch into the edge of the airport, plane wrecks rust and shabby car bodies come and go with purpose. This is an isolated town in Zaire's West Kasai province and it feels like a South American "oasis" camp.**

But here "the goods", as diamond traders call their wares, are secret stashes dug up in rivers that flow from Angola. Silks away.

Informal diggers produce the bulk of Zaire's diamonds, mostly of industrial quality. They can earn anything between R150,000 and R200,000 for a stone, sold at local markets as if they were tomatoes or onions, or to exporters in more formal shops or companies — mainly Lebanese-run.

What is sinister is that as much as 80% of Zaire's diamond wealth is smuggled out of the country. Some stones are smuggled by horse to Belgium destined for South Africa, but Zaire diggers also disappear into the neighbour's countryside over "the arrow of a border", as Prime Minister Kasavubu once described it.

"The Congo Republic, for instance, has no diamond resources but in 1982 it exported $250 million (R270 million) worth of diamonds," said Kengo.

Both diamonds and gold from Zaire also go through to Brazzaville in Central African Republic, to Lebanon, to Israel. Some also trickle into Tanzania, Malagasy and Somali too.

If you sum up all these exports Zaire has lost, they come to more than $1 billion a year.

Kengo told how diamond production jumped suddenly in 1982, when, during a previous strike inlite miners, he made the getting for diamond thieves to trade diamonds and gold in Zaire.

Ironically, the last vestiges of control are left to a strict check on non-Zairian entering the diamond areas.

Foreign observers rarely go into the area. I had twice attempted, but failed. Instead, I was ordered by Zairean police to stay off aircrafts at Kinshasa's N'djili airport and the second time I failed to find further transport, having been left behind on torresy roadworks from Kinshasa.

BUSINESS IS BOOMING: Hundreds of precious stones, scales and piles of near-worthless "old zaire" notes clutter the bustling open diamond market in Muju-Muya.

**Tikalpa, where Mbaa, a largely State-owned company, operates a formal mine.**

A wider, informal diamond area has opened up on the rivers in the central areas of deep jungle around Kiangangi. Diamonds from here are charactized by a green colouring and, according to South African police, are being seen in South Africa.

**GAINING CURRENCY:** "Business of Dollars" reads a quaint sign indicating a money-change in the diamond market at Muju-Muya.

**DIAMONDS IN THE ROUGH:** In Muju-Muya's open market, diamonds are sold among toothbrushes, cloth wrappings and the usual crude items normally found in a rural African market. These uncut and rough diamonds are known among the local gem traders as "the goods". And much of the quality is questionable as they are only of industrial quality.

Zaire has several diamond areas where "the goods" are traded openly, including the city of Muju-Muya in East Kasai province — 300 km from close to President Mobutu Sese Seke. Zaire has several diamond areas where "the goods" are traded openly, including the city of Muju-Muya in East Kasai province — 300 km from close to President Mobutu Sese Seke. Zaire has several diamond areas where "the goods" are traded openly, including the city of Muju-Muya in East Kasai province — 300 km from...
Zaire faces long haul to self-sufficiency

IN the copper boom days that ended in 1990, food from Zaire's agriculturally rich East and West Kasai provinces came by rail into neighbouring Shaba, Swahili for the mineral un-earthed there.

Today essential commodities go in the opposite direction as diamond production in Kasai is the last hope for economically crippled Zaire.

Although more than a 1,000 mm of rain a year gives Shaba an agricultural potential similar to the Kasai regions, little of the produce on twice-a-week upcountry trains out of Lubumbashi carries the "Produit du Zaire" stamp.

Imported maize, wheat, sugar, salt — and, most important, petrol — are among the 8,000 tons of goods hauled every month on Spoonnet trucks, to the station at Mwita Ditu, 1,300 km into Zaire. The occasional train goes even further — to the brewery town of Kananga or the tin mining centre at Kindu.

Spoonnet has an agreement to ensure movement through southern Zaire with the Lubumbashi-based state railway company, Office Des Chemins de Fer de Sud (OCS). A third company, Southern Rail, based in Lubumbashi, was also involved in the agreement until February, ensuring that Spoonnet receives its payments from OCS.

Spoonnet general manager for regional management Pierre Lombard said in Johannesburg that Southern Rail would probably also be involved in future plans in Zaire, which Argus newspapers outlined earlier this year.

These include upgrading an existing line and services to the port of Kalémie on Lake Tanganyika.

"But it's still early days," said Mr Lombard. "We do not yet have a clear cut agreement with Zaire.

At present we are trying to assist the country in uplifting the level of operational activities. Once traffic picks up, we hope it will flow well and we shall be able to plough back into the infrastructure and get things going."

SPoonnet is slowly making tracks into Zaire, helping to get goods into the diamond areas. DUNCAN GUY reports for Argus Foreign Service from Lubumbashi.

Loading up: Imported maize is loaded onto a truck for distribution into Zaire's Kasai diamond area, a region with high enough rainfall to make it the breadbasket of Zaire and beyond.

Grinding to a halt: Lubumbashi's copper mine lies idle as Zaire's economy has shifted to the diamond area further north.

Meanwhile, in Lubumbashi, Southern Rail regional director Philippe Wacquez said although derailments happened almost daily due to a lack of maintenance, rail was an important form of transport because of the appalling state of Zaire's roads.

"Rail rates are three times higher than in South Africa," he said.

The main rail client is Miba, a predominantly state-owned diamond mining company which gets a 20 percent discount.

It also has a jet which collects supplies three times a week from Ndola, Zambia, and once a month from Johannesburg, said Mr Wacquez.

Apart from a scattering of coffee plantations in eastern Zaire, there is little commercial farming left in this huge country. Kasai, which has all the potential, yields its agricultural riches to peasant subsistence farmers only and the diamond industry is entirely dependent on food imports. Similar shortsightedness results in the import of petrol.

"Most of it is used to keep private generators going that only operate for about four hours a day. But there are so many sites there offering potential for small hydro-electric schemes that would cost about R7 million to build — that's the revenue of two week's diamond sales from the area," said a Lubumbashi businessman.

Sources in Lubumbashi also spoke of entrenched corruption on the rail tracks.

"Smugglers assisted by the civil guard and soldiers stop the train just after the Zambian border, forcing it to halt by taking out the vacuum pipes between the carriages," said one source.

"They then load on maize and travel to the last station before Lubumbashi where they offload it once again."

There have been efforts to stop these practices, but most have been in vain. The locomotive driver is bribed. He won't stop doing this because it's far too profitable. Everybody's involved in this system. Their salaries are so low that's when they get paid at all — and they collect a lot of money this way," a source said.

Then there are also less self-inflicted mishaps on the train line penetrating Zaire's interior.

"At the end of the dry season last year, between Kamina and Kanjama, passengers jumped out of the cars and staff sprang from out of the locomotive as wild bees attacked the train," said the source.
Zaire's vital but frail artery

In the copper boom days that ended in 1990, food from Zaire's agriculturally rich east and west Kasaï provinces came by rail into neighbouring Shaba, Swahili for the mineral unscathed there.

Today, essential commodities go in the opposite direction as diamond production in Kasaï is the last hope for economically crippled Zaire.

Although more than a metre of rain a year gives Shaba similar agricultural potential to the Kasaï region, little of the produce on twice-a-week up-country trains out of Lubumbashi carries the "Produit du Zaire" stamp. Imported maize, wheat, salt — and most importantly petrol — are among the 600 tons of goods handled a month, often on Spoonet trucks, to the station at Mine Dikanda, 300km into Zaire. The occasional train even further to the copper town of Kansanga or tin mining centre at Kindu.

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"Most of it is used to keep private generators going that only operate for about four hours a day. But there are so many sites there offering potential for small hydro-electric schemes that would cost about R200 million to build — that's the revenue of two week's diamond sales from the area," said a Lubumbashi businessman.

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There have been efforts to stop this smuggling and uneconomic railway time, but mostly in vain.

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Then there are other avoidable mishaps on the train line penetrating Zaire's interior.

"At the end of the dry season last year, between Kamina and Kalambo, passengers jumped out of the cars and staff sprang off the locomotive as wild bees attacked the train," said the source.
Road versus rail... a battered Land-Rover, carrying charcoal from Zaire's forests, rounds a memorial to the ruling Movement Populaire de la Revolution, in Lubumbashi, once Zaire's "copper capital". Zaire's appalling roads make rail transport vital.

PICTURE: DUNCAN GUY

Train 1300km twice-a-week
Mobutu signs symbolic Budget: President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire yesterday signed the country’s symbolic 1995 Budget, providing for revenue equalling $46 million against spending of $49 million. The deficit budget, passed by parliament last week, means little in practice: Zaire’s economy and government apparatus are in disarray, and western creditors are continuing to boycott this central African nation.
Unpaid diplomats living on the streets

ABIDJAN: Zaire's economic crisis is so bad that many of its diplomats have to rely on charity or welfare in their host countries — and some are facing legal action for debt.

DIPLOMATS at Zaire's embassy in Ivory Coast, unpaid for three years, say some of them have been turned out of their homes and are finding it increasingly hard to make ends meet.

"We're beggars," one diplomat said yesterday. "I'm staying with friends. Two of us had our belongings literally thrown into the street."

Ambassador Mr Bambi Mavungu said he was grateful to Ivorian creditors, who had approached the Abidjan foreign ministry over unpaid bills but were generally unproving patient.

"There is no one here right up to ambassador level who has not been the subject of legal proceedings," he said.

The same problems plague Zairean diplomats the world over: Zaire's charge d'affaires in Poland was found sleeping in a railway station last November because he could not pay the rent on either his apartment or his office.

Other Zairean diplomats have signed up for welfare in their host countries or rely on the charity of their diplomatic colleagues. Many are reluctant to return home, convinced things are even worse in their crisis-ridden country.

Mr Mavungu said the problem stemmed from Zaire's internal economic crisis and a decision by foreign donors to halt aid.

The Abidjan embassy's staff of eight scratches a precarious living from expensive visas and other consular activities. "We issue a couple of visas a month and share out the money," Mr Mavungu said. "We rely on the generosity of our friends."

A six-month multiple entry visa for Zaire costs 190,000 CFA francs (just under R1 400) — but the Ivorian government has advised its citizens not to travel to Zaire because of the Ebola outbreak. Zaire said on December 2 last year it would close 38 of its 63 foreign embassies and slash staff numbers. — SAPU-REUTERS
Zaire uses all its weapons to fight fear

Superstition and science have joined forces against the Ebola virus. Frédéric Fritsch reports from Kikwit

Dr. Fontaine's reputation is firmly established in the Zairean town of Kikwit. The residents live in fear of the powers of these extraordinary white American missionary and medical doctor.

Did he not put this terrible hex on the town... the Ebola virus, the hemorrhagic fever and its train of ghastly manifestations? Popular African "wisdom" has an explanation for this. It may not be rational, but it calms people and puts the epidemic and the deaths within a familiar traditional context.

It all began the day Dr Fontaine turned into a hippopotamus and hid in the Kulu River from where he emerged to terrify the region's inhabitants. So harmful was his behaviour that the missionaries in Vanga didn't want to take him back when he assumed his former self. So in a rage, he went to see his friend President Mobutu Sese Seko at Gbadolite. It is well known that the president doesn't like Kikwit. So he asked the doctor-hippopotamus to cast a spell on the town.

Taking advantage of a double opportunity - a conference on Aids and an evangelical week - Dr Fontaine went to Kikwit. There he spread the poison, especially at the hospital, and cast an evil spell. The day after he left, patients began to die.

"Only those who don't believe in the virus heed the advice. Leaflets in French and Kikongo were also distributed. Everybody now knows that one mustn't touch the sick or handle corpses."

The drive to provide people with information and make them aware of the disease launched last week by the international commission entrusted with the job of combating the Kikwit epidemic is paying off. Nobody shakes hands anymore. People who know one another exchange noisy greetings, such as "Hi, good morning, How's it going?" Younger people greet one another by flexing the right arm and touching elbows. Such practices are uncommon in Africa, where lingering handshakes and hugs are generally the rule.

The information patrols are joined by teams of Zairean medical students and Red Cross workers, who methodically comb the town's districts seeking out the sick and the dying. The sick are immediately transferred to the Kikwit general hospital. Some townpeople are shocked that they are not allowed to look after their dead in the traditional way.

"In our tradition," said Jean-Paul Kimassolo, "we have to wash the dead person before burying him, just as we have to console the bereaved families and comfort them in their grief."

Nurses and nursing auxiliaries bustle around outside the emergency ward. All wear outside white gowns, two pairs of gloves, black rubber boots, face masks, protective glasses and helmets. They move slowly around three old metal beds, spraying them liberally with disinfectant. Other nurses burn gloves and masks that have been used just once.

"This," explained Lieutenant-Colonel René Katuliki, the military doctor running the emergency service, "is like a marshalling yard. We receive all the sick people here. Those who have at least one symptom of hemorrhagic fever we keep under observation here for a day or two. Those who have several symptoms are promptly referred to Wards 2 and 3, where they are taken charge of and quarantined."

His chief nurse, Césarine Mumbaba, has no intention of leaving. "I can't abandon the patients," she said. "It's a question of professional conscience. But she acknowledged that she had not been paid since January 1994 except for some bonuses that were as pitifully small as they were irregular.

Yet she remains firmly optimistic. She said that she was "very scared after the Italian sisters and the Zairean nurses died" for "we were caring for our patients without taking any special precautions."

Mumbaba had a staff of 32. There are only 10 left. Six fell victim to the epidemic, the others ran away. The head nurse, who has four children, said: "It's three weeks since I touched the last sick person without taking any precautions. Another few days and I'll be sure I haven't been contaminated."

At the entrance to the main building stands an orange tipper-truck. The driver is waiting for orders to set off on his grisly round of collecting the corpses that families now abandon in their homes or by the roadside. Sick people are reluctant to set foot in the hospital. "You go there and you come out in a bodybag," said Issiaka Kinke angrily. "You go to hospital to be treated and a few days later you are buried without even the traditional customs."

His friend, Kihumba Nzamba, like him an unpaid voluntary worker with the Zairean Red Cross, had just died. His body, wrapped in a plastic bag, lay on a trolley that was being pushed by nursing aides wearing protective gear to the cathedral's burial grounds. The dead man's family and friends were all present. The singing was mournful and the pace brisk. As soon as they lowered the body into the ground, the stand-in grave-diggers threw in their gloves and masks.

Nzamba's grief-stricken widow would probably come back the next day to place a bowl, a cooking pot, a teapot and a pair of slippers on the grave "so he will have nothing in the next world."
Zairean PM told to ‘step aside’

KINSHASA. — Zaire has moved deeper into political crisis after an alliance of opposition radicals and supporters of the president said Prime Minister Kengo Wa Diallo’s government must move aside for a new leadership.

“July 10 is the start of a new step in the transition as the political class notes that the government has come to an end,” said a statement signed by the alliance.

Parliament acknowledged last week that elections could not be organised in time for Sunday—the scheduled end of Zaire’s democratic transition—and voted to extend the transition for a further two years.

The statement casts doubt on an announcement from the prime minister’s office on Monday which suggested Mr. Kengo was staying on with the blessing of President Mobutu.

The two political groups are made up of Mobutu supporters and the radical opposition of Etienne Tshisekedi.
Zaire's leaders' mandate over, say rivals.

KINSHASA: Zaire's political crisis has deepened, with opposition radicals and supporters of President Mobutu Sese Seko declaring that Prime Minister Mr Kengo wa Donko's mandate has expired.

The two groups issued a statement on Tuesday saying Mr Kengo's mandate had ended on Sunday along with the latest phase of Zaire's democratic transition.

Their announcement will complicate Mr Kengo's efforts to broaden his government, which has won support from Zaire's former Western partners for its efforts to clean up the economy.

The two parties now want a government of national unity "where the prime minister is presented by the other political family to that of the head of state".

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Mr Kengo, elected by parliament in June 1994, and his supporters interpret the move as a simple extension of the status quo, which includes the government's mandate.

The radical opposition and many of Mr Mobutu's supporters, however, want him out. — Reuter
Zaire leader's mandate over, say rivals

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KINSHASA: Zaire's government yesterday blamed a veteran radical leader loyal to murdered independence prime minister Patrice Lumumba for weekend political violence which killed 10 people.

Information Minister Masegabo Nzanzu said security forces fired on demonstrators on Saturday after Mr Antoine Gizenga, leader of the Unified Lumumbist Party, organised a violent march on parliament "with the aim of taking power".

But the radical opposition, at the forefront of pro-democracy protests in the early 1990s, denounced the shooting as "barbarity". The Sacred Union said it would press ahead with its own plans for a campaign of anti-government action from tomorrow. It and its allies have not spelt out what form their anti-government action will take.

Mr Nzanzu said: "An M-16 style rifle was found with the barrel still warm at Mr Gizenga's house. "Two soldiers had been shot and wounded."

Justice Minister Mr Nsinge Udjie said Mr Gizenga, a member of independence hero Mr Lumumba's government, had not sought permission for the march and had been held for questioning.

Prime Minister Mr Kengo wa Dondo, popular in the West for his efforts to clean up Zaire's corruption-plagued economy, called a special cabinet meeting yesterday to discuss the unrest which killed nine civilians and a policeman and wounded 47 people.

Reuter
Pro-Lumumba party hard hit

The number of victims could not be confirmed. The destroyed headquarters of the Lumumba Party were searched and the remains of the destroyed building were searched by soldiers. About 30 people were already wounded in the wake of violent attacks.

Pro-Lumumba party hard hit
Zaire's currency takes a dive as public sector payouts start

KINSHASA. — The value of Zaire's currency, the source of army-led violence in the past, has fallen by nearly a third in a week after the central bank printed billions to clear pay arrears for soldiers and civil servants.

This week moneychangers in the Kinshasa district nicknamed "Wall Street" were selling one US dollar for 9500 and 10,000 new Zaires. A week ago, the rate was 7350 Zaires to the dollar.

The "mamans", the powerful women controlling the capital's black market, sitting under sunshades with huge bundles of notes in their hands, said the exchange had gone crazy.

"Suddenly there are a lot more Zaires on the market," one said.

"Only two weeks ago Zaire was congratulating itself on having stabilised the currency.

In August Zaire recorded month-on-month inflation below zero percent after central bank intervention.

The US embassy had estimated an inflation rate for 1995 of 199 percent, compared to 6,030 percent for 1994.

Finance Minister Pay Pay wa Syakassighe told Reuters the Zaire had been dragged down by government measures to clear months of salary arrears for soldiers and civil servants.

"Between 13 and 18 thousand million (Zaires) a week have been put on the market. Sadly we have arrears of 260 thousand million," he said.

The government had to live with the dilemma of paying salaries and the resulting runaway inflation. "We can't pay them, but when we pay them the consequences are devastating for purchasing power," — Reuters.
MBN - May decisions spell diamonds
Zaireans resisting currency reform

BY MATTHEW TOMKIV

Kinshasa — Resistance has emerged in Zaire’s chaotic capital to government measures intended to stabilise the national currency, businessmen said last week.

The government imposed new rules on hard currency dealings a week ago, to bring backdoor exchanges under the umbrella of the central bank and stabilise the tumbling Zairean currency.

“In the sector used to working with the informal market there will be resistance, and there is already resistance,” said Luboya Divo of the Employers’ Association.

He said people had been working with the informal sector for 10 years and would find it hard to change, although such change was necessary.

Since Tuesday, the central bank has fixed the exchange rate every day.

At the latest fix on Friday, one dollar was worth 10 716 zaires. The black market rate was 11 500 zaires to the dollar.

Privately many businessmen are sceptical about the “benefits of reform.

“We have to have hard currency if we are going to import,” said an importer.

The bulk of the hard currency used to pay for essential imports comes through the trade in diamonds, and the government’s new code aims to bring in more hard currency through official channels to support the zaire.

The government now insists that 50 percent of hard currency brought in by diamond dealers be deposited with the central bank, and that all diamond deals be done in local currency.

There are immense difficulties with purchasing diamonds in zaires, which are bulky and not accepted in the main diamond region of Kasai for political reasons.

The currency is not accepted by smugglers bringing diamonds from Angola.

Most importantly, its habitual instability makes it unattractive.
Zaire’s diggings gain on Kimberley

BY JAMES TOMLINS

Paris — Kimberley’s Big Hole is about to be beaten in size by illicit diggers at Mbuji-Mayi in the diamond rich province of Kasai, southern Zaire.

At present, Mbuji-Mayi notches up 25 percent to 35 percent of the world’s annual industrial diamond production, in addition to bijou stones. Recorded annual sales, which do not include smuggling, are estimated at about R600 million.

But conditions are vastly different from those ever experienced by diggers in Kimberley.

Mercenaries hired by the Zaire Diamond Board at one time protected official concessions by shooting at illicit diggers from helicopter gunships, the weekly Jeune Afrique reports.

“There is little organisation or law and order in Zaire, except for the diamond trade because this brings in much needed dollars,” its correspondent wrote.

“This means that Mbuji-Mayi is relatively safe compared to the rest of central Africa as everybody concerned there profits from the trade.

“Buyers and diggers have their own code of honour, which insists on honesty in daily deals between both sides.”

No diamond buyer or digger has ever been attacked or robbed.

Many dealers keep thousands of dollars at home or in the office, and do not even lock their doors or windows. There is an unspoken underworld law — leave them and the diggers alone.

It is estimated that the Zaire Diamond Board’s diamond sales are worth about R20 million a month, compared to R30 million a month earned by the diggers and private buyers.

Marcel, a prospector, reckoned that he earned from R500 to R2 200 a month with his concession worked by 20 diggers in five-man teams.

His three-month-old hole was eight metres deep and getting wider and deeper by the hour. Sacks of earth were washed in the nearby Kasai River, revealing industrial and bijou diamonds.

The biggest diamond discovered this year, but not by Marcel, weighed 700 carats, bringing the digger instant riches.

Nobody is paid in Zairese banknotes — a wheelbarrow would be needed to transport the equivalent of $10.

The end result is a diamond rush from all over Zaire, even by 14-year-olds who can earn more in a week than their teachers at home earn in a year.
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Sparkling future for diamond mine

The Argus Foreign Service

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His three-month-old hole was eight metres deep and getting wider and deeper by the hour.

The biggest diamond found this year weighed 700 carats.

The rich pickings have prompted a diamond rush from all over Zaire.
Zaire to the Rescue?

MOWA NEWS of International Press Services reports from Nyanga, Zimbabwe on a new plan to

Water Resources and Forestry

The Southern African Department of the United Nations

Zaire's water problems are expected to be

The Water Resources Department of the United Nations is expected to improve Zaire's water problems. The new plan involves a comprehensive approach to water management. The plan includes:

- The construction of new water infrastructure.
- The implementation of water conservation measures.
- The development of water management policies.
- The training of local water technicians.

The plan is expected to be implemented in the next 10 years. The Water Resources Department of the United Nations expects to provide assistance to improve Zaire's water crisis. The plan is expected to improve Zaire's water management and conservation efforts.
Bold plan to make the fields fertile again

Development of roads, railways and other infrastructure

swampy areas lining parts of the mighty Zaire river are holding up

...
Zaire says it won't expel Hutu refugees

CAIRO - Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seke told a Central African summit that Zaire would not expel Rwandan Hutu refugees who fled there during civil war last year, a Zairean delegate said.

But the Tutsi-dominated government in Rwanda must guarantee safe return for the refugees, the delegate said as four African leaders and former US President Jimmy Carter held talks in Cairo on the Tutsi-Hutu conflict in Central Africa.

Mr Carter has brought together presidents from Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda and Zaire in a bid to mediate a solution to the conflict that has wreaked havoc on Rwanda, Burundi and their neighbours for decades.

Diplomats said the delegations worked through Tuesday night and hoped to wrap up an agreement late yesterday.

Hutus killed hundreds of thousands of Tutsis in a genocidal campaign instigated by the then Hutu-dominated government in Rwanda last year. More than a million Hutus later fled to Zaire.

Ethnic bloodshed between majority Hutus and minority Tutsis continues in neighbouring Burundi, periodically triggering waves of refugees across the small country's borders.

"The refugees have to go back to their country, that is the solution we are looking for. Rwanda and Burundi agreed that they have to go home. But we have to respect international conventions," the Zairean delegate said.

"There is no question of returning these refugees. We want to solve the refugee problem."

Prime Minister Kengo Wa Dondo had previously threatened to expel Rwandan and Burundian refugees in January.

Rwandan Hutus are trickling back to their homeland, now ruled by a Tutsi-dominated government, but many refuse to return out of fear of reprisals for the genocide.

Rwandan President Pasteur Bizimungu, a Hutu, said on Tuesday his country was committed to "unconditional repatriation of all Rwanda's refugees to solve... our own internal problem and alleviate the burden of Rwandan refugees to the neighbouring countries."

The Zairean delegate said authorities in Rwanda could alleviate refugee worries by ensuring their safety upon return.

"They have to improve security so these people who come home are not worried. They have to help them recover their possessions when they return," he said. — Reuters