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. Star 2/11/91

Truth

(358)

"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 Ngbase Te Gerengbo, 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.



Mobutu Sese Seko

Mobutu's dark plans exposed

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".

Open 6/1/91

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

According to *Umoja* 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.

Umoja 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". – Sapa-Reuter

The frontier between Zambia's Copperbelt and Zaire is one of Africa's most dangerous areas, reports **John Ryar**

Dodging bandits on Africa's hell run

Star 22/2/91 (358)

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 around the bend. 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.

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

Two people a day die here, numerous others are assaulted. Two vehicles are stolen daily, mainly at gunpoint. The casualties are Zambian civilians killed by the bandits or — less frequently — bandits killed by patrols of the Zambian Army.

The army's record in the area is not good. As we continue through the lush maize belt, the vehicle an object of suspicion for the few people along the route, Adam points to a man-made forest on the rise.

That, he says, is where the Zaireans conceal themselves, and the Zambian patrols have not yet found the courage to try to clear them out.

"The bandits will attack a car or rob people just passing," he says, "and the patrols will come by and by. But at that time the Zaireans are back in the forest.

"They wait until they see what the soldiers are doing and then they go again to Misundu Road at another point and attack somebody else."

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 Zairean 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 Misundu 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 Misundu Road these days. Most farmers would rather go the longer way around through Mufulira or Chingola, linking up with convoys 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 1989, 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.

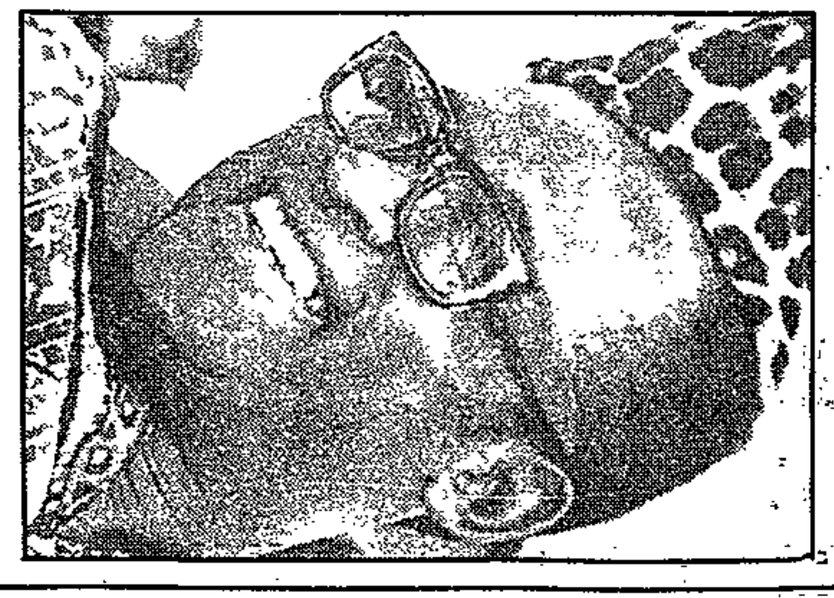
A national audit of all bank stocks was ordered and revealed that Zambia had almost three times more kwachas in circulation than had officially been printed. The only possible explanation was that the additional notes had been introduced through Zaire, as payment for smuggled or legally consigned goods. 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 kwacha. 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 issued.

They have yet to be, while the government waits for the rest of the forgeries to surface. — Star Africa Service. □



Zaire's Mobutu Sese Seko . . . soldiers underpaid and underfed

Mobutu to mediate Rwanda ceasefire

358

WMon 22/2-28/2/91

DARES 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 communique 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 Bululu.

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 Kanuna and Cyanika 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.

Bukeye was unable to say whether the rebel Rwanda Patriotic Front had formally accepted the ceasefire.

— dpa

Run the gauntlet of Death Road

The frontier between Zambia's Copperbelt and neighbouring Zaire is one of the most dangerous areas in Africa. Sowetan correspondent John Ryan reports on an ongoing chronicle of banditry - and death. Sowetan 25/2/91.

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

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Doctor faces Aids guinea pig charges

358

Star 16/3/91

JAMES TOMLINS

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 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

Sowetan 20/3/91.

358

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-Reuter*

Premier looks at Zaire deal

S Times (Bus IT) 21/4/91 · 358

By CURT VON KEYSERLINGK

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 Malumba Lukoji has announced the acquisition, but a Premier spokesman says Professor Lukoji is jumping 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 Grau, the World Bank's representative to Zaire. He describes such a deal as a step to restoring confidence in Zaire and confirmation of 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 probably become involved in nutrition practices and health services in the Shaba province and other aspects of the infrastructure.

(Bus IT) S/Times 21/4/91 · Step

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.

Premier buys state firm from Zaire

358
B1 Day 22.4.91

MATTHEW CURTIN

PREMIER International, the Premier Group's 10-year-old overseas trading arm, has bought one of Zaire's state-run food companies for an undisclosed sum, and will take over operations officially at the beginning of May.

A Premier International spokesman said yesterday the Zairean goverment had approached the company in early April with a view to selling Gecamines' Development. It is the food division of Gecamines, the former Belgian mining company Union Miniere which was nationalised.

Premier International confirmed its acceptance of the deal last week and was waiting for "legal arrangements" to be sorted out from the Zairean side.

The spokesman said the Zairean government had approached Premier because of the group's long-standing contact with it.

He said there was growing pressure from the World Bank on Zaire to privatise Gecamines. The bank had criticised the way in which a R300m loan had been spent by Gecamines. The existence of an outstanding portion of the loan was an important factor in Premier's decision to buy Gecamines.

Business Times reported yesterday that Zairean Prime Minister Lukoji Malumba announced the acquisition recently.

Zairean World Bank representative William Grau was reported as welcoming the deal as a step towards restoring confidence in Zaire.

CONDUIT TO AFRICA

358

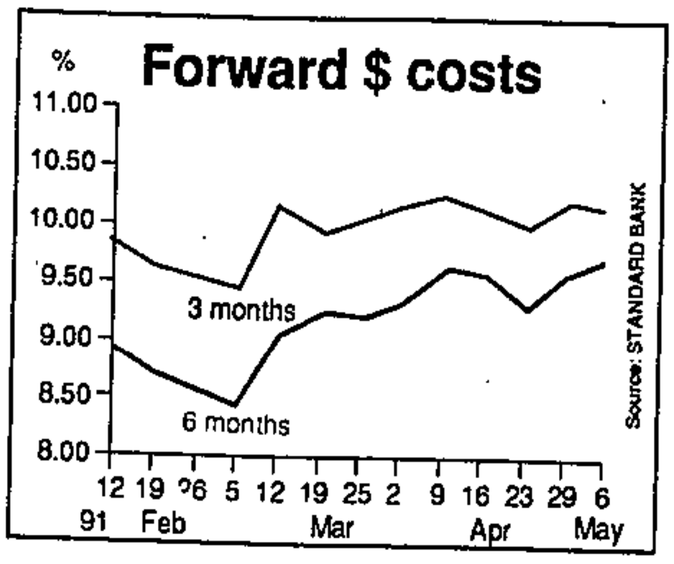
Banque Commerciale Zairoise, a Zairean bank with a Belgian parent, has opened a representative office in SA. Its main objective, says representative Willy du Bois, is to act as facilitator for SA businessmen wanting to make investments in the rest of Africa. He adds that this is the first time an African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

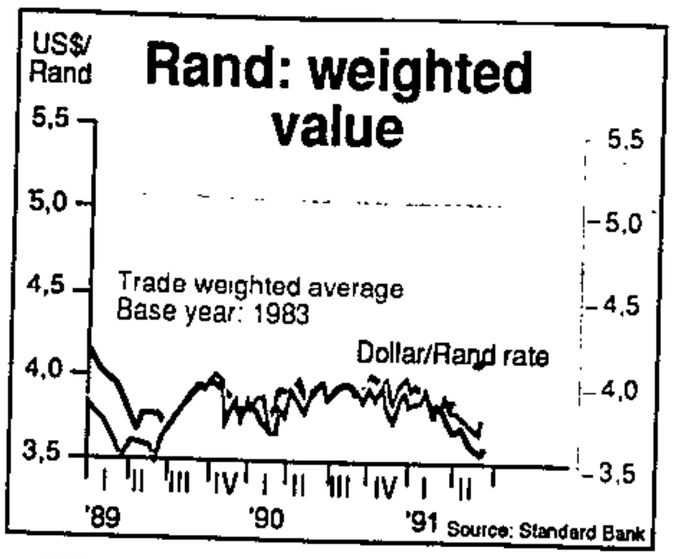
Banque Commerciale Zairoise is registered in Kinshasa and has a network throughout Zaire. Its shareholders include Belgian bank Belgolaise (25%), the government of Zaire (25%) and the public (50%). Belgolaise in turn is a 53,4% subsidiary of Belgium's largest bank, Generale de Banque. Du Bois says that through Generale and its subsidiaries Banque Commerciale Zairoise has access to more than 30 countries.

Belgolaise 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. ■





RAND'S PRICE

May 6 1991	R1 equals	One foreign unit equals (R)
SDR	0,266	3,765
	0,288	3,477
ECU	0,304	3,287
	0,309	3,237
UK £	0,209	4,788
	0,225	4,438
US $	0,356	2,808
	0,377	2,655
Canada $	0,409	2,445
	0,437	2,288
Switzerland Fr	0,520	1,923
	0,539	1,855
France Fr	2,094	0,478
	2,092	0,478
Germany DM	0,618	1,618
	0,622	1,608
Japan Yen	49,135	0,020
	59,420	0,017
Italy Lire	457,895	0,002
	456,700	0,002
Zimbabwe $	1,068	0,936
	0,908	1,101
Austria Schil	4,345	0,230
	4,380	0,228
Holland Guilder	0,697	1,435
	0,700	1,429
US $ value of SDR	1,314	1,344
US $ value of ECU	1,219	1,187
Financial Rand		
Cost per US $	4,095	3,339
Discount (%)	35,279	15,730

Year ago figures in light print.
Average of the Telegraphic Transfer buying and selling rates used by the banking sector for the day, for amounts up to R20 000 depending on foreign currency involved.
The above rates are for guidance purposes only.

Fm 10/5/91 358

Now Air Zaire operating in SA

Star 15/5/91

By John Miller

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 DC 10 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 en 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

B|Day 28|5|91

MATTHEW CURTIN

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.

(358)

Phases

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 — 7,9-million carats out of a total 18,3-million carats worth about R725m. Mbuji-Mayi is in the south-eastern Kasai province, the main diamond producing area. Production is largely from alluvial operations although the amount of stones produced from kimberlite pipes is increasing.

Harness the mighty Zaire River, make smokeless fuel, use solar power, build breeder nuclear reactors — these were some of the options raised at a recent Megawatt Park energy conference.

Power to the people – a problem of perspectives

Star 29/5/91

358

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 worth while.

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 21 863 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 of 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 Sastech 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 energy needs, 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 of the University of Cape Town, Professor R K Dutkiewicz, said the Eskom policy of electricity for all was laudable — but could we really afford to provide electricity for 20 million people? Even developed countries did not have electricity in every home, he said.

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

Reinhold Viljoen 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 TOIT

Zaire's 'warrior' may face defeat

Sowetan 12/6/91.

358

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 the control of the military - at least those with bullets in their guns - and Zaire's security services are very efficient."

FOCUS

After he seized power with the army in 1965, five years after independence from Belgium, Mobutu convinced influential foreigners that without him, Africa's second largest country would disintegrate through tribal secessions.

But the end of the Cold War punctured the case for supporting a regional ally who had been an enemy for years.

Allegations of human rights abuses made in the US Congress, in the Belgian parliament and by Amnesty International, and charges of massive corruption levelled by Mobutu's former lieutenants, suddenly became hard to ignore.

"If Mobutu dies, does that mean Zaire will explode and disappear from the map of the world?" Mr Joseph Ileo, who heads the PDSC (Christian Social Democratic Party) opposition party, asked angrily.

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 an "abas-cost".

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

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

But many ordinary Zaireans 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 R84 a month and public sector workers are perpetually on strike.

"This is 25 years of Mobutisme," said Marie-Pauline, looking up glumly at the giant cobwebs festooning the cavernous 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.

Threats

The main threats to the president come from two former aides, Mr Tshisekedi wa Mulumba and Mr Nguza Karl-I-Bond. Both men can mobilise large crowds almost anywhere in the country. Both expect to win presidential elections. And both say Mobutu is history.

Nguza, a former prime minister whose final split with Mobutu was much later than Tshisekedi's, knows that many Zaireans consider him an opportunist.

"For 25 years there was no other way to serve Zaire except under President Mobutu.

"Now the time has come for telling tales. That is normal, it is a way of washing off the dirt of the past but it is dangerous to look at people's political virginity and nothing else," said Nguza, whose Uferi (Union of Independent Federalists and Republicans) party's manifesto includes a pledge to change Zaire's name back to Congo.

Tshisekedi, described by one Western diplomat as "bull headed enough to defeat Mobutu", agrees that a national conference will have to be a no holds barred affair.

"In Zaire, corruption was institutionalised. Mobutu equalled corruption," he said.

Exile

"He's finished, he's preparing his exile somewhere," Tshisekedi said in an interview while Mobutu was away in the south of France, resting at his luxurious villa.

Some diplomats, and many well-heeled Zaireans, 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 Lubicz 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 Zaireans.

Tshisekedi, a co-chairman of the UDPS (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 has beens. Those who advocate the Kengo solution forget there is a decisive new factor in Zaire - the people." - *Sapa-Reuter*.

Zaire rush to set up formal SA ties

(358) CT 13/6/91

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 ailing continent as the countries are among the economic "powerhouses" in their regions.

Kinshasa diplomats, who requested anonymity, identified the ambassador only as General Bolozi. They said he was close to President Mobutu Sese Seko 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 becasue 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

TIM COHEN (358)

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. (254)

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 Bolozi.

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. B/Day 13/6/91

Zaire has long traded openly with SA despite an OAU ban and President Mobutu Sese Seko was the first African leader to receive President F W 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.

358

Zaire may be marching to Pretoria

ARGUS 13/6/71

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 Bolozi. — Sapa-AP.

Eskom, Zaire in power deal

(358)

ST Times (Bus Times) 30/6/91 1

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 Inga 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.

By IAN ROBINSON

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 3 400mW will be needed by the year 2000. Only 1 300mW will be forthcoming from Cahora Bassa, which means that more than 2 000mW will still be required.

SA's potential offtake in 2000 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 *Beacon* 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?"

Umoja, a leading independent paper, said in a front-page editorial: "The direct connection of the present misery of the people of Zaire and the presence 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.

- *Sapa-AP*.

Mobutu stays put as his nation's economy topples

KINSHASA — Mobutu Sese Seko, last of the cold warriors installed to block communism, has managed so far to thwart the demands for democracy that have brought down one African dictator after another.

The economic collapse after 26 years of Mobutu's rule is so complete that his political foes have trouble even organising opposition.

Communications and transport, once among the best in Africa, have collapsed.

Many government agencies are shut down or on strike.

"There is no government for anyone to oppose," said Buane Kabwe of the Zaire Human Rights League.

In May and June, opposition leaders hoped to organise huge protests at Mobutu's failure to schedule elections as he had promised 14 months ago.

Most public attention, however, was focused on get-rich-quick schemes being promoted on state radio and television.

Riots broke out when the schemes failed, which US and Belgian diplomats said could "set off the fire that brings the regime down". But the violence affected only Kinshasa. Police rarely intervened unless they were attacked.

Mobutu seldom visits the capital. He spends most of his time on his riverboat or in residences more than 1 600km from the city, in a region with virtually no roads.

Travel is difficult even in Kinshasa.

Streets are washed away by rain or overrun by bush. The only improvement visitors notice in the communication system is that cellular phones have replaced radios for the few businessmen connected to the private system.

Collapse

The best way to make an overseas call is to cross the Congo River to Brazzaville, the Congolese capital.

Zaire's gross national product is 30% of what it was in 1960, when the country became independent of Belgium.

The collapse of the infrastructure is so complete the US State Department's Human Rights report includes mention of it.

In April, the government-controlled copper company, which provides 90% of the Central African nation's foreign exchange earnings, announced it was cutting exports by 45% because of strikes, bad weather and maintenance problems.

Aid has been cut off by the IMF, World Bank, Belgium and the US.

Journalists, opposition leaders and students interviewed said Zaire's 36-million people spent so much time just surviving they have little time for political revolts.

Critics say Mobutu's personal fortune is more than $4bn, but the system of patronage that has kept him in power requires him to share his wealth with supporters.

On April 24, 1990, Mobutu announced he would legalise opposition parties.

Now there are more than 100, and opposition leaders claim he finances many of them to dilute the strength of his political rivals. The promised elections have not been scheduled.

The newly freed Press describes the situation as "multi-Mobutism," or a choice between the many faces of the president.

"It is not clear that the political system will be liberalised sufficiently to permit citizens to change their government through democratic means," said the US State Department's human rights report. — Sapa-AP.

Madagascar imposes curfew after rioting

ANTANANARIVO — A curfew has been imposed in Madagascar's main port city after rioting in which stores were looted, cars set afire and at least five people injured, officials said yesterday

The rioting on Monday in Toamasina, on the east coast of the island nation, followed three weeks of almost daily mass protests in Antananarivo, the capital, against the government of President Didier Ratsiraka.

Few details about the riots were immediately available, but authorities said an 8pm to 6am curfew had been imposed on Toamasina.

The coalition of opposition parties organising the protests in Antananarivo is demanding replacement of the socialist constitution, free elections and an end to Ratsiraka's 16-year rule.

Security forces have not interfered with the protests and there have been no reports of serious violence linked to them. — Sapa-AP.

Violence reigns in Beira Corridor

HARARE — A sudden upsurge of violent incidents, apparently sparked by hunger, has broken out on Mozambique's Beira Corridor, Zimbabwe's closest link to the sea, posing new dangers for travellers on the 315km link.

The BCG Bulletin, published monthly by the Beira Corridor Group, the private company monitoring business interests on the route, says in its latest edition there were five attacks in May and early June in which one person was killed and another was injured.

"None of the attacks appear to have been politically motivated," says the Bulletin. Instead, they were carried out by men in a desperate attempt to find food or money.

Sapa's correspondent in Harare reports food production has fallen by 45% in the central Mozambican provinces of Manica and Sofala through which the corridor runs. It is heavily guarded by Zimbabwean troops to protect the road, railway line and fuel pipeline link from the port city of Beira to the eastern Zimbabwean border city of Mutare.

Reports say the number of refugees on the corridor, fleeing hunger and attacks by Renamo, have swelled dramatically in recent months.

The Bulletin says all the attacks, between May 16 and June 7, occurred during daylight, and were mostly shots fired at passing vehicles.

The incidents occurred after a long lull in the violence on the corridor which has earned the reputation for being one of the few safe roads in Mozambique.

The Bulletin says the attacks "seem to have been carried out under the assumption that vehicles travelling from Zimbabwe will contain food, and travellers coming from Beira will have money" for shopping in Zimbabwe.

The Bulletin says the Zimbabwe National Army has arrested some of the gunmen but adds: "The easy availability of weapons may result in further attacks of this nature." — Sapa.

Zaireans in UK dole fraud

B Ibarra
4/7/91. 358

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

Own Correspondent

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

MARC HASENFUSS 358

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. BTDay 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."

Zaire 'govt ministers flee from protesters

KINSHASA. — Two Zairean 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-Reuter

great embarrassment for security chiefs who recently introduced new measures to stop intelligence leaks to Protestant extremists.

Star 17/7/91 (358)

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

Star 18/7/91 358

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 22/7/91

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 Chongo, will also try to persuade the Paris Club meeting to release to Zambia the first instalment of the $650 million (about R1,8 billion) it pledged in aid last year.

The Africa News Organisation reports the money is being withheld because the Zambian government has not yet complied with the tough conditions laid down in the pledge.

Six months ago, Zambia's international debt stood at $5,8 billion (about R14,5 billion).

Last month, the Kaunda government rejected donor demands to raise the price of mealie 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

358

Sowetan 24/7/91

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 Nguza Karl-I-Bond, a former prime minister who heads the opposition Union of Federalists and Independent Republicans.

Ileo Songo Amban, a leader of the Democratic and Social-Christian Party, said main opposition parties had signed a pact of united opposition to Mobutu.

AROUND THE WORLD

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. - *Sapa-Reuter.*

Time is on the side of the opposition parties in Zaire, concludes **The Economist**

Mobutu's back is to the wall

Star 26/7/91 (358)

EVEN in Zaire 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 10 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 [illegible]crat 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 called for strikes and protests, and been ignored. The three main opposition figures, Nguza Karl I Bond, Tshisekedi wa Mulumba and Ileo Nsongo Amba, 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 Gécamines declared *force majeure* on copper deliveries in May. If Mr Mobutu cannot get minerals to his foreign customers, they will back 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 officers 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 criticised 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.

With the transition to peace in neighbouring Angola, Zaire has lost much of its value as an ally of the United States.

Mr Mobutu, like his colleagues in Côte d'Ivoire and Gabon, may hope to become a paternalist head of state in a multiparty Zaire. A national conference of all political groups could offer him a last chance to placate the people as well as Zaire's creditors, securing a fresh presidential term as well as the loans needed to bring the economy out of its despondency.

But the combination of an opposition boycott, widespread strikes, pressure from former allies and a demoralised army with only two or three effective divisions could close the Mobutu era. □

SADF ~~289~~ 358 'trained Zaireans'

Star 9/8/91.

Pretoria Bureau

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 Kitona. 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.

C

into a killer, says CCB man

w/mail 9/8 - 15/8/91

ural ties that bound him to the sangoma explained why "all the members of the CCB felt themselves invested with a special mission". The pastor who performed an exorcism on him told Gordon-Bates he had received two orther identical confessions.

The Weekly Mail has been able to establish that Van der Merwe was born in June 1963 in Johannesburg. He is a self-confessed member of the CCB who, according to various sources, has decided to come clean.

Van der Merwe claimed that murders were "painstakingly decided and approved directly by a general. We had a list of people that we had to neutralise one way or another."

He said the networks of the CCB were officially and operationally dissolved by the government in July 1990, but Van der Merwe's comrades, put to harmless tasks, could still be mobilised.

According to Van der Merwe, when his superiors began to "feel that I was wavering in my convictions, they proposed to send me to Natal in order to continue the dirty war on South African soil".

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 ruin 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 sevice 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

w/mail 9/8-15/8/91.

The Civil Co-operation Bureau saga has taken a bizarre twist with a former operative claiming he was turned into a killing machine by black magic administered by a Zairean sangoma.

358

By WEEKLY MAIL REPORTER

A DISSIDENT member of the Civil Co-operation Bureau claims to have been "trapped" into CCB activities, including murders, by bizarre muti rites 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 like a Swapo murder) of a Democratic Turnhalle Alliance official and three members of Swapo'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 Comops (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 civilisation — and we had to do everything to stop Swapo 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. The 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 Senekula Paredeku Yo 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'

ET 12/8/91

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 Zairean 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

358

Star 26/8/91

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



On the way out . . . President Mobutu.

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 geopolitical 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 guerillas in neighbouring Angola.

The events now unfolding in Zaire, coupled with the recent Angolan settlement, provide a chance 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. □

eptember 4 1991

Police in Zaire shot protesters, say witnesses

(358)

Star 4/9/91.

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 Belgium, Kimbulu 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

(358)

B/Day 4/9/97

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 Kimbulu Moyanso denied 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 loaded 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.



MOBUTU ... 26 years of absolute power

"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 Kasavubu, 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 Ngaba, 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.

period. — Sapa-Reuter

tion. — Sapa-Reuter

Zairean inflation is 3 000%

358
CT 9/9/91

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 3 000%.

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

358 AIG 12/9/91

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.

SA men 'trained Zaire's soldiers'

358 CT13/9/91

KINSHASA. — South African instructors trained at least 100 Zairean soldiers in urban terrorism techniques, Zaire's Human Rights League said yesterday.

The 34 South African instructors taught members of Zaire's elite Owl Regiment techniques of sabotage, kidnapping, the laying of mines and other aspects of non-conventional warfare, the league said in a report.

The training took place at the Kitona military base in southern Zaire and the trainees were responsible for several acts of terrorism in Kinshasa, the report said.

Among them was an attack on the headquarters of the Union of Federalists and Independent Republicans (Uferi) party of Mr Nguza Karl-I-Bond last week.

One Uferi official and a member of President Mobutu Sese Seko's ruling party were killed in the ensuing fighting. — Sapa-Reuter

300 new Aids cases a day

CT13/9/91

PRETORIA. — The government is to spend R5 million on a publicity drive to fight the spread of the Aids virus, HIV, which infects 300 people each day, National Health, Health Services and Welfare Minister Dr Rina Venter said yesterday.

She also announced that a toll-free telephone service providing pre-recorded Aids information and an Aids help-line would be set up.

Dr Venter said President F W de Klerk had decided to allocate special funds because of the urgency and extent of the Aids pandemic.

About 300 people a day were becoming irreversibly infected with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus, she said.

Various advertising agencies had been approached to design the comunication campaign. The agency that came up with the strongest proposals would be appointed.

Dr Venter said the number of health personnel would be increased over the next few months, so that more effective technical assistance could be provided.

If callers had further questions after calling the toll-free number — which would be made public in due course — they would be able to dial an Aids help-line.

If necessary, they would be able to visit an Aids Training, Information and Counselling Centre.

"Children between the ages of five and twelve years are essentially free from HIV infection and we aim to retain their infection-free status as they grow into their teenage years," said Dr Venter.

"As a direct result of this we are researching an Aids and lifestyle training package for children in secondary schools."

This programme would cost a further R1,5 million.

Aids Unit head Dr Manda Holmshaw said the campaign would feature an African, as opposed to European or North American-oriented, approach.

The chief medical adviser to the unit, Dr Wilson Carswell, was optimistic that the spread of Aids in South Africa could be checked. — Sapa and Own Correspondent

Police Aids tests 'not compulsory'

Staff Reporter

POLICE who have been randomly selected for a variety of medical tests, including screenings for Aids and Hepatitis B, will not be compelled to undergo the tests.

It was also learnt that members of the police who test HIV-positive will not be discharged from the force.

This was disclosed this week by the chief of police personnel services, Lieutenant-General P M du Plessis, who was reacting to the controversy surrounding the nationwide random testing of thousands of police for for a host of contagious diseases, including Aids and Hepatitis B.

The wide-ranging tests were devised to form a health profile of the police force.

S|T|15|9|91

Zaire PM woos IMF

358

S|Times

KINSHASA: Prime Minister Mulumba Lukoji 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 $81,7-million (R228-million).

Paratroopers mutiny in Brazzaville

358
Jan 24/9/91.

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 31st 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-entrenched military leaders in Benin, Congo, Niger and Mali, and forced civilian President Omar Bongo of Gabon to multiparty elections that led to power-sharing with the opposition.

Strikes and violent protests for democracy have forced 16 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 source added Belgian residents have been warned to stay at home.

The scheduled flight of Sabena had to be rerouted at the last moment to Brazaville, 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-Reuter.

Zairean soldiers go on looting rampage

358

BRUSSELS — Zairean soldiers went on a looting rampage in their capital, Kinshasa, yesterday, firing shots and sending civilians scurrying for cover. BDA 31

Zaire's ambassador to Belgium, Kimbulu Moyanso wa Lokwa, said soldiers from several brigades pillaged shopping districts in Kinshasa as well as Ndjili 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 tourist activities had come to a standstill. BIDay 24/9/91

Kimbulu said the 31st 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. Kimbulu 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. — Sapa-Reuter.

Mutiny in Zaire closes airport

358

ET 24/9/91

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

358
ARG 25/9/91

BACKGROUND TO THE NEWS

PARIS. — A mutiny by Zaire army units is the clearest signal that long-serving President Mobutu Sese Seko is losing his iron grip on the vast central African state.

With the Angolan civil war over, South Africa shedding its pariah status and the world awash with cheap copper, Zaire has lost the strategic appeal which once guaranteed Mr Mobutu almost automatic Western backing.

The United States, Mr Mobutu's closest ally during his 26-year reign, has virtually cut all support, citing human rights abuses and the failure to push through economic reforms.

Said a Western diplomat who monitors Africa from Paris: "If I were Mr Mobutu I would be thinking of leaving the country while there is time.

"When your own soldiers are shooting and looting in the streets, yours is clearly a crumbling regime."

France and Belgium rushed paratroops and marines to Zaire yesterday to protect foreign nationals after Mr Mobutu's soldiers pillaged shops and homes in the capital, Kinshasa, and razed the ruling party's headquarters in a mutiny over pay.



Mr Mobutu

"I can't see what Mr Mobutu can do to satisfy the soldiers. The uprising is clearly a reaction to hunger," said the diplomat, who asked not to be named.

With extensive reserves of strategic minerals, Zaire is potentially one of Africa's richest countries, but its economy has crumbled. Inflation is now running at over 1 000 percent a year.

The strategic minerals, and Zaire's role as a conduit for arms for US-backed Angolan rebels, long guaranteed US support for Mr Mobutu. French and Belgian interests in the economy motivated joint interventions in 1977 and 1978 to defeat rebels in the southern copper belt.

Said Mr Christophe Carle, an Africa expert at the French Institute for International Affairs: "Mr Mobutu used to trade shamelessly on this geo-political usefulness to ensure US military and financial assistance.

"When Mr Mobutu saw his standing in the US Congress was diminishing he quickly re-established diplomatic relations with Israel to make sure he had the support of the American Jewish lobby."

Exiled Zaire opposition leaders in Paris said France should not just send troops to protect Europeans but should also tell Mr Mobutu it was time to step aside.

"This intervention should not be to keep Mr Mobutu in power," said Mr Evarist Nyembo, spokesman for the Zaire Opposition Co-ordinating Committee in France.

"It would be sad if France encouraged people in Eastern Europe to carry out their revolution but does not do the same for Africans. Mr Mobutu is incapable of organising even a national conference to discuss a multi-party constitution." — Sapa.

Operation airlift

DEFENCE FORCE STAND BY TO RUSH TO ZAIRE AFTER RIOTING, LOOTING

TODAY



Win a minibus

There's a super minibus to be won by an Argus reader.

A new clue in the Stick-a-Pic competition appears on page 2 today.

You could win a Toyota Hi-Ace GLX minibus worth R57 000 from Atkinson's Toyota!

There will be a new clue every publishing day, including Weekend Argus, until Saturday October 12.

In addition to the fabulous minibus there are five cash consolation prizes of R1 000.

If you subscribe to The Argus during this Stick-a-Pic competition you will be entered in the draw automatically.

NORTHERN Argus

NATURE'S GARDEN

In Northern Argus today:

- Start of a new series by Kirstenbosch experts on the cultivation and care of indigenous plants.
- Car sales slump hits Peninsula's "Motortown".
- Latest research at Tygerberg offers new hope for childless couples.

Argus **motoring**

An eight-page pull-out section covering the full motor-

MICHAEL MORRIS, Political Correspondent

THE Defence Force is on standby for a rescue mission to airlift South Africans from Zaire where wild rioting and looting by mobs led by mutinous soldiers has already claimed 30 lives.

Hundreds of foreign nationals have been scrambling to flee from the sprawling central African country since the outbreak of violence. Scores have arrived in Johannesburg and more are expected today.

About 20 South African diplomats, businessmen and their families have gathered at the Kinshasa residence of the head of the mission in Zaire, Mr Herman Hanekom.

A Foreign Affairs spokesman said in Pretoria today: "Our first concern is the safety of our people in Zaire. We are keeping in touch with them and on that basis the Cabinet will decide whether or not they should be recalled.

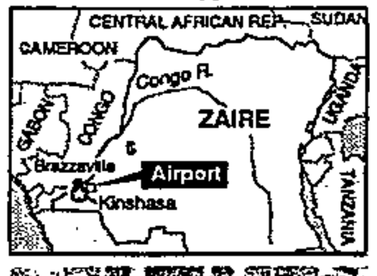
"It is not easy for our diplomats in Kinshasa to know exactly what is going on. They are in one part of an enormous country and they have no way of knowing what is going on elsewhere."

● Sapa-Reuter reports from Kinshasa that France and Belgium have flown hundreds of troops to Zaire.

In Paris, an official said a French soldier was shot dead and another wounded when shooting broke out as French troops intervened to help round up some of the 3 500 French residents in Kinshasa.

Hundreds of foreign nationals scrambled to flee the sprawling central African country. More than 1 000 people also took refuge in the luxury Intercontinental Hotel in Kinshasa.

Officials said President Mobutu Sese Seko, who appears 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.



There were scenes of wild terror in the commercial centre of Kinshasa.

Authorities warned foreigners to keep off the streets and stay in home in the wake of widespread unrest and looting.

The unrest followed a mutiny by a unit of the Zairean armed forces who were reported to be angry at not having been paid for three months.

Civilians, fed up with food shortages and inflation that has reached 1 000 percent, joined mutinous soldiers in looting and ransacking private homes, shops and a hotel.

Soldiers at the head of angry mobs shot out padlocks and smashed doors. Private homes and restaurants were stripped bare.

Gunfire echoed through the streets while the foreign troops took up position at embassies and at N'Djili airport on the outskirts of the city.

Anti-government protesters also ransacked the headquarters of Mr Mobutu's ruling





FLEEING STRIFE: Belgian refugees, above, from strife-torn Lubumbashi arrive at Harare airport to escape widespread rioting, looting and mutiny in Zaire.

REFUGEES IN SA: Medics, left, load a woman into an ambulance at Lanseria airport minutes after she and 50 other foreigners landed after fleeing Zaire

US bank pledges R250-m backing

RAMSAY MILNE
The Argus Foreign Service

NEW YORK. — One of America's biggest investment banks has pledged its support for international efforts by South Africa's Independent Trust (IDT) to raise at least R250-million to help relieve poverty in black communities.

J P Morgan's announcement in New York coincided with the release of a statement in London disclosing that IDT's chairman, former Supreme Court Judge Mr Jan Steyn, will lead a team of experts to make representations in London, Zurich and Frankfurt to raise this sum through a Eurobond issue in November.

Funds raised by the bond will be used to build schools and provide clinics and clean water in rural communities.

J P Morgan, which will lead the bond issue, is the first major American financial institution to announce publicly its support for a South African project on this scale.

But a spokesman for J P Morgan said it would be surprising if the bank's support for the trust's development programme raised any criticism in the United States.

Brick thrown at ambulance

JOHAN SCHRÖNEN
Crime Staff

Mana Slabbert dies at home

Staff Reporter

MRS Mana Slabbert, ex-wife of Idasa's Dr Frederik van Zyl Slabbert, has died after col-

1 000 in the Cape have Aids virus

VIVIEN HORLER, Medical Reporter

THE number of people who have tested positive for HIV infection in the Cape has passed the 1 000 mark for the first time, the Department of Health said.

It said 60 new cases of infection were diagnosed in August, compared with 34 in July.

"There has been a worrying jump," said Dr P T Vurgarellis. "At this stage we're not sure if it is purely coincidental — perhaps because of a new survey somewhere in the area on blood samples — or whether the increase will be sustained.

"We think it is coincidental, but we won't know

LEATHER AFFORDABILITY
• IMPORTED LEATHER •
HESSE LOUNGE SUITE

[illegible] p round up some of the [illegible] French residents in Kinshasa.

Hundreds of foreign nationals scrambled to flee the sprawling central African country. More than 1 000 people also took refuge in the luxury Intercontinental Hotel in Kinshasa.

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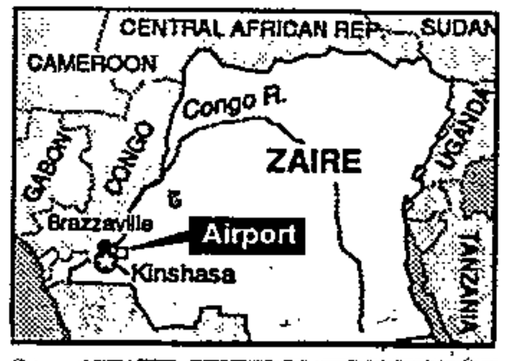

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Soldiers at the head of angry mobs shot out padlocks and smashed doors. Private homes and restaurants were stripped bare.

Gunfire echoed through the streets while the foreign troops took up position at embassies and at N'Djili airport on the outskirts of the city.

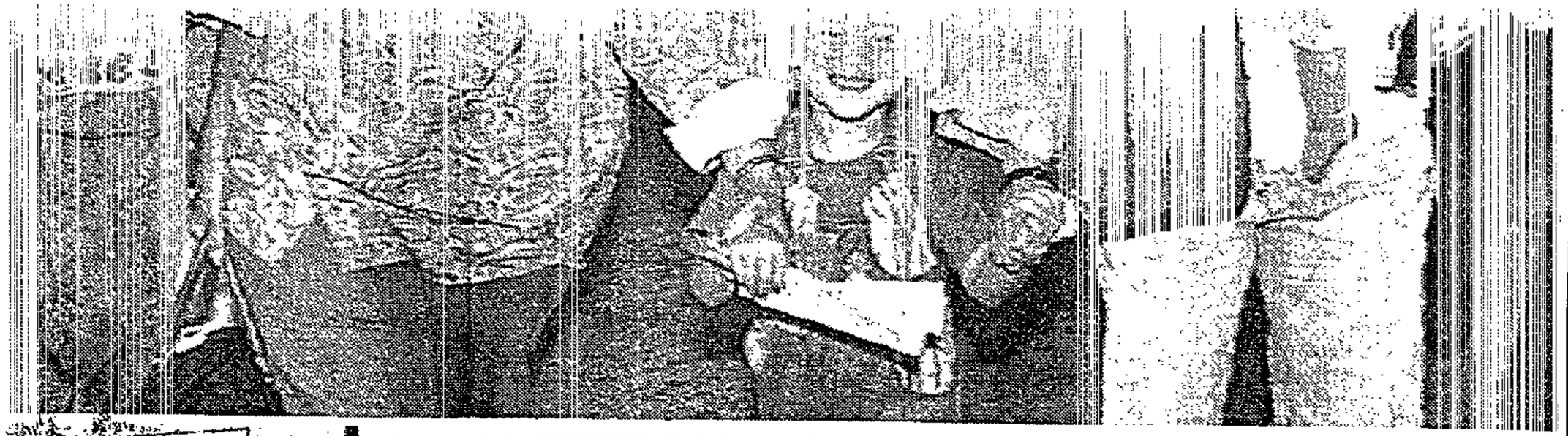
Anti-government protesters also ransacked the headquarters of Mr Mobutu's ruling Popular Movement for the Revolution party.

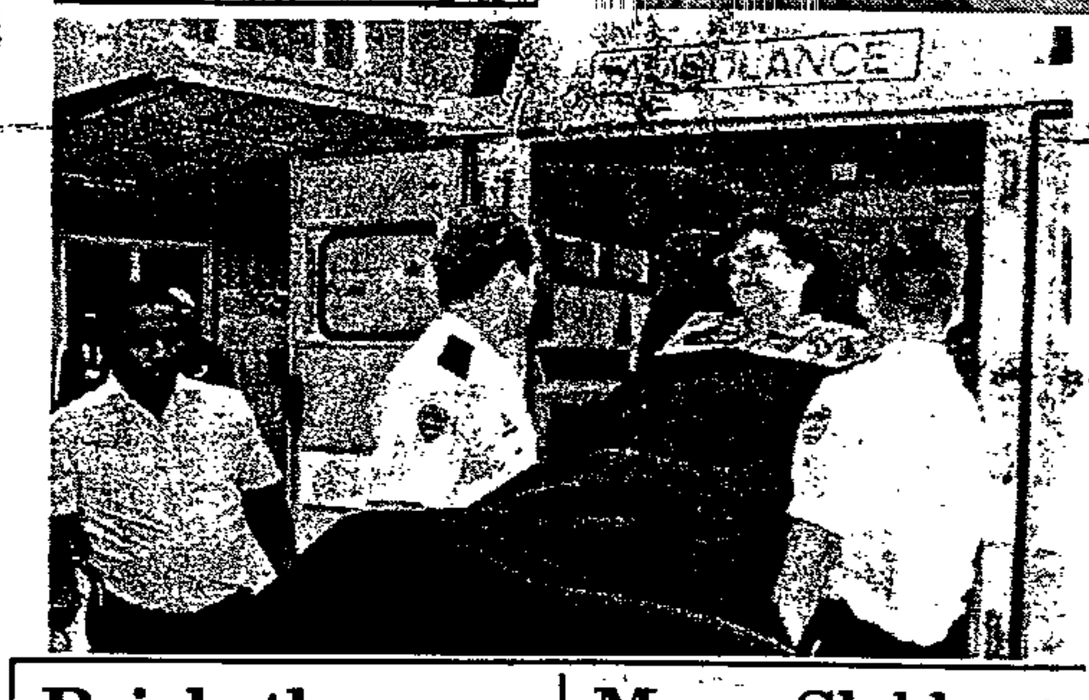
Mr Mobutu was reported to be sheltering in his palace at N'Sele near the airport.

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 3-million.

Portugal, Italy and Greece said yesterday that they would send aircraft to evacuate their nationals.

Argus Africa News Service reports that several hundred Belgian women and children have flown to Harare from the Shaba province of Zaire because of fears that unrest could spread there from Kinshasa.





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REFUGEES IN SA: Medics, left, load a woman into an ambulance at Lanseria airport minutes after she and 50 other foreigners landed after fleeing Zaire

Brick thrown at ambulance

JOHAN SCHRÖNEN
Crime Staff

THE stoning of an ambulance in a main road in Milnerton has left ambulancemen astounded.

Ambulancemen Mr Jason Higgins and Mr Shadley Abrahams were in Koeberg Road about 10.30am yesterday when they saw two young men standing beside the road.

"I couldn't believe my eyes when one of the men bent down, picked up a brick and threw it at us," Mr Abrahams said.

The windscreen was smashed.

Any one who might have seen the incident is asked to contact Milnerton police.

Mana Slabbert dies at home

Staff Reporter

MRS Mana Slabbert, ex-wife of Idasa's Dr Frederik van Zyl Slabbert, has died after collapsing at her home in Goodwood.

She is survived by her son Riko and daughter Tania.

Mrs Slabbert, a well-known criminologist, formerly lecturerd at the Institute of Criminology and was renowned for her research on prisoners and prison conditions.

She also concentrated on lower strata population groups and their problems.

In a booklet entitled *Justice for All?* she reviewed legal representation and legal aid in South Africa.

Fine and mild

(Details — page 2)

1 000 in the Cape have Aids virus

VIVIEN HORLER, Medical Reporter (92) ARG 25/9/91

THE number of people who have tested positive for HIV infection in the Cape has passed the 1 000 mark for the first time, the Department of Health said.

It said 60 new cases of infection were diagnosed in August, compared with 34 in July.

"There has been a worrying jump," said Dr P T Vurgarellis. "At this stage we're not sure if it is purely coincidental — perhaps because of a new survey somewhere in the area on blood samples — or whether the increase will be sustained.

"We think it is coincidental, but we won't know until the next monthly report. We have to keep tabs on this."

Of the 1 000 cases, almost 500 are in the Greater Cape Town area.

'Penalty try for WP'

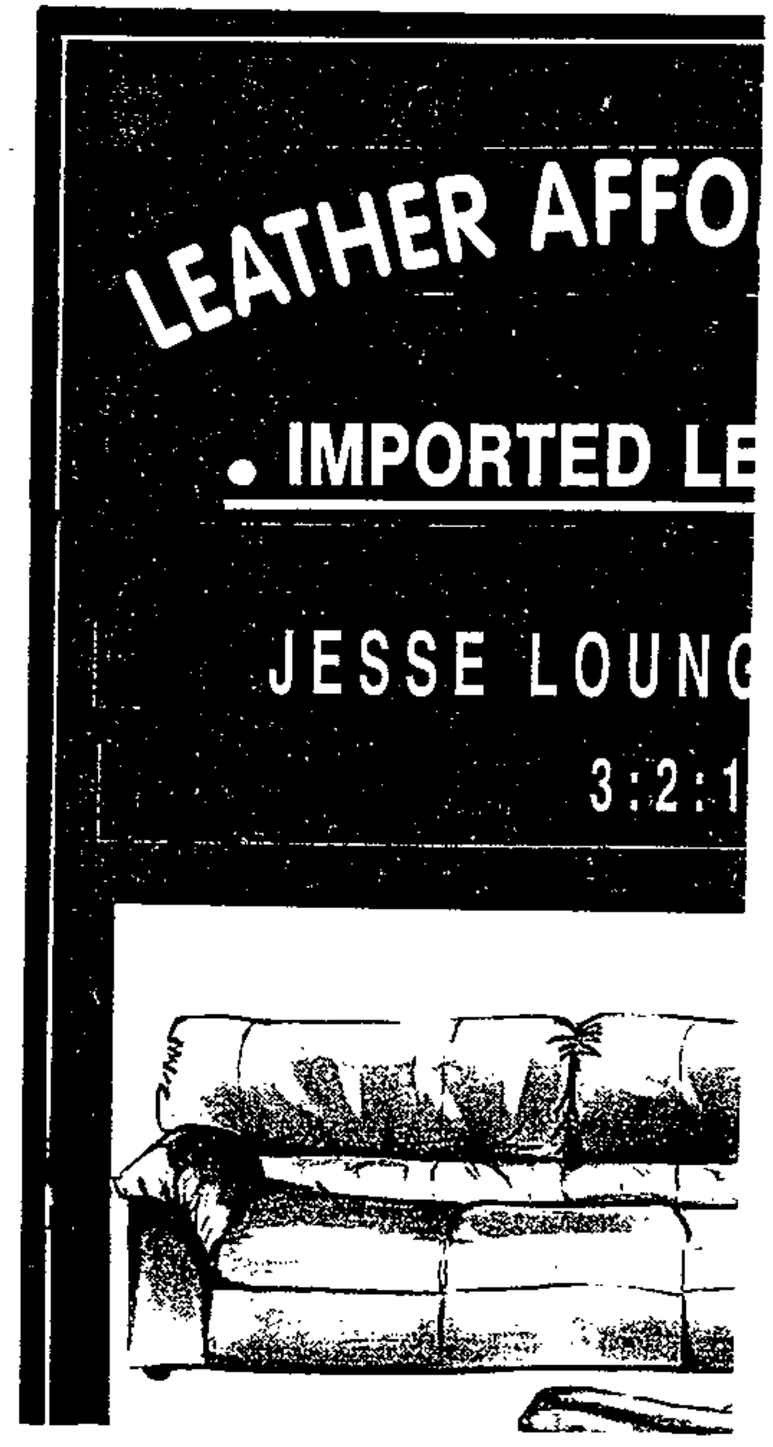
DEON VILJOEN, Argus Rugby Writer

LONDON. — The streaker incident in Bloemfontein merited an automatic penalty try against the home side, says Clive Norling, the Welsh referee of international renown.

He was reduced to fits of laughter when told of the controversial incident which many claim helped Free State beat Western Province 24-18 in a decisive Currie Cup game.

"If I had been handling the match I would not have hesitated to award a penalty try.

"The general rule is that the home union is held responsible for crowd behaviour."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Kinshasa looks worse than Beirut – witness

Zaire exodus gathers pace

(358) Star 26/9/91

BRAZZAVILLE — Expatriates in Zaire jammed boats and planes yesterday as European soldiers shepherded evacuees from the troubled nation where three days of military-led unrest has claimed at least 30 lives.

The government also clamped an overnight curfew on their devastated capital, Kinshasa, but this did not stem the flow of hundreds of French, Belgian, Italian, German and Greek nationals from fleeing to Brazzaville, across the Congo River, in an evacuation supervised by French and Belgian troops.

At least 700 people were evacuated to the Congolese capital and hundreds fled from southern Zaire to Zambia, Zimbabwe and South Africa.

Rioting and looting by mutinous Zairese soldiers subsided yesterday in Kinshasa, but other areas were "really tense", a Belgian foreign affairs spokesman said in Brussels. Belgian reports also said one French paratrooper was among the more than 30 people killed.

Many of those ferried across the river felt lucky to have escaped with their lives. "Soldiers armed with machine guns broke into my house while we were there," one Frenchman said. "They stole everything."

An estimated 4 000 people took refuge in the capital's Intercontinental Hotel.

"This is worse than West Beirut ever was," said the hotel's European manager.

In a brief statement yesterday, Foreign Affairs Minister Pik Botha said South Africa was to send an aircraft to Zaire to evacuate dependents of the South African mission and South Africa has also been offered to countries whose nationals in Zaire require evacuation."

Mutiny

France and Belgium, the former colonial ruler, have flown in more than 1 000 paratroopers to protect their embassies and nationals from mobs led by mutinous soldiers who have not been paid for several months.

The French and Belgian governments reiterated their calls yesterday to President Mobutu Sese Seko to move toward multiparty democracy in the country he has ruled for 26 years.

Opposition leaders said President Mobutu had incited the troops to mutiny to provoke intervention by Western forces. Twice in the 1970s Western troops intervened to keep him in power when dissident Zairese attacked from Marxist-ruled Angola, but French officials have made it clear President Mobutu could not count on them this time.

The European relief group, Medicines Sans Frontieres, said up to 1 750 people were wounded in Kinshasa alone, though only 250 had been able to get to hospitals.

The United States has loaned several transport planes to France to help carry additional troops to Zaire. Portugal said it was sending a small military contingent to accompany two planes to neighbouring Congo to assist the evacuation. Italy has also sent planes to Brazzaville.

In Kinshasa, Zairese soldiers patrolled the city with orders to fire on any groups of five people or more.

President Mobutu was scheduled to call a Cabinet meeting yesterday where he was expected to introduce changes in the government.

— Sapa-Reuter and AP.

France, Belgium send in hundreds of troops

Foreigners flee Zaire

Star 25/9/91 (358)

KINSHASA — France and Belgium flew hundreds of troops to Zaire yesterday after 30 people were killed in wild rioting and looting by mobs led by mutinous soldiers.

In Paris, an official 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 3 500 French residents in the capital, Kinshasa.

Hundreds of foreign nationals scrambled to flee the sprawling central African country. More than 1 000 people also took refuge in the luxury Intercontinental Hotel in Kinshasa.

Officials said President Mobutu Sese Seko, who appears 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 3 million people.

Belgium said its 10 000 nationals could leave on the planes transporting the troops.

Portugal said it was making arrangements to evacuate its nationals.

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

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

The Department of Foreign Affairs warned prospective travellers to Zaire against going to that country.

The number of South African diplomats and their families in Kinshasa is thought to be about 20. But the total number of South Africans in Zaire is unknown.

The South African diplomats and their families are understood to have gathered at the residence of the head of the South African mission, Herman Hanekom, to make it easier to account for and protect them.

Italy and Greece also announced yesterday that they would send planes to evacuate their nationals.

There were scenes of wild terror in the commercial centre of Kinshasa.

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

Soldiers at the head of angry mobs used rifles or pistols to shoot padlocks and smash down doors. Private homes were robbed of everything from light fixtures and stereos to carpeting. Restaurants were stripped bare.

Witnesses said they had counted at least 30 bodies, many apparently killed by stray bullets.

Anti-government protesters also ransacked the headquarters of Mr Mobutu's ruling Popular Movement for the Revolution party.

Eight civilians died in a gas explosion at a chemical factory they were looting and an amateur photographer was shot dead by drunken soldiers, the national news agency, Azap, said.

Mr Mobutu was reported to be sheltering in his palace at N'Sele near the airport.

Azap, monitored by the Belgian news agency, said Zaire's Prime Minister, Mulumba Lukoji, had called a special cabinet meeting for Tuesday evening. The report gave no further details.

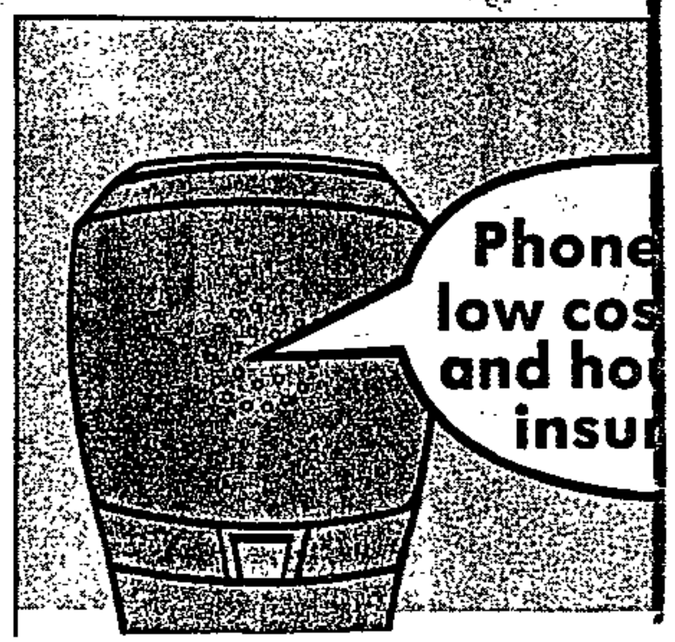
France said its forces had taken up position at the N'Djili airport and the French ambassador's residence.

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

"We are in touch with Marshal Mobutu. We think these incidents are linked to a certain economic and social deterioration," French Foreign Ministry spokesman Maurice Gourdault-Montagne told reporters in Paris. — Sapa-Reuter.



Safe at last . . . refugees from Zaire sit wearily in a bus at Lanseria Airport last night, waiting to be taken to a Johannesburg hotel where they will spend a few days. Picture: Herbert Mabuza



Belgians fleeing Zaire arrive in SA

358

JONATHON REES and
MICHAEL HARTNACK

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 85 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 first-come-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

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Belgians

B1 Day 25/9/91

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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 Harare, Benoit Starndaert, 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.

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WORLD

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 close range an 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 Wilfred Martens sent 500 troops in an operation co-ordinated 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 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-Reuter.

French troops enter Zaire

358

Sowetan 25/9/91

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-Reuter.*

Rush to safety as 30 die in Zaire

(358)
CT 25/9/91

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 Zairean 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.

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From page 1

Zaire

(358)
ET 25/9/91

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

Officials said Mr Sese 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 and 1978 to put down an uprising by Katangese separatists in the southern copper-mining region, coupled its intervention with a warning to Mr Sese 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-Reuter

ZAIRE

How Mobutu's pillars have collapsed . . .

(358)
AREG 26/9/91

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

ALMOST 26 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 variously guess-timated at between R15 billion and R1 500 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 vast 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 30 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 civilian 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 steadfast 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 Marshall" Mobutu, the possibility of the country fragmenting once more is very real.

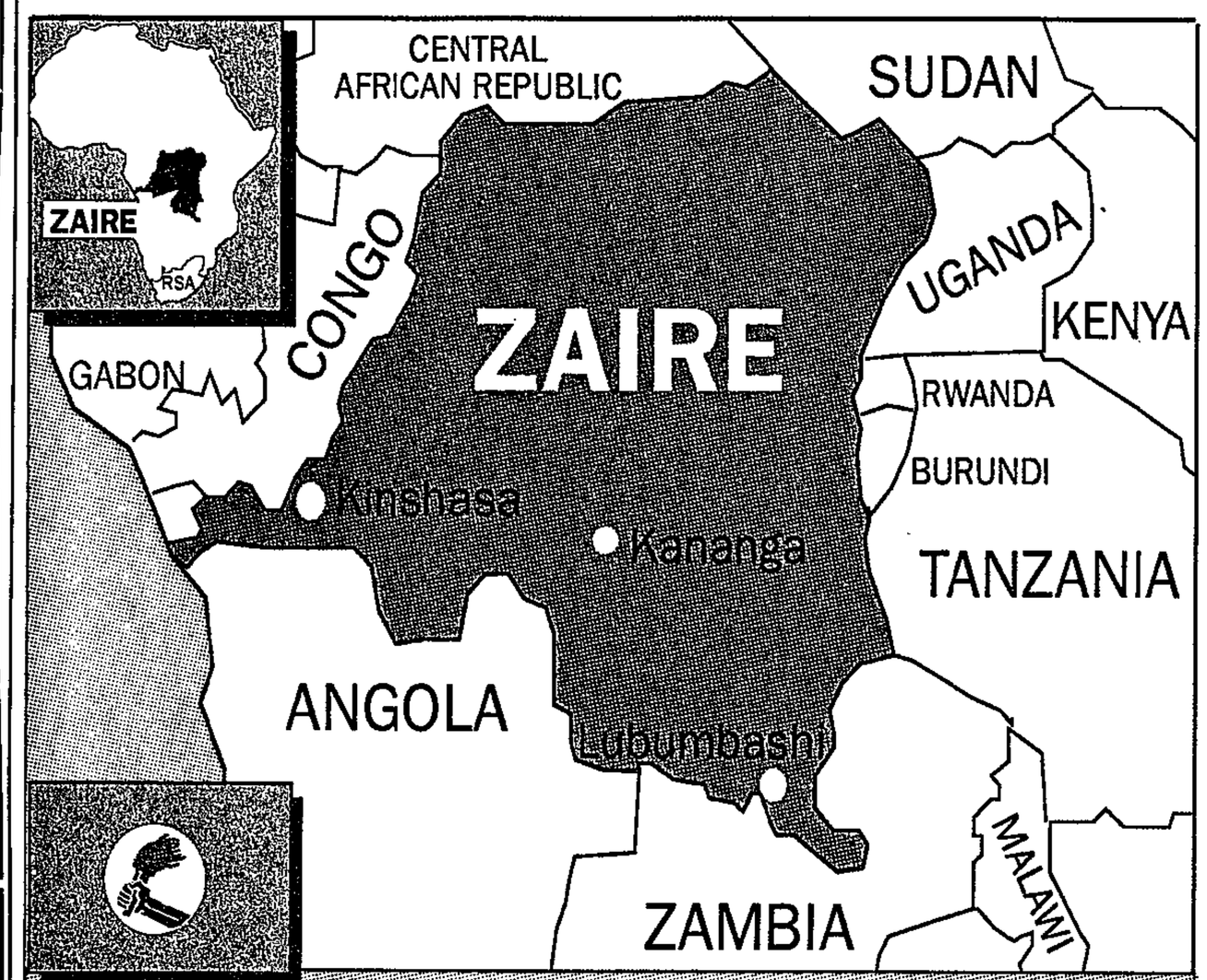
Zaire, in the heart of Africa, has more international borders than any other African country and the possibility of a civil war spreading into neighbouring countries is a worrying prospect for a continent on the verge of escaping from being the playground for super-power confrontation.

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 Nguza Karl I Bond, Tshiskedi wa Mulumba and Ileo Nsongo Amba, all of who at one time or another have been closely associated with Mobutu and so may lack the necessary credibility to appeal to a post-Mobutu Zaire.

Mobutu may be Zaire's anchor



Independence: 30 June 1960. Formerly Belgian Congo.
Leader: President Mobutu Sese Seko, b. 1930, President since 1965.
Capital: Kinshasa.
Area: 2 344 885 squ.km.
Population: 34 279 000 (July 1987)
Religion: Animist 50%, Christian 43%
Languages: French (official), Lingala, Swahili, Kikongo.
Major exports: Copper (35%), coffee, diamonds, cobalt, crude oil, wood, palm products.

Despite enormous natural resources, low per capita income of the population places Zaire among five poorest countries in the world. Although Mobutu has brought stability through authoritarian one party rule, Zaire is virtually bankrupt and relies heavily on IMF support

Graphic by Liz Warder

Star 26/9/91

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If Mobutu Sese Seko is toppled, Zaire may fragment as there is no one to unite the country. By KEN VERNON of the Star Africa Service.

ALMOST 26 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 Zairese 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 Zairese opposition politicans based abroad has for years been to call on the army to desert President Mobutu, and it is possible that this week saw the first steps in that direction.

But undoubtedly the deeper causes of this weeks 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 the Zairese have grown steadily poorer — to the point where their country is listed as the fifth poorest in the world — while their president has grown wealthier.

Mr Mobutu's personel worth is variously guesstimated at between $5 billion (R14,5 billion) and $500 billion (R1 450 billion). He has palatial villas dotted across Europe, in addition to palace built with Versailles-like opulence — largely by South African companies — at Gbadolite, his birth-place in the north of the vast country.

During his dictatorial 26-year reign Mr Mobutu has been supported by two main pillars. Firstly the army, which he has commanded for more than 30 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 civilian 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 steadfast between Mr Mobutu and the mob.

The popular unrest, fed by the tide of democratic reform sweeping Africa, led Mr Mobutu in April last year to announce that Zaire was ready for multi-party democracy — but 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 Mr Mobutu with the aim of confusing and dissipating opposition.

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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 — located more than 2 000 km from the capital on the western border.

If, as anticipated by observers, the present unrest does eventually result in the toppling of "Field Marshall" Mobutu, the possibility of the country fragmenting once more is very real.

Zaire, located in the very heart of Africa, has more international borders than any other African country and the possibility of any 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.

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Reaching out . . . F W de Klerk with President Mobutu during the South Africa President's visit to Zaire in 1989.

A man who won't run without a fight

By KEN VERNON

MOBUTU SESE SEKO is a rare commodity in African politics — a survivor — and critics who are this week writing his political obituary may still be surprised.

Reputedly one of the world's richest men — all allegedly stolen from his improverished country — Mr Mobutu has ruled what is arguably Africa's most fractious country with a unique blend of guile, force and persuasion for 26 years. He will not put his tail between his legs and run without a fight that could destroy the country.

Mr Mobutu was born in a remote village near the northern river town of Lisala in 1930.

He attended missionary schools and dabbled briefly in journalism before joining the colonial army at the age of 19.

From an early age he was interested in politics, joining the ANC of Patrice Lumumba under whose tutelage he rose to head the army upon independence in 1960.

The same year he first illustrated his ability to take direct action by seizing power for five months during the darkest days of the Belgian withdrawal, only to hand it back to his mentor.

But when Mr Lumumba died in a mysterious plane crash some years later, Mr Mobutu once again acted and took power in 1965, and held it.

During his 26-year reign he has ruthlessly crushed all opposition, reportedly dropping protesting students from aircraft and at one time forcibly conscripting all first-year university students into the army.

He has amassed untold wealth, investing it in villas throughout Europe and Zaire, culminating in his palacé at Gbadolite, near his birthplace, that boasts a runway long enough to take a Concorde. □

Govt charters aircraft to fly South Africans out of Kinshasa

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AN AIRCRAFT chartered by the SA government will fly to Kinshasa today to evacuate about 50 South Africans still in troubled Zaire.

A second planeload of Belgian nationals was expected in SA last night, while another aircraft with about 55 Belgians, Italians and Uruguayans on board was expected to fly to Jan Smuts Airport after landing in Harare.

Foreign Affairs said yesterday a chartered Safair flight would leave Johannesburg early this morning and was expected to return with the SA nationals late this afternoon. The department said all South Africans in Zaire were safe and accounted for.

A branch of SA's Metro Cash and Carry wholesalers, established in Kinshasa about a year ago, was believed to have been looted and burnt by soldiers during rioting in the capital.

An SA Foreign Trade Organisation spokesman said SA companies had "put the brakes" on trade with Zaire.

Sapa-Reuter reports that foreign troops restored calm to Kinshasa yesterday after two days of riots and looting killed at least

JONATHON REES

30 people.

The government clamped an overnight curfew on the devastated city.

France and Belgium, former colonial rulers, flew in hundreds of troops to protect their nationals, whose homes and businesses were stripped bare by mobs led by mutinous soldiers angered by low pay.

The French Foreign Ministry said some of the troops were being redeployed to protect foreigners in the copper-rich Shaba province in the south.

An SA Foreign Affairs spokesman said some South Africans were holed up in the residence of SA's Zaire representative, Herman Hanekom.

He said a skeleton staff would remain in Zaire to monitor the situation and run SA offices.

Foreign Affairs said it was in telephone contact with Hanekom, although it was difficult to get through.

A Safto spokesman said most SA traders and mining equipment suppliers had suspended dealings with Zaire since violence broke out on Monday and were waiting to see what happened in the country.

Zaire is SA's second biggest trading partner in Africa, after Zimbabwe.

Safto Africa Trade Intelligence Organisation head Andrew Maggs said most SA business in Zaire revolved around the copper mining industry and was concentrated in the south of the country.

SA companies were a major supplier of mining equipment, foodstuffs, pharmaceuticals and other goods to Zaire's mining parastatal Gecamines, but had "put on the brakes" until the situation stabilised,

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Maggs said.

SA traders supplying Kinshasa had also delayed further contact for the time being, he said.

Diplomatic sources said dozens of "ordinary SA citizens" had offered accommodation to European citizens fleeing Zaire.

Sources close to the French and Belgian missions said yesterday switchboards had been jammed throughout the day, with well-meaning South Africans offering their spare rooms to refugees.

Offers of accommodation had also been received, but turned down, from at least two councils, "including either Boksburg or Benoni council", a source said.

Several hotels, including the Southern Sun Airport Hotel at Jan Smuts, had been booked by foreign missions expecting an influx of their nationals from Zaire.

SA flight sent on rescue mission to Zaire

(358) CT 26/9/91

DURBAN. — The government was to send a dawn flight to Zaire today in a bid to evacuate South Africans trapped in riot-torn Kinshasa.

A plane-load of European nationals fleeing 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, a Lubumbashi hotel worker, Mr Ralph Amido, said military intervention at Kolwezi was too late.

"Kolwezi has been destroyed," he said.

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

Foreign Minister Mr Pik Botha announced last night that the flight would evacuate dependants of staff at South Africa's mission in Kinshasa and other South African citizens in the city.

"Assistance has also been offered to countries whose nationals in Zaire require evacuation," said Mr Botha in a brief statement.

At least 18 South Africans, including diplomats and their families, are known to be in Kinshasha. Staff at the mission had to shelter in their office in downtown Kinshasa for five hours on Tuesday while mobs went on a rampage outside. They were joined there by other South Africans living in the city.

Rioting and looting by mutinous Zairean soldiers subsided yesterday in the capital, Kinshasa, but other areas were "really tense", Belgian Foreign Affairs spokeswoman Ms Francoise Gustin said.

Some of the 7 000 Belgians living in Kinshasa were escorted by Belgian paratroopers across the Congo River to Brazzaville, the capital of Congo, said Ms Gustin.

"With every crossing, the boats are full," she said. "We encourage them to leave Kinshasa."

France sent at least 150 more soldiers into Zaire yesterday bringing to 600 the number of foreign troops in the country.

Several US C-141 military transport planes have been loaned to France to ferry more soldiers, supplies and equipment to Zaire, French officials said. — Sapa-Reuter and Own Correspondent

Zaire riots spread south

A PLANELOAD of European nationals fleeing riot-torn 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 riotious mobs led by Zairean 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 Demaeght'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 Reusël, said two more flights carrying refugees to South Africa would arrive today. - *Sapa-Reuter.*

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 Saito's African Trade Intelligence Organisation head Andrew Maggs said SA trade with the Zairean mining company Gecamines, which employs 30 000 people, was likely to be particularly hard 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, Zairean 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 and evacuees said they feared a fresh outbreak of the riots and looting which devastated the city and were still sweeping the provinces.

The relief organisation Medicins Sans Frontieres said in Brussels that more than 100 people had died in the violence up to Wednesday and at least 1 500 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 $75 at the exchange rate before Monday's anarchy.

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

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nments decided to launch one. "Who can distribute food in this atmosphere?" asked German aid worker Robert Muller before leaving for Congo.

Western governments, led by France and Belgium, Zaire's former colonial power, are already walking a political tightrope, facing accusations in Zaire and at home that by sending troops they are effectively shoring up one of Africa's most unpopular regimes.

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 Nsele, 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 011 873 3938) 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.

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Mitterrand capitalises on troubles in Zaire

Star 27/9/91 (358)

The trouble flaring in Zaire may give French premier Francois Mitterrand a chance to shine again. From JULIAN NUNDY in Paris.



Zaire shuttle . . . French paratroopers board a US C-141 aircraft in Lubumbashi as the mass airlift from Zaire got under way this week. The C-141s were also used for transporting Morroccan troops into this mining centre.
Picture: AP

FRANCE'S decision to send troops to evacuate its nationals in Zaire is part of a pattern of direct and fast intervention by Paris in African crises. Since President Francois Mitterrand came to power in 1981, French troops have put down rebellions in the Comoros islands, Gabon, Rwanda and Togo.

The arrival of about 1 000 French and Belgian paratroopers and marines in Kinshasa on Tuesday and the dispatch of more to the southern province of Shaba (formerly Katanga) on Wednesday has thrust Mr Mitterrand into an active foreign policy role after an unhappy few weeks in which he has been accused of being hesitant and behind the times on east Europe and the Soviet Union.

At first sight, the arrival of French and Belgian troops looks like a re-run of French and Belgian intervention in the Shaba capital of Kolwezi in 1978.

Then, as now, the main mission was to ensure the safe evacuation of foreign nationals. Then, as now, the operation was carried out with US support.

Yesterday, 11 huge US C-141 transports were taking on equipment at Toulouse for ferrying to Zaire. But in 1978 the Shaba rebels had crossed the border from Angola with Cuban support. The conflict was a classic case of the West trying to keep the East at bay.

Now, French officials are at pains to stress, the issue is different and the Kinshasa government can expect no support unless it is prepared to move towards democracy.

Last year, Mr Mitterrand promised "a bonus for democracy" at a meeting with French African leaders, the beginning of a French policy of encouraging democracy on the continent which has been dubbed "Paristroika".

Pierre Joxe, the Defence Minister, said yesterday: "France does not wish to interfere in Zaire's domestic affairs but it does support any moves towards democracy and it cannot leave its nationals or its friends in danger."

Whatever the expressions of reluctance to get involved in internal affairs, however, reports reaching Paris suggest that the French ambassador in Kinshasa, Henri Rethore, has become an important player.

According to these reports, Mr Rethore, liaising with some of Zaire's generals, has been pushing President Mobutu, currently on his yacht on the Congo river, to make "a credible political gesture", one that might calm his rebellious, unpaid troops.

Zaire, while a former Belgian colony, has long fascinated French foreign-policy makers. Four times as big as France, it is territorially the biggest French-speaking country in the world and has the second-biggest French-speaking population, 38 million.

Rich in minerals and with frontiers from Sudan to Angola, it is a country to which, whoever is in charge, France would like to be close.

Chad, where some French troops now in Zaire are based, has been the main focus of French intervention in Africa since 1983. Then, to counter Libyan influence among rebels in northern Chad, France sent planes and soldiers to back the government of Hissene Habré, overthrown in December with the French garrison staying out of the conflict.

Now the French role in the country could become more active as trouble has flared in the north of the country with 49 people reported killed in a mutiny by troops still loyal to Mr Habré. A fresh intervention, particularly if there are signs of a Libyan role, would give France the chance to take on Muammar Gaddafi, a perennial American bogeyman.

Last week, Libya was accused of being behind the explosion on a French airliner over Africa in 1989 which killed 170 people. Intervening to counter Libyan influence could be a popular move.

It would give Mr Mitterrand a chance to shine again on a world stage where he has recently fumbled his lines. — The Independent News Service. □

The Iraqi conundrum

Allies plan military escorts for UN inspection helicopters. From LEONARD DOYLE in New York.

THE UNITED States, Britain and France have drawn up contingency plans to establish a forward base within Iraq from which future searches for Iraq's nuclear, chemical and ballistic weapons would be carried out, unless Iraq gives in to demands that UN helicopters be given free rein to fly in Iraqi airspace, according to senior diplomatic sources.

The plan, drawn up by the Pentagon, involves painting UN insignia on US helicopters and using attack helicopters and warplanes to escort them within Iraq.

One proposal being discussed by the military planners is for the Allies to seize an Iraqi military airfield and to establish an armed stockade from which inspection teams would leave.

If Iraq subsequently agreed to the UN's requests to fly unarmed helicopters in the country, the Allies would pull out of Iraq and stop flying armed escort missions, according to the sources.

Rolf Ekeus, the head of the UN Special Commission responsible for disarming Iraq of all its weapons of mass destruction, was trying to avert a military escalation with Iraq yesterday.

But he was adamant that the nuclear inspectors, whom Iraq has prevented from removing records for the second day running, were under instructions not to give in, provided their lives were not endangered.

The three transport helicopters and pilots being used by the UN inspectors have been provided by Germany. But, because Germany's constitution forbids its armed forces from taking part in military action outside the country, the helicopters would be withdrawn and US helicopters used instead.

The contingency plan to fly armed escort missions and to establish an armed enclave within Iraq has been acted on so far because the Pentagon did not have enough military hardware in position to carry out the missions. Two US aircraft carriers and some 25 other ships are already heading for Iraq.

But if the order for military action is given, it would take up to 12 hours for the USS United States to arrive in Saudi Arabia. It could then take two to three days for the US to prepare its crews and equipment to fly combat missions.

Included in the US flotilla are long-range A-6 attack planes, which can carry out precision bombing at night. In addition, the flotilla includes F-15 and F-16 jets among its 200 or so warplanes.

Senior allied diplomatic sources say that a bombing campaign against Iraq is most unlikely however: neither the Allies nor the UN Special Commission believe that their mission of ridding Iraq of its nuclear, chemical and ballistic weapons capability would be furthered by bombing missions, and could, in fact, be seriously set back.

It is also likely that the countries which provided military experts and scientists to the UN to act as inspectors would recall them, if there were to be bombing raids.

All in all, the UN has some 700 personnel in Iraq performing inspections for the Special Commission and carrying out humanitarian work on behalf of various UN agencies.

In addition, there are close to 100 lightly armed UN guards, whose role is to protect UN personnel and equipment.

If, as expected, Iraq provides a letter to the Security Council agreeing to let the helicopters fly, but continues to impede the work of the nuclear inspectors, the council will be at a loss to do anything except provide further warnings to Baghdad to cooperate.

UN officials say that it would be highly dangerous to attempt to seize Iraqi documents at gunpoint, even if backed up by allied firepower. "It's very doubtful that any inspectors would want to go into a situation like that," one UN official said. "It would be tantamount to committing suicide." — The Independent News Service. □

tricks' revelation

Students set up barricades and disrupted lectures in a show of solidarity with

Zairean troops shoot protesters

Star 27/9/91 (358)

KINSHASA — Zairean troops wounded several anti-government 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 Sese 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 neighbouring Congo. South Africa flew out 130 foreigners from Kinshasa. The United States evacuated 219 people, including about 200 Americans.

The relief organisation, Medicins 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.

More reports — Pages 8 and 15

Sketchy reports from the interior of Africa's third biggest country said there was looting on Wednesday in several provincial cities, including the mining centres 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-Reuter.

Iron rule to blame for Zaire collapse

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Sowetan

27/9/91

Sowetan Africa News Service

Focus

ALMOST 26 years of iron-handed rule by President Mobutu Sese Seko have 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 Robin Hood style, indicating a measure of solidarity previously lacking.

Just weeks ago those same soldiers were shooting civilian looters.

A major tactic of Zairean opposition politicans based abroad has for years been to call on the army to desert Mobutu and it is possible that this week saw that tactic bearing its first 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 since he took 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 variously guess-timated at between R14,5 billion and R1 450 billion.

He has palatial villas dotted across Europe, in addition to a palace built with Versailles-like opulence.

During his dictatorial 26-year reign Mobutu has been supported by two main pillars. Firstly the army, which he has commanded for more than 30 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.

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.

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

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 again flared.

Zaire, located in the very heart of Africa, has more international borders than any other African country and the possibility of any 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.

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. (358) (336)

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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, Zairean 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. B|Day 27|9|91.

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

The relief organisation Medicins Sans Frontieres said in Brussels that more than 100 people had died in the violence up to Wednesday and at least 1 500 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 $75 at the exchange rate before Monday's anarchy.

There was scepticism that a Western food airlift would be possible even if governments decided to launch one. "Who can distribute food in this atmosphere?" asked German aid worker Robert Muller before leaving for Congo.

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Zaire B|Day 27|9|91.



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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 Nsele, 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 011 873 3938) 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.

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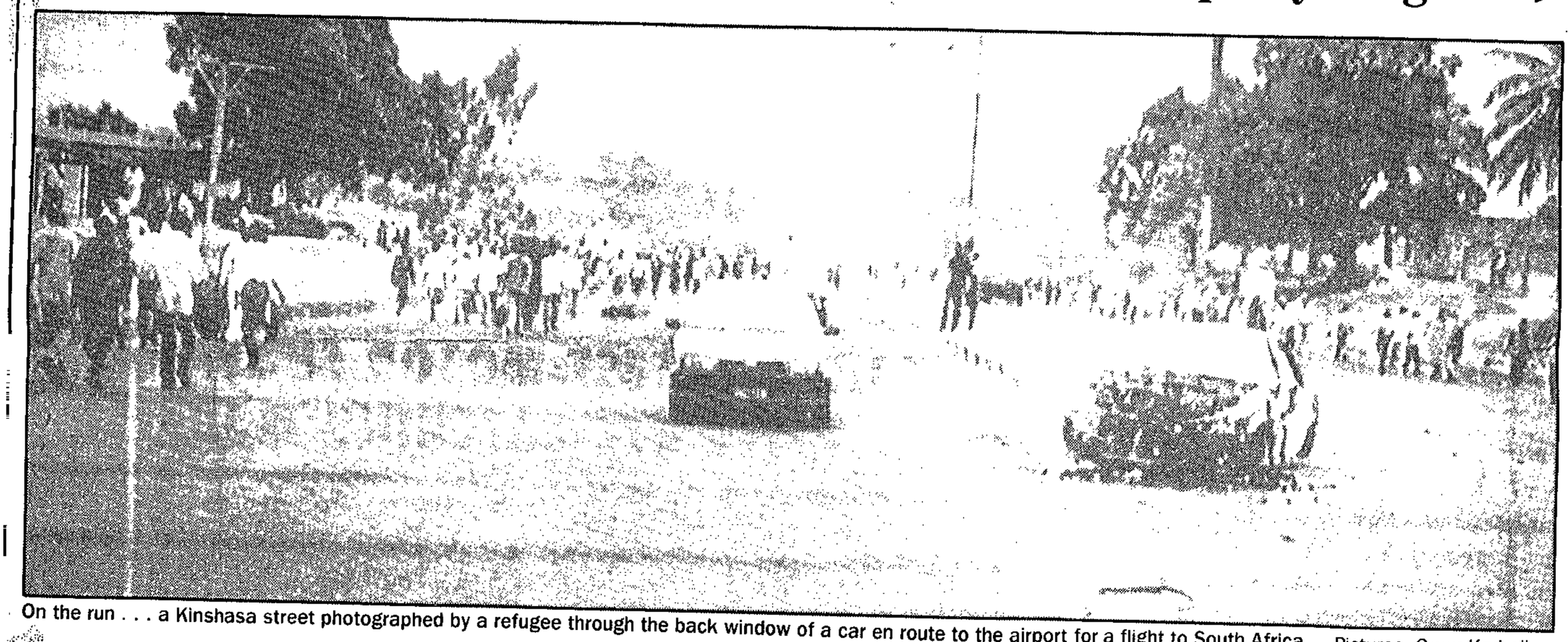
‘ Civilians stripped my house, then soldiers cleaned up anything left ’



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 Karbelkar

The pain of a country aflame

Star 27/9/91. (358)

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 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.

Expatriates 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.

"Its absolutely devastating. Its 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.

South African passengers said they had watched troops running around the city, firing shots randomly into the air. Shouting 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 Rawji showed scratches on his arms caused by soldiers who had beaten him up in his home. He escaped and hid up a tree.

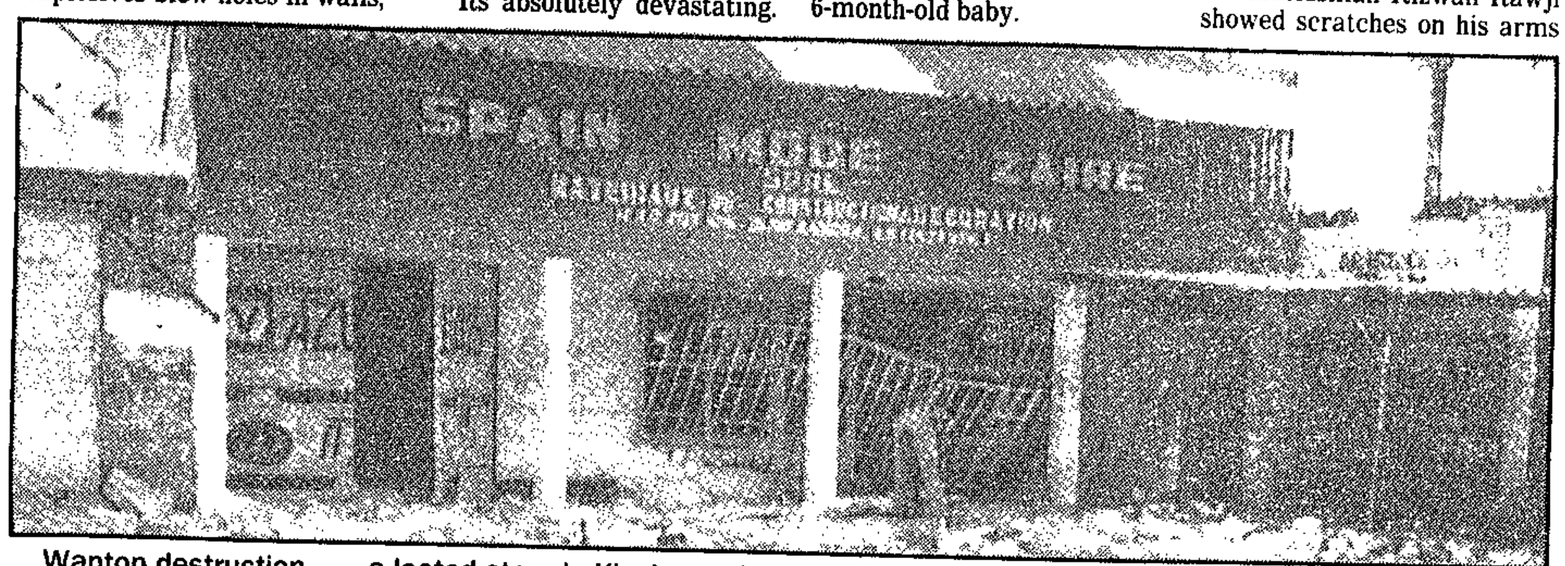
"First, about 200 civilians burst into my house and stripped it, then soldiers arrived and cleaned up anything that had been left," he said.

Valerie Dickens 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 three Portuguese women had been raped on Wednesday night and their 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.



FLEEING . . . A Portuguese family wait anxiously to board a plane in Brazzaville after fleeing the unrest in Zaire (left), a refugee from Zaire (centre) is comforted by friends after flying to Johannesburg on Wednesday night and two French women are hugged by a relative on their arrival from Zaire at Roissy Airport near Paris yesterday

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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 Rizwan Rawji lauded the rescue mission and said more planes should be 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.



ARRESTED . . . A man arrested for looting is shown an item he allegely stole from a shop during Kinshasa riots. Pictures: AP

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 M'Bandaka in further separate missions," he said.

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 200 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 Kananga and Kisangani, and troops had staged a mutiny at the army base at Kokolo.

Mr Coeme said a company of Belgian commandos had just arrived at Kananga, 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 Starlifter transport planes began airlifting more French troops to Africa to be ready to reinforce colleagues deployed in Zaire.

The American jets took on board 300 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 800.

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 Sese Seko to take measures to accelerate the process towards democratisation".

Earlier yesterday in Kinshasa Zairean 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-Reuter

Mobutu's not finished yet

Sowetan 27/9/91

By KEN VERNON
Sowetan Africa News Service

MOBUTU Seso Seko is a very rare commodity in African politics - a survivor - and critics who are this week writing his political obituary may still be surprised.

Reputedly one of the world's richest men - all allegedly stolen from his improverished country - Mobutu has ruled what is arguably Africa's most potentially fractious country with a unique blend of guile, force and persuasion for 26 years.

He will not put his tail between his legs and run without a fight that could destroy the country. 358

Mobutu was born in a remote village near the northern river town of Lisala in November 1930.

He attended missionary schools and dabbled briefly in journalism before joining the colonial army at the age of 19.

From an early age he was interested in politics, joining the ANC of Patrice Lumumba, under whose tutelage he rose to head the army upon independence in 1960.

The same year he first illustrated his ability to take direct action by seizing power for five months during the darkest days of the Belgian withdrawal, only to hand it back to his mentor five months later.

But when Lumumba died in a mysterious plane crash some years later, Mobutu once again acted and took power in 1965, and has held it single-handedly since then.

During his 26-year reign he has ruthlessly crushed all opposition, reportedly dropping protesting students from airplanes and at one time forcibly conscripting all first year university students into the army.

He has amassed untold wealth, investing it in villas throughout Europe and Zaire, culminating in his palace at Gbadolite, near his birthplace, that boasts a runway long enough to take the Concorde that he is said sometimes to hire for his overseas trips.

... of the pro-
...ollah (Party of God) mi-

... condi-
...ostages had improved in
...ecent months in apparent anticipation
that they might be freed. — The
Washington Post



Painful memories ... Former hostage Jack Mann, 77, recounts his days as a captive in Beirut Photo: AP

ism should not be equated with racism and called on the UN to cast aside a 1975 resolution condemning Israel as a racist state. The Soviet Union is in the process of restoring diplomatic relations with Israel after a break of 24 years.

Pressure mounts on isolated Mobutu

W/Mail 27/9 – 3/10/91

By ALAN RAKE

FOR a year now Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko has been under intense international and internal pressure to democratise. His Western allies have virtually suspended aid and shown themselves quite prepared to drop him now that the battle against communism in Africa has been won.

Government has broken down and the economy is sliding into chaos. Hyper-inflation at over 1 000 percent, continual currency devaluation, uncontrolled government expenditure, and international debt of $10-billion have made rational economic management impossible.

His people are impoverished and starving, at the very time their political expectations have been raised sky-high by the new multiplicity of political parties. The opposition has lost its fear and is openly voicing criticism which less than a year ago would have brought immediate retribution.

Last year Mobutu thought he could manage the transition to democracy. As opposition rose to a crescendo following the massacre of more than 100 students at Lubumbashi University in May 1990, he announced a multi-party system and his own resignation from the ruling MPR party, in an attempt to safeguard his own position by rising above party politics while remaining head of state.

He finally agreed to a national conference to ease the pressure.

The meeting was repeatedly delayed and it became clear that a power struggle was developing between him and the growing opposition that was leading to the total breakdown of government.

Unlike his fellow presidents elsewhere in Africa, he was afraid to open the conference personally when it finally started in August.

He was so worried at the outcome that, while the delegates were heaping abuse on him inside the assembly chamber, he was cowering on his yacht on the River Zaire, with a helicopter on board ready for a quick getaway.

His strategy was to stay away and try to guide proceedings through a prime minister, Mulumba Lukoji.

Lukoji tried to pack the conference with delegates favourable to him, bringing in supporters from outlying regions, to challenge the credentials of the genuine opposition groups.

There were continual postponements and wrangling over credentials. Eventually, 2 400 delegates were registered — about 600 more than expected.

Delegates reflected the social degeneracy of the country by spending most of their time in the first two weeks haggling over their *per diem* allowance.

Mobutu, using the national radio and TV that he still controlled, then tried to discredit the conference. He called the whole circus a "vaudeville", and then managed to get the dismissal of the scrutiny committee, which was still trying to check the validity of delegates' credentials. (358)

This infuriated the opposition. The major opposition parties, led by Tshisekedi and former foreign minister Nguza Karl-I-Bond, formed a "Sacred Union" which decided to boycott the conference until the credential committee was reinstated, bogus delegates were barred and the sovereignty of the conference was confirmed by Mobutu.

The Union agreed to return to the conference at the end of August, but haggling continued and, this month, the opposition was beginning to resort to direct action, holding mass rallies and calling for general strikes.

These were broken up by the troops loyal to Mobutu, with dozens of deaths among demonstrators in Kinshasa.

A number of opposition supporters have also been killed by assassination squads in recent weeks.

Meanwhile, Belgium has told Mobutu its suspended aid will not be resumed unless requested by a "genuine national conference". US ambassador Melissa Wells has also been negotiating with opposition leaders.

Mobutu still has the loyalty of the only units allowed to carry weapons and ammunition — the civil guard, the security service and the special presidential division.

The loyalty of the army as a whole is questionable, and this was graphically illustrated when a failed attempt was made to abduct one pro-democracy general from the steps of the assembly.

Other army units have thrown in their lot with the opposition now that Mobutu cannot deliver.

Mobutu now has to choose whether to salvage something from the conference by making concessions and playing for time, or whether to try to repress the democratic forces as he steadily loses internal and external support. — Gemini News

Mobutu troops turn duty into looting

(358) ALG 28/9/91

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 tension".

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), R300 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 Sese 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.

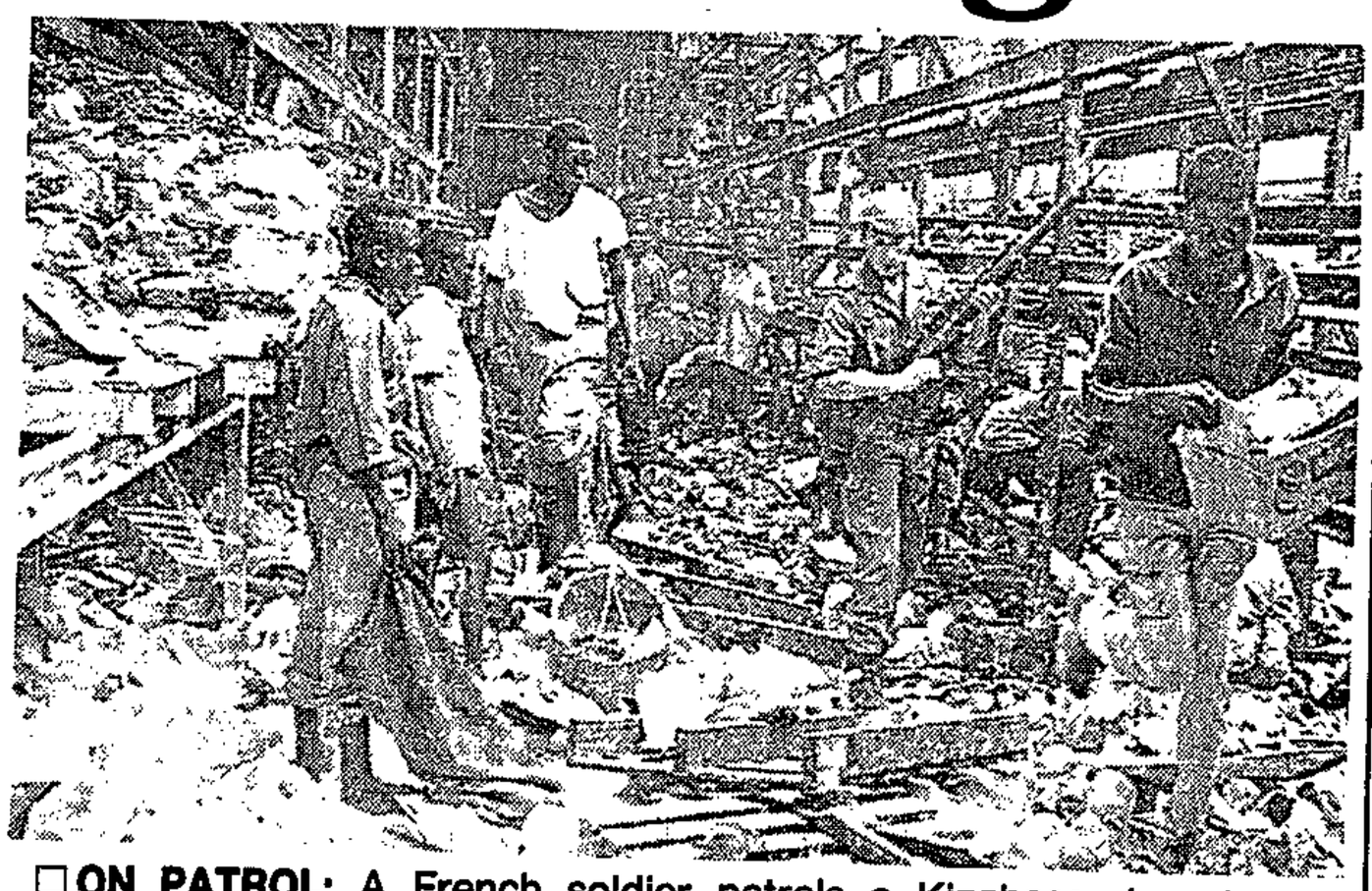
No comment was forthcoming, but Ms Wells has taken a high profile in urging Mobutu to push promised democratic reforms further and faster.

Mobutu's future was unclear after the behaviour of the army, which had buttressed 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 Nguza Karl-I-Bond, a former Mobutu stalwart, fears that foreign troops might help to shore up Mobutu. — Sapa-Reuter.



☐ **ON PATROL:** A French soldier patrols a Kinshasa department store looted and destroyed in riots.

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 MTHOMBOTHI.

Star 28/9/91.

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 occasions 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 24 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, dissident 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 1966 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-Desire 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 orchestrated personality cult of "Mobutuism" which is remarkable even by African standards. Officials wear Mobutu badges on their Mobutu suits known as "abacos" (*a bas le costume* — down with suits).

Workers in every establishment have to sing his praises every morning before they start their day's work. Mr Mobutu has often dismissed Western detractors for slating 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 avowedly pro-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 1988 he welcomed P W Botha at the height of the former State 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 African 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 President Joseph Kasavubu and Moise Tshombe — whose party controlled the National Assembly — Mr Mobutu intervened and transferred all executive powers 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.



IRREPLACEABLE: Like Samson, President Mobuto could pull the pillars down should he be forced out of power. Many believe there is no one with sufficient stature to take over from him.

Troops on curfew duty in new looting spree

Star 28/9/91.

Mobutu may cling to power (358) yet

NICHOLAS DOUGHTY

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 Zairean soldiers looted in 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) and areas of tension," one senior security source told Reuters.

He said the worst incidents occurred in the Ma Campagne area. 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 on yesterday in neighbouring 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

Zaire holds breath as Mobutu feels the heat — Page 4

international aid organisation, Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), R360 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 Zaire won independence from Belgium, its colonial ruler, in 1960.

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 doctor told the radio his television and radio were taken. 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 said highly radioactive materials were stolen during the riots earlier this week which were led by troops angry at low pay and the disastrous state of Zaire's economy.

There have been few official reports of what has happened in the rest of the country, which is 80 times bigger than Belgium and has a population of nearly 40 million. But there were riots involving troops in Kolwezi, Kisangani and other major towns.

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



OUTWARD BOUND: Foreign nationals fleeing from Kinshasa board a ferry going to Brazzaville on the other side of the Congo river yesterday. ● Photograph: AFP.

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.

Western diplomats said there were questions about the opposition's credibility. President Mobutu, a wily tactician, may yet have a few cards to play, they said.

"He is not finished," said one diplomat.

"It's a very serious threat to his position, but he still has options."

Kinshasa was calm after daybreak on yesterday, after troops opened fire on anti-Mobutu demonstrators on Thursday, wounding several. A semblance of normality was restored when some public transport started running again.

Opposition leader Nguza Karl-I-Bond, a former Mobutu stalwart, fearing that foreign troops might help to shore up the President, said on Thursday that if the French and Belgian forces gave "oxygen to a moribund government" the opposition would "defend the will of the people." — Sapa-Reuter.

● See Page 4.

More foreigners evacuate Zaire

358 CT 28/9/91

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-Reuter and Own Correspondent

Thousands face starvation in embattled Zaire

358
6/ Times
29/9/91

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.

By CATHERINE BOND: Kinshasa

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 armouries by local brigands, a total breakdown of whatever passes for law and order in Zaire is thought more than likely once they go.

Lt-Col Gaynecoetche, head of the 850-strong force of French troops taking part in Operation Baumier, 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, queueing for an armed escort to the airport for a flight they had chartered to Bombay.

Zairean soldiers are said to have tried to rob travellers on the 25km road to the airport.

Diamond dealers among them, they gave a clue as to why so many thousands of expatriates had been living in Kinshasa in the first place. Mr Mehmood, now on his way to London, had about R700 000 worth of property looted this week.

Others had "lost millions".

But not disillusioned, he said he would be back when things improved.

"You can make good money here. Better than anywhere in the world," he said, leaving behind his R28 000-a-month job as an interior designer.

President Mobutu, who is said to have salted away up to R22-billion over 26 years in power, was to have met Western envoys, including US Ambassador Melissa Wells. They urged him to press ahead with democratic reforms. — *Daily Telegraph.*



GETTING OUT ... mainly white refugees, guarded by French soldiers, prepare to board a jet aircaft leaving the riot-torn Kinshasa
Picture: JUHAN KUUS



President Mobutu

Mobutu likely to call a truce

Clipper 29/9/91. (258)

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 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

ELECTRICITY MAKING LIFE A LITTLE EASIER
So switch to electricity and make your life a little easier. Gives you heart to cook your food, lights to brighten every room, warmth

A REAL rumble in the jungle

EXPATRIATES fled Zaire in droves this week after the mutiny by army units.

France and Belgium flew hundreds of troops to Zaire on Tuesday after 30 people were killed in a wild spree of rioting and looting by mobs led by mutinous soldiers. It was the worst rioting in Kinshasa since Zaire gained independence 30 years ago.

The troops went to protect foreign nationals after Mobutu's soldiers pillaged shops and homes in the capital Kinshasa, and razed the ruling party's headquarters in a mutiny over pay.

The average Zairean soldier earns only 100 000 Zaires a month – just over R8 at the current exchange rate – while a bag of the staple manioc costs 250 000 Zaires.

"I can't see what Mobutu (President Mobutu Sese Seko) can do to satisfy the soldiers. The uprising is clearly a reaction to hunger," said a diplomat.

Hundreds of foreign nationals scrambled to flee the country and more than 1 000 people took refuge in the luxury Intercontinental Hotel in Kinshasa.

About 50 foreigners fleeing Zaire landed in Johannesburg on Tuesday carrying babies and pets.

"It's very bad. The army is stealing everything," said a Belgian businessman among the group which flew from the south-eastern town of Lubumbashi.

Most of the passengers on the flight, chartered by a foreign construction company, were Belgian or Italian women and children. One sick woman, whose illness was not related to the rioting, was rushed to hospital by ambulance.

Belgian Arlette Verborgh, who left her husband in Zaire but brought out her poodle, said Lubumbashi was still quiet when they left but they feared trouble could spread.

"In Kolwezi, about 300 km away, the soldiers took everything. They came into the houses several times. We heard one foreigner was shot and another was beaten," she said.

"That's why we ran away, not to be involved in that."

The businessman, who declined to give his name, said: "Kolwezi is finished. We heard they broke everything in the town and raided the mine there."

Kolwezi and Lubumbashi lie in Zaire's copper mining district and have large populations of expatriate workers.

A woman cradling a baby in her arms said Lubumbashi was seized by panic, made worse when telephone, radio and television services were cut.

"We had only rumours, no facts," she said.

The refugees said hundreds of foreigners remained in Lubumbashi. The town has 150 French nationals alone.



THINGS CHANGE ... Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko with South African President FW de Klerk and Foreign Minister Pik Botha during a visit to Zaire.

A planeload of 55 Belgian women and children fleeing Zaire arrived in Harare on Tuesday.

A young Belgian woman from Lubumbashi who asked not to be named said she and the group of refugees had heard of the unrest in Kinshasa on Monday morning, and later in the day that it had spread to Kolwezi.

At 4 pm on Monday they had been advised by the Belgian Government and were given an hour in which to pack for a chartered Shabair flight out of the small town bordering Zambia.

"We didn't want to go," she said. "We are very anxious about our husbands."

The town had been "normal" when they left and a small group of soldiers guarding the airport had made no atttempt to stop them.

The group is part of a community of about 4 000 expatriates – businessmen, miners and agricultural advisers – living in Shaba province in southern Zaire.

With the Angolan civil war over, South Africa shedding its pariah status and the world awash with cheap copper, Zaire has lost the strategic appeal which once guaranteed Mobutu almost automatic Western backing, they said.

Zaire's economy has been in a shambles for the past year due to low world prices for its main export copper and plummeting production at mines in the south of the country. Zaire's state-owned mining company, Gecamines, announced last week that copper production this year would be about 250 000 tons, compared with 400 000 tons last year.

The US, Mobutu's closest ally during his 26-year reign, has virtually cut all support.

Zaire is potentially one of Africa's richest countries with extensive reserves of strategic minerals, but its economy has crumbled. Inflation is now running at over 1 000 percent a year.

Mining for copper, cobalt and zinc, the most important economic sector, is controlled almost entirely by Gecamines – the second biggest employer after the government.

The strategic minerals and Zaire's role as a conduit for arms for US-backed Angolan rebels, long guaranteed US support for Mobutu. French and Belgian interests in the economy motivated joint interventions in 1977 and 1978 to defeat rebels in the southern copper belt.

"Mobutu used to trade shamelessly on this geo-political usefulness to ensure US military and financial assistance," said Christophe Carle, an Africa expert at the French Institute for International Affairs.

"When Mobutu saw that his standing in the US Congress was diminishing, he quickly re-established diplomatic relations with Israel to make sure he had the support of the American Jewish lobby," said Carle. The US ambassador in Kinshasa announced this month that Washington was suspending aid because of Zaire's human rights abuses and failure to implement economic reform.

France coupled its military intervention on Tuesday with a call on Mobutu to speed up democratic reforms. But exiled Zaire opposition leaders in Paris said France should not just send troops to protect Europeans but should also tell Mobutu it was time to step aside.

"This intervention should not be to keep Mobutu in power," said Evarist Nyembo, spokesman for the Zaire Opposition Co-ordinating Committee in France.

"It would be sad if France encouraged people in Eastern Europe to carry out their revolution but does not do the same for Africans.

Incapable

"Mobutu is incapable of even organising a national conference to discuss a multiparty constitution."

Mobutu, who seized power in a military coup in 1965, forestalled his critics last April by announcing moves towards multiparty politics after decades of autocracy.

But he gave few details and no timetable for reform, prompting some diplomats to question whether things would really change.

The country's on-off constitutional conference broke down this month after the opposition staged crippling strikes to demand better representation. – Sapa-Reuter

358 ARG 30/9/91

Mobutu asks opposition leader to rule



POWER-SHARING: Under heavy guard, President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire walks to the Marble Palace in Kinshasa to discuss forming a crisis government with the opposition after a week of rioting and looting in his country.

KINSHASA. — Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko, ceding some power after more than a quarter of a century of autocratic rule, has asked opposition leader Mr Etienne Tshisekedi to form a crisis government.

The beleaguered president, who earlier fired his army chief, put an end to a week of chaos and looting yesterday when he agreed to the choice of Mr Tshisekedi, his fiercest adversary since 1980, after nine hours of talks with his opponents.

"I have no comment to make," Mr Tshisekedi, interior minister before he split with President Mobutu, said gravely as he left the marathon talks at the Marble Palace.

Aides said he had accepted the challenge of trying to steer Zaire through a crisis in uneasy tandem with President Mobutu.

President Mobutu, 60, engaged in a determined fight to prolong his 26-year rule, looked impassive after the crisis talks.

The two sides meet again today for the third successive day to try to share out Cabinet posts.

A joint statement released yesterday said that Mr Tshisekedi would be formally invested by parliament — still an exclusive preserve of Mobutu supporters — before being presented to 3 000 delegates at a national conference on democratic reform.

The opposition dropped earlier demands that a new government must be approved by the conference.

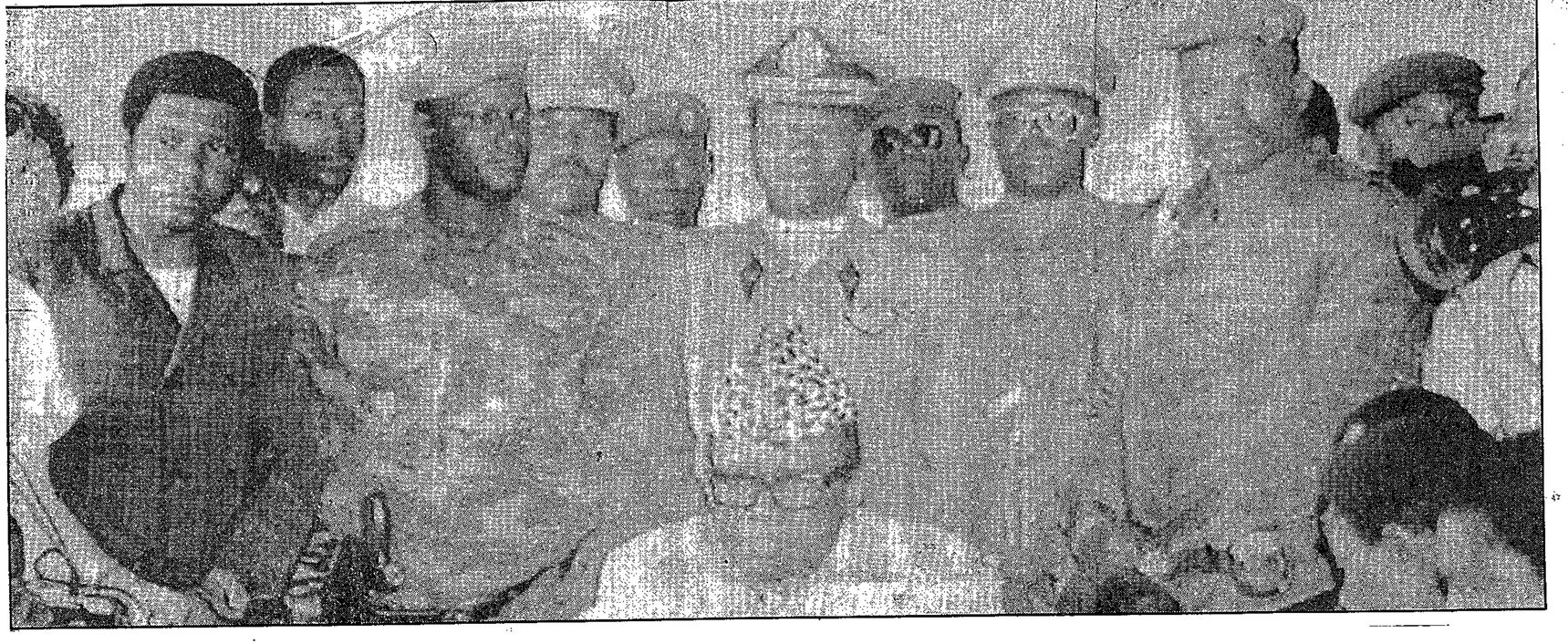
Military sources said President Mobutu had ordered a restructuring of the army after the orgy of looting last week — mostly by soldiers. State radio said 117 people had been killed and more than 150 injured.

General Manzembe Mayibanga was replaced by the head of military intelligence, General Mahele Liyeko, because of his failure to control the army, an official statement said.

General Liyeko appealed to the army to "leave politics to the politicians" and to respect the law and property. He persuaded paratroops to leave Kinshasa airport after they seized and looted it.

A dusk-to-dawn curfew imposed last week was lifted.

Although President Mobutu has been forced to cede some authority for the first time since he took power in 1965, only major opposition parties are involved in talks on a new government. — Sapa-Reuter.



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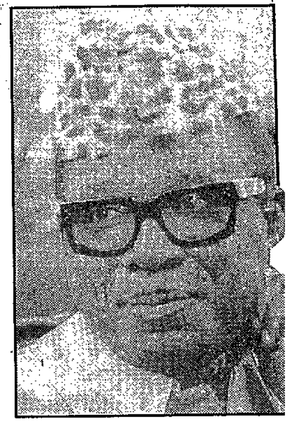

The future of a nation at stake

Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko, surrounded by hi staff, attends a meeting with opposition leaders to discus forming a crisis government in Kinshasa yesterday. A wee of rioting and looting across the country left 117 peopl dead.

Mobutu sacks army chief

Sowetan 30/9/91

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SAPA-Reuter

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 country's slide towards chaos.

Military sources said 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 were killed and more than 150 injured in the unrest.

General Manzembe Mayi-banga was replaced by current head of military intelligence General Mahele Liyeko because of the former's failure to control the armed forces, sources said. State radio later confirmed the change.

Mobutu, arriving for a meeting with opposition leaders to discuss the formation of a crisis government at Kinshasa's Marble Palace, was confronted by about 100 angry delegates to a national conference.

The 3 000-strong conference, which is to meet tomorrow, is supposed to chart the path to democracy after a quarter century of iron rule under Mobutu.

The delegates were angered by being left out of the talks with the opposition.

"Mobutu and the opposition are plotting together to form a government behind the people's backs," said one delegate.

The 60-year-old Mobutu, surrounded by soldiers and wearing his usual leopard skin hat, got out of his car to talk to the delegates, who also shouted abuse at opposition leaders involved in yesterday's talks.

"We're in a crisis situation," Mobutu told them. "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 economy improved meant that a new government had to be decided quickly.

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 Mahele Liyeko, 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.

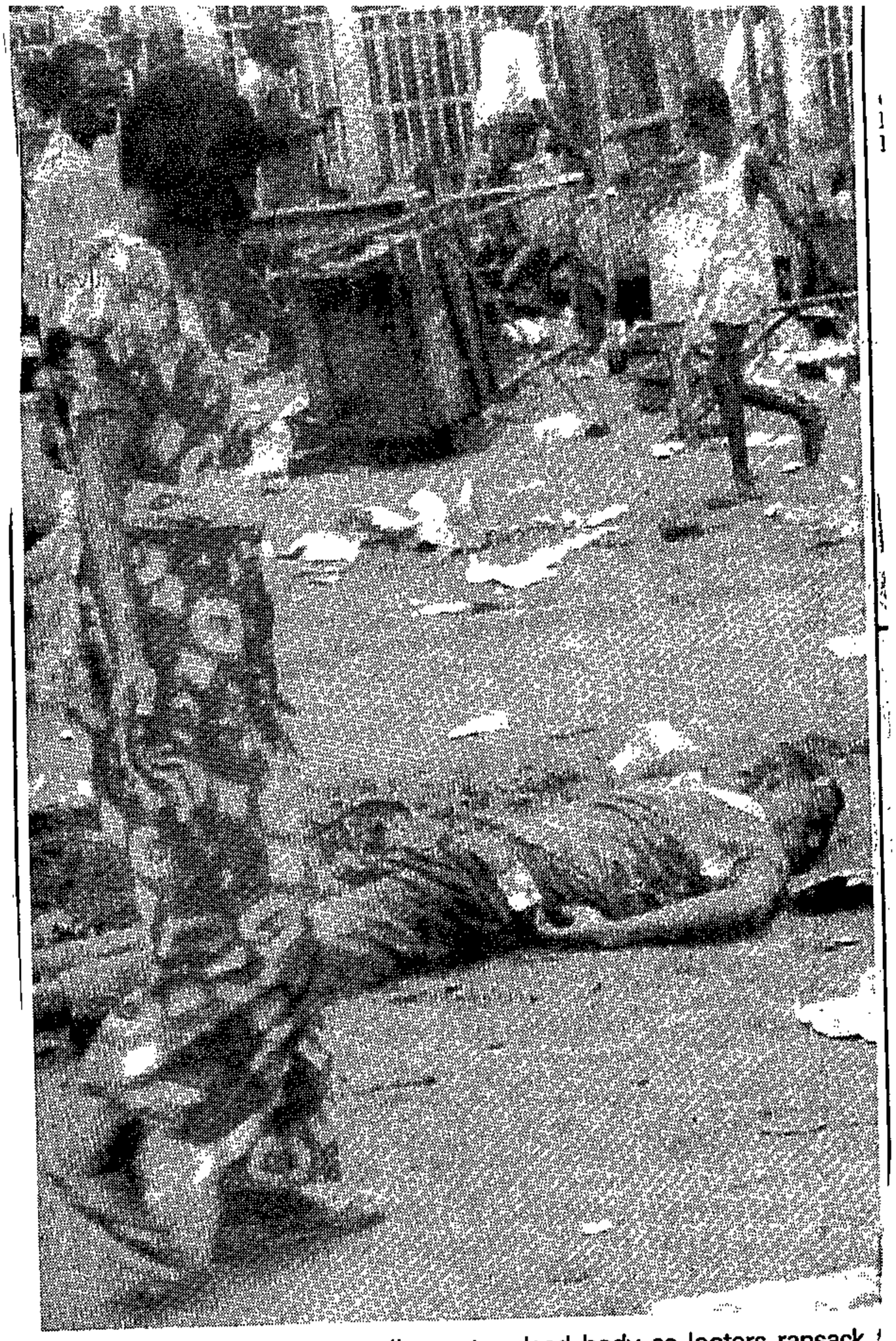
The delegates were annoyed at being left out of the talks and told Mr Mobutu the national conference, due to meet tomorrow, should instead be responsible.

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 (58) for 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-Reuter-AP.

● Future of a nation at stake — Page 13



LOOTING . . . A woman walks past a dead body as looters ransack shops in downtown Kinshasa last week. Picture: AP

Mobutu fires his army chief

358 CT 30/9/91

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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. — Sapa-Reuter

Opposition leader now PM

(368) CT 1|10|91

KINSHASA. — Zairean opposition leader Mr Etienne Tshisekedi formally accepted the prime ministership yesterday and denied he was an enemy of President Mobutu Sese 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 aftershock 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-Reuter-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).

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Zaire still tense as Mobutu haggles

KINSHASA — President Mobutu Sese Seko and opposition leaders haggled yesterday on the share-out of key posts in a new crisis government.

Zaireans 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 the power he has wielded 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.

Etienne Tshisekedi, a key opposition figure appointed as prime minister, told reporters that he would have real power — including control of the armed forces.

"I'm not going to be prime minister for a laugh. I'm the real prime minister, with all the responsibilities," he said.

Political sources yesterday said the negotiations on sharing out government posts started in an atmosphere of mistrust when Mr Tshisekedi arrived late — and then objected to the fact that the committee 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 Mahele Liyeko, a soldier with a distinguished military record.

But ordinary Zaireans are as suspicious of the main opposition leaders — most of whom have served Mr Mobutu at one time or another — as they are of the president himself.

Mr Tshisekedi (58) served as Mr Mobutu's interior minister and justice minister before breaking with him in 1980.

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 resisting pressure to withdraw all support from Mr Mobutu.

Sources said yesterday that the Foreign Ministry and several Cabinet Ministers advocated dissociating France completely from Mr Mobutu, arguing that he typified a corrupt, autocratic style of leadership.

● An exodus of foreigners from Zaire has robbed State copper mines of vital skills, slashing output by more than half.

With minerals earning 85 percent of export income, the economic aftershock is expected to add to Mr Mobutu's political woes. — Sapa-Reuter-AP.

● 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 10 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 26 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 democratisation 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".

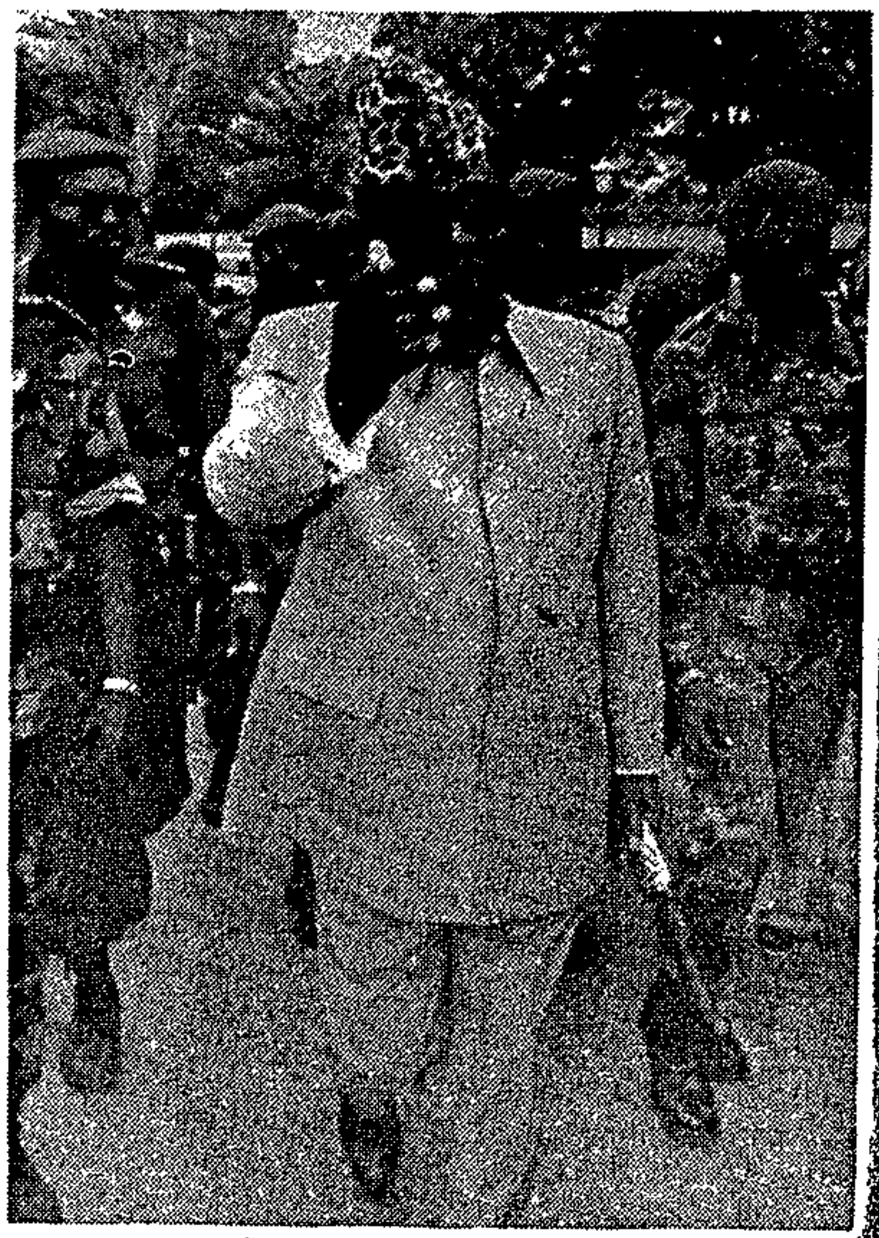
There are fears that the pullout of the troops, whose presence apparently helped restore order, could create a vacuum in the fragile climate and a return to chaos.

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 30-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 legalise 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.



Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko goes to meet opposition leaders on forming a crisis government at the Marble Palace in Kinshasa on Sunday. Picture: 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 designs," 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. Sowetan 2/10/91

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. 358

"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

(358)

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, 58, 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-Reuter

CT 2|10|91

Mobutu's power cut, claims new premier

Star 2/10/91

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

The 58-year-old prime minister, who split with Mr Mobutu in 1980, 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, defence 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 Zaireans 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 Atondoko Ngefa, a lawyer who heads the Zairean 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 Zaire'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-Reuter.

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".

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(358) ET 3/10/91

Sese Seko 'a human monster'

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.



FIERCE CRITIC ... Mr Tshisekedi

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 gulf that exists 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.



SHAKY ALLIANCE ... President Mobutu

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 60-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-Reuter

Mobutu's alliance close to collapse

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B/Day 3/10/91.

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 25 years.

Information Minister Banza 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 1980, had agreed to work together, 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 33-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. — Reuter.

Kinshasa tense as power struggle peaks

Star 3/10/91

358

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 Tshisikedi 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 Nguez Karl-I-Bond, another opposition leader. But it was not clear whether Mr Nguez 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 unravelled. 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 evacutations.

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-AP.

● **Choices facing Mobutu — Page 19**

President's wife takes holiday on Riviera

Star 3/10/91.

Star Bureau (358)

LONDON — As Zaire teeters on the verge of collapse, Bobila Dawa 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

Star 3/10/91.

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

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

A mutiny in the army over abysmal pay, rioting and looting throughout the country, and the intervention of French and Belgian troops to restore a veneer of law and order and evacuate their nationals have re-ignited the deep sources of discontent which have spilt 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 monarchical rule, or a continued drift into turmoil.

But, rather than a sense of urgency, all that is emerging is a political tussle between the president and Etienne Tshisekedi — the opponent he has chosen to form a crisis government — over how much power the new administration will wield over the army and exchequer.

Such political wrangling leaves the twin causes of the present crisis unsolved. These are the profound economic catastrophe which has forced many Zaireans, 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 looted and gutted factories to find that their expatriate bosses 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 this 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 led the violent eruption last week.

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

Instead, they now fear that under Mr Mobutu, Zaire may be heading for disintegration, a collapse of its mineral-rich economy and the inevitable spill-over of instability into its nine neighbouring states.

Of particular concern is the resurgence of ethnic 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. □

Lucrative SA trade stopped by Zaire riots

By FERIAL HAFFAJEE AND HUBERT MATLOU

SOUTH AFRICA'S brisk trade with Zaire has come to a standstill in the anarchy which has gripped the African republic for the past two weeks.

In the looting, arson and riots, Metro's $20-million store was gutted, and many South African businesses have pulled out their staff and ceased operations, says Paul Runge, manager of the African Business Development Group of the South African Foreign Trade Organisation.

The trade between the two countries amounts to about R400-million.

Zaire is South Africa's fourth largest trading partner in Africa and in 1990 trade between the two countries increased by 40 percent. In addition, South Africa supplies most of Zaire's food, according to Theo van der Merwe, South Africa's trade representative in Zaire.

There were also significant increases in the supply of consumer goods and mining supplies to the copper mines, the country's major revenue earner.

Eskom last year signed a co-operation agreement with Zaire's electricity supply company, Snel.

The agreement covered training and maintenance of electrical installations. Eskom's Jac Messer-Schmidt said the agreement had virtually come to a dead halt. "Until the situation normalises we cannot put any of the agreements into operation."

Other companies with significant interests in Zaire are the Premier Group, De Beers, Eskom, the Cape Town-based company Engineering Management Services and General Electric.

But most of the other companies contacted this week were tightlipped about trade with Zaire, perhaps embarrassed at having to hotfoot it from a country which has courted South African business when most of the world shunned it.

A representative of Barlow Rand, which is reputed to have substantial interests in Zaire, this week said "the situation is far too fluid to comment." De Beers says trade with Zaire is conducted through its London office and therefore does not amount to a South African trade interest.

But what is clear from investigations is that Zaire is South Africa's fourth largest trading partner after Zimbabwe, Zambia and Mauritius and that trade between the two countries was flourishing until Zaire flared up.

South Africa established a trade office in Kinshasa and in June last year the Banque Commerciale Zairose set up an office in Johannesburg "to exploit the substantial economic ties between the two countries".

In two important contracts last year, Zaire's Railway, SNCZ, purchased 14 secondhand General Electric engines and spare parts from South Africa to the tune of $6-million and the milling company, Midema, has turned to South Africa for its wheat imports.

Runge says: "It will be a while before South African companies will go back into Zaire". He points out that the African gateway is expanding with political changes in South Africa. "We are no longer hard-up for Zaire," he said.

But Van der Merwe foresees "positive trade opportunities for South Africa in Zaire in the near future".

He points out that Kinshasa is without any foodstuff at the moment and will look to South Africa for supplies.

Business people were also keen to point out that trade is affected by more than Zaire's current political strife.

Last year the country ran at a budget deficit of Z430-billion which converted to $600-million at the average exchange rate for last year.

Poor revenue collection, a 60 percent inflation rate and acute difficulties at Gecomines all contribute to the deficit. Gecomines is the country's largest mining house and it has been forced to declare a moratorium on exports.

Sybil Romberg, marketing director of the Cape Town-based firm, Engineering Management Services, believes "Zaire has more opportunities for development than South Africa".

Her company last year offered to purchase Zairean copper, petroleum, timber and coffee for export and to convert the petrol refinery of the Societe Zairo-Italienne de Raffinage for the processing of Zairean crude oil.

After less than a year of operating, they shut down operations there.

One of the major trade constraints, she says, is the fact that the country offers no insurance on finance.

Transport is another problem: large parts of the Zaire River are not navigable, making it necessary to go on to rail, but the country does not have the necessary infrastructure to ensure smooth transportation of goods.

Zaire power struggle as jungle law reigns

(358)

KINSHASA — President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, furious 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 present impasse drags into next week.



Trying to form govt . . . Etienne Tshisekedi.

Star 4/10/91

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 (60) showed no sign of planning to go quietly. "He is very determined," he said. — Sapa-Reuter.

Mobutu hopes for agreement

(358) B10ay 4/10/91

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 Mulaja said.

As the crisis went on, outgoing Prime Minister Mulumba Lukoji 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.

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

Army boss disowns Haiti coup ... UN helicopters

Zaire economy in chaos

AN exodus of foreigners from strife-torn Zaire has robbed the country's copper mines of vital skills, slashing output by more than half.

With minerals earning 85 percent of export income, the economic aftershock is expected to add to President Mobutu Sese Seko's political woes.

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

Outflow of skills

Most Belgian, French, Portuguese and Lebanese families who lived in Kolwezi and depended on the mines fled after rioting and looting last week.

The violence swept many of Zaire's cities and towns after a mutiny by unpaid paratroopers in Kinshasa on Monday and Tuesday last week.

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

Mobutu, meanwhile, has been forced by political opponents to ease his iron grip on the nation and take steps towards multiparty democracy.

The disruption of the copper mines, all nationalised by Mobutu in the 1960s, represents a further blow to Zaire's frail economy.

The mines produced 500 000 tons of copper annually, six percent of world output.

"All the mines and metalurgical operations have slowed down to less than 50 percent of capacity," said Patrick Kippea, a French mining engineer.

Kippea is one of over 600 mining technicians who abandoned their jobs and sought sanctuary in Zambia until permanent peace is restored in Zaire.

The Frenchman arrived in a Belgian Air Force plane on Sunday.

Thousands of other foreigners fled to Europe, Burundi, Congo, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

George Loix, another engineer, said mines at Kolwezi where he was employed had shut down.

Belgian and French paratroopers were guarding the mines in the Shaba province against looters who attacked foreigners' homes and businesses, Loix said.

Kippea said only local Zairean workers were going underground as expatriates remained on the surface to protect their property.

Most foreigners, however, had been evacuated, he said.

Gecamines, the state mining conglomerate, has threatened to cancel contracts of the evacuees while promising fat bonuses for those who stay, Kippea said.

Shaba province, from where most copper is extracted, has often been convulsed by violence.

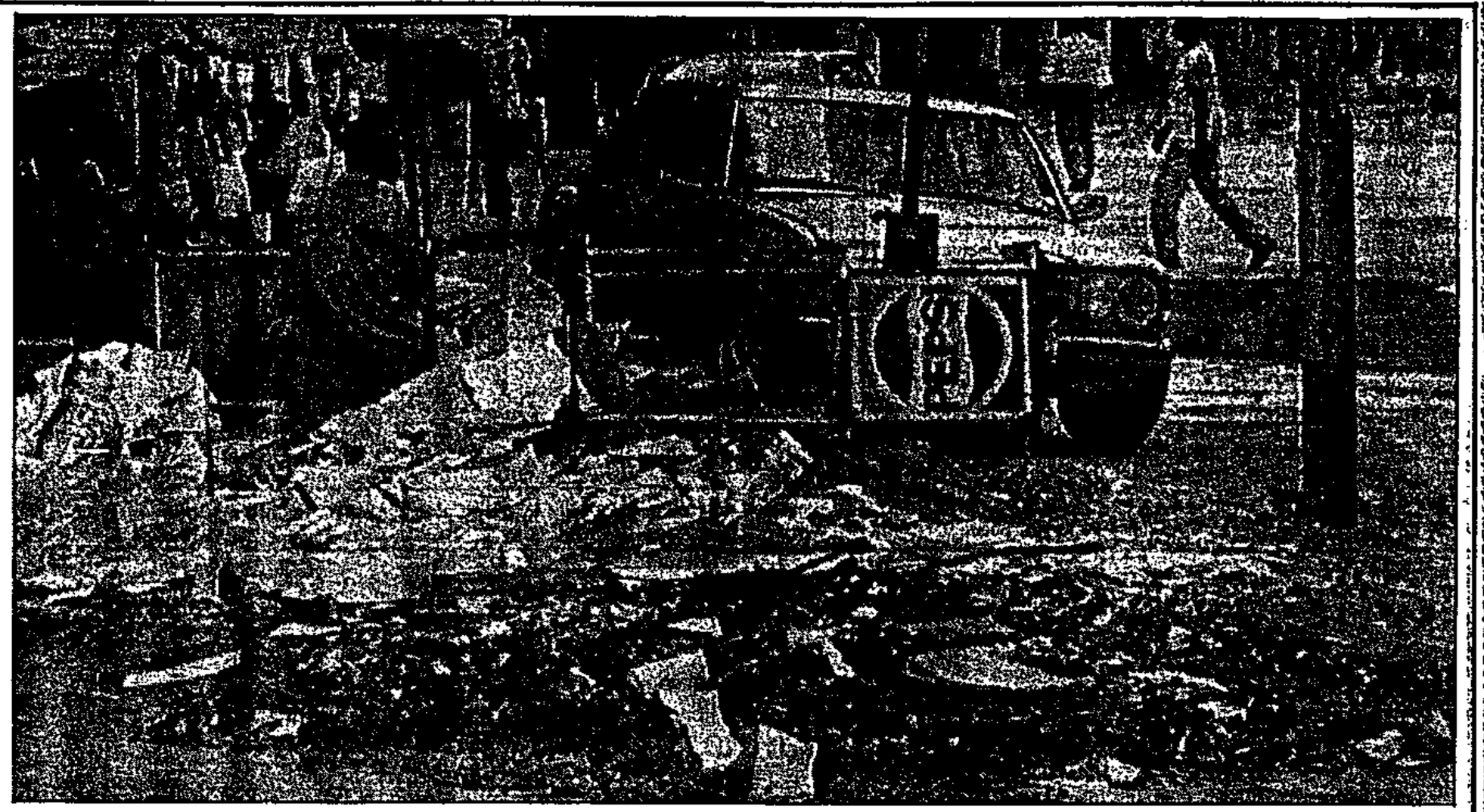
It was the scene of a secessionist war in the 1960s. At least 100 expatriates were massacred at Kolwezi in 1978. In May last year, many students at the University of Lubumbashi, the Shaba provincial capital, were slaughtered – allegedly by troops sent by Mobutu.

Previous unrest

The latest evacuees said previous accounts of murder, maiming, rape and looting persuaded them to get out while they could.

A Western diplomat in Lusaka, the Zambian capital, said a convoy of some 450 vehicles was expected to bring more foreigners there in the next few days.

Many expatriates like Kippea left with only the clothes they wore as most of their money and possessions were looted. – Sapa-AP



SORRY SIGHT... The centre of Kinshasa, with its shops wrecked and the streets deep in rubbish left by looters. There is hardly any food.

Deadlock on Zaire Cabinet

358

CI Pres 6/10/91

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 arch-rival, 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 being designated Prime Minister in an effort to get Zaire out of its political crisis. — Sapa-Reuter

Tshisekedi waits in the wings

C)Pres 6/10/91

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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.

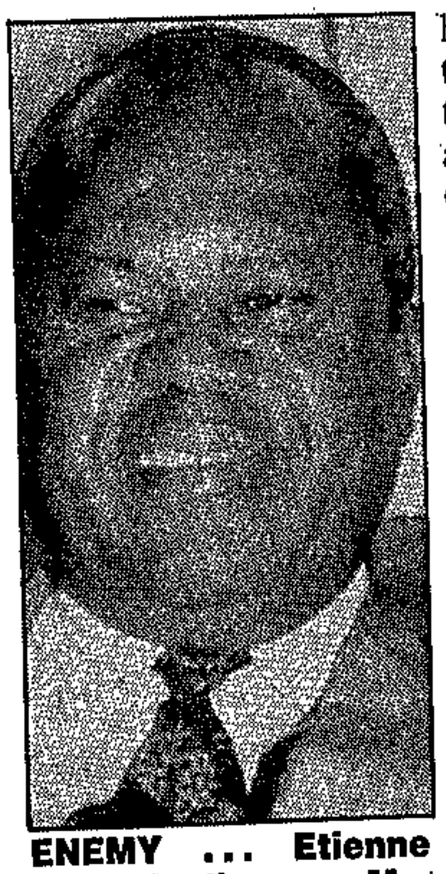
This week, Tshisekedi declared that he alone would run the mineral-rich Central African nation at the head of a crisis government.

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



ENEMY ... Etienne Tshisekedi wa Mulamba

Group of 13, an organisation of parliamentarians who published a letter to Mobutu condemning government corruption and calling for democratic reforms.

As a result, he was arrested in 1982 and sentenced to 15 years in prison for treason. He was released the following year after protests from Amnesty International and other human rights groups.

From time to time thereafter, Tshisekedi was placed under house arrest or imprisoned for mounting anti-Mobutu protests.

At one point the government announced he 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. Aides say 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 did a deal with the man they call "Satan". – Sapa-Reuter

We want our money back!



ESCAPE . . . Refugees from strife-torn Zaire arrive in Brazzaville, Congo, on a barge. There was not much to leave behind. Rampant inflation has made almost worthless what little money they have and looters have cleared the shops.

■ Mobutu elects new PM
■ Inflation at 1 000 percent

C/Press 6/10/91 (358)

THE man who used to work in a hotel now stripped bare by looters has, like most Zaireans, no doubts about the cause of his country's wretched state.

"Mobutu leaves us here to die of hunger while he stashes his money abroad," he said, surveying the ruins of the place where he once earned a living.

"It's you Europeans and the Americans who support him – your governments. We want to bring back his fortune and then we could put the place right in no time."

President Mobutu Sese Seko and his party, the Popular Movement for the Revolution (MPR), have ruled this vast central African country of 40 million people for more than a quarter of a century.

The people are able to speak more freely now that opposition parties have been legalised and will even be part of a new crisis government. They have had enough.

Slogans saying "Mobutu is a bastard", "Mobutu is a thief" are daubed on the walls in this sprawling city, hit by a vicious orgy of looting during which at least 117 people died.

"Zaire is a rich country, but people are poor," said Jose, a taxi driver who plies his trade on the wide avenues of Kinshasa. "A few of the most powerful have taken advantage. Now everyone must have a chance."

Go on a tour of the city – markets, shops, hospitals, the streets – and you will find almost no one who has a good word to say for Mobutu, who is known to have amassed a massive fortune abroad and encouraged corruption on an unprecedented scale.

Diabeno Tombe, chief surgeon at Kinshasa's main hospital – named Mama Yewo after the president's mother – shoved reporters the desperate conditions in which he has to work.

"But Mobutu and his minsters go to a private clinic in Switzerland," he said. "Why can't you Europeans do something about him?"

On the streets, people wander aimlessly. Many say they are out of work. Food is on sale, but not at prices that any Zairean can afford, even if he has a job. Inflation is running at well over 1 000 percent a year.

"Tell me," said one young woman carrying an empty shopping bag through Kinshasa's biggest market, "how am I to feed my children?"

While poverty in Africa is nothing new, what galls Zaireans is that there is no reason for it in their country.

It is enormously rich in minerals and metals – everything from diamonds to copper and cobalt.

So why is there no popular uprising to overthrow Mobutu? The answer, people say, is that he still has control of the army.

For now, they are hoping that the new crisis government will be able to give them a new start – although many of them are cynical about all politicians; not just Mobutu.

"We hope that our country will have a proper government now," said Rugazura Mushonda, personnel manager at the looted Hotel Okapi.

The newly appointed Prime Minister, Etienne Tshisekedi, served the president loyally before breaking with him in 1980.

On Monday, when Mobutu agreed to name him Prime Minister, Tshisekedi disavowed the years of abuse that he had heaped on the president, declaring that they had never been enemies and that the age of corruption was over.

"Corruption over? Don't make me laugh," said Ornella, a young woman who worked as a beautician when there was work to be had.

"They're all the same, they'll just line their own pockets and screw the people."

To many of the poor in the riot-battered city of Kinshasa, the monumental shift away from 26 years of dictatorship is fine. But what they really want is money.

"For me, Mobutu can stay," said a 35-year-old woman who identified herself only as Elizabeth. "We've had peace with him for years. But we must change the money and change salaries."

The local currency, the Zaire, is virtually worthless. The last time anyone checked, one US dollar bought 18 000 Zaires.

Most Zaireans have no money to buy anything. If they do, there's often nothing to buy.

Elizabeth's case is typical. Her husband, an army sergeant-major, earns 180 000 Zaires a month. She makes about the same running a tiny bar-grocery store.

It wasn't enough for their family of six children to live on a month ago without hustling and moonlighting. Now, it's worse. The cost of a 25 kg sack of rice has tripled in a week to 1-million Zaires. The average monthly salary of 100 000 Zaires buys six bars of soap.

Since the looting last week, many residents of this city of 3-million people have taken to trading in goods pillaged from Western homes. They fetch a better price across the river in Brazzville, Congo, where the currency is tied to the French franc.

Youths trading in petrol stolen from service stations sell the precious stuff for 7 400 Zaires a litre. They're nicknamed "Gaddafis" after the oil-rich Libyan leader.

Kinshasans shrug when reminded that delegates to the national conference trying to negotiate a new government to lead this sprawling country toward democracy are paid 400 000 Zaires a day in expenses.

"It's going to take time for all this to change," says Blandine, a mother of five, referring to President Mobutu Sese Seko's institutionalised corruption. "Maybe years." – Sapa-AP-Reuter

Unlocking the trade doors to Africa

RISKY BUSINESS

S/Times 6/10/91.

TWO weeks ago, 10 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 15 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 Gordan 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 25 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.



SA businessmen are doing a thriving trade with Africa. But as the revolt in Zaire has shown, there are dangers attached. EDYTH BULBRING reports



INTO AFRICA . . . President FW de Klerk with President Mobutu of Zaire before the country's crisis

Lesson

With invisibles, trade with Africa now totals some R10-billion and is set to increase. Foreign Affairs chief director for Africa Christo Prins says Africa is the natural market for South African food and and manufactured goods.

But as the revolt in Zaire has shown, it is a market which, though potentially lucrative, is also both difficult and potentially dangerous.

The lesson that Premier has learnt in 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 R400 and R500-million a year — more than eight percent of trade between SA and the rest of Africa.

Mr Utian will not divulge how Premier conducts trade in most of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa — it is sensitive, he says.

But he will say that Premier has never embarrassed its customers — it has never appeared that they were doing business with South Africa.

In the past year of rapid political change in SA the need for offshore companies, bribes, false certificates and backdoor trading with Africa has declined.

Mr Laurence Meenehan, 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 export costs by three percent.

A year ago, Mr Meenehan would leave his South African passport at Jan Smuts Airport and travel to an African country on a "clean" passport to meet a business client.

Presenting his credentials from a front company in, 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 simpler methods of doing business in Africa; other companies went to far more elaborate lengths.

Mr Prins says the best-known secret in Zimbabwe is that its trade with South Africa amounts to close on R2-billion 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 countries' import needs.

Contact with African countries north of the neighbouring states has increased dramatically over the past months. In the first nine months of this year more than 60 delegations from these countries have visited SA openly.

South African businessmen 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 R6 and R7-billion this year. Hidden trade could bring the figure closer to R10-billion.

Besides Zimbabwe, South Africa's largest trading partners on the continent are Zambia, Zaire, 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-gold 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 to trade with Africa — besides political instability — is lack of foreign exchange.

Africa suffers a debt burden of $271,9-billion (R760-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 no Fifth Avenue in New York," he says.

Despite this, there are still profits to be made. South African businessmen, 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 Gernot 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 — if 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 R900-million.

Mr Prins says Africa's inability to pay for goods could be alleviated by barter trade, which is negligible because of the complications involved. There are rich oil reserves in Angola, Gabon, Cameroon and Nigeria which South Africa would be interested in obtaining, he says.

Future

Mr Mossie Mostert, administrative manager for the SA Swanepoel Group, which has large business interests in Zaire — and also got burnt — says barter trade with that country has not been possible so far.

He puts this down to the reluctance of President Mobutu to allocate a part of the country's exports to the detriment of filling his own coffers.

Safto 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 the recognition of South Africa as part of Africa and the growth of political acceptability, the chances of South African businesses taking a slice of the African aid cake is looking favourable.

But first the dust from the rubble in Zaire will have to settle.

KEN OWEN IS ABROAD

Mobutu, arch-foe must strike a deal

Sowetan 8/10/91 (358)

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.

FOCUS

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 300 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 Zairean sources said.

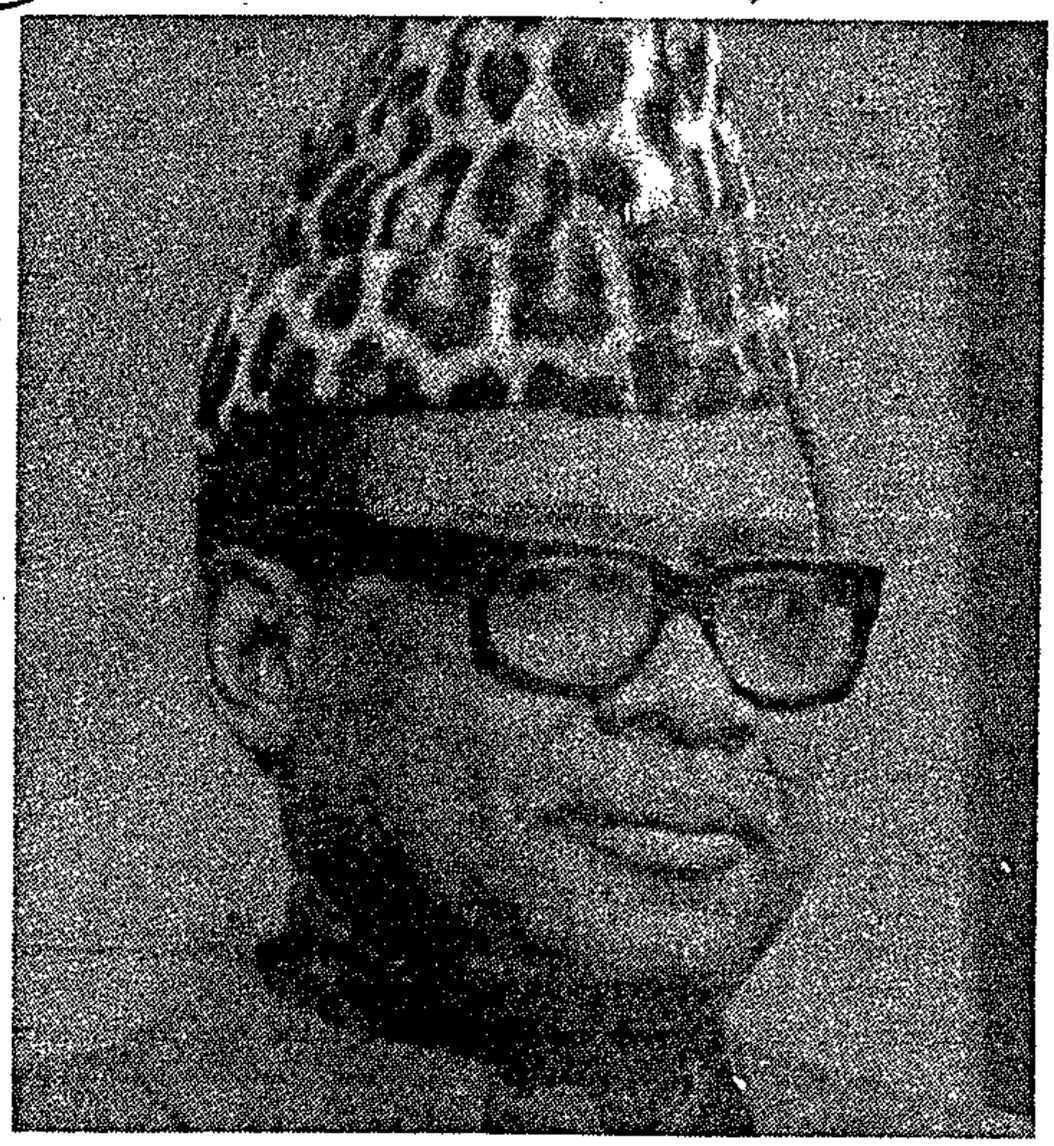
Tshisekedi, a 58-year-old lawyer, told a news conference on Saturday that efforts to form the government were blocked by Mobutu's insistence on retaining the military control he has exercised for 26 years.

"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 Zairean political sources said.

Unless a compromise is reached soon, Mobutu may re-convene a committee of elders, which last week was involved in designating Tshisekedi as prime minister.



MOBUTU SESE SEKO

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 rands 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-Reuter*

Mobutu, arch-foe must strike a deal

Sowetan 8/10/91 (358)

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.

FOCUS

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 300 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 Zairean 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 Zairean political sources said.

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Until the bitter end . . . President Mobutu, in an exclusive interview, stresses his position as the constitutional freely elected leader of Zaire, and says he is prepared to stay in power until the year 2000.



My people want me, asserts Mobutu from luxury yacht

Star 8/10/91 (358)

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 1989 I transferred $10 million (about R28 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

B/Day 9/10/91 (358)

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 345 000 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 Lyssen, the company's Canadian financial director, said two weeks ago that its office in Kolwezi had been demolished.

But the disturbances did reduce output as workers stayed away and supplies of acid and other inputs were held up.

Lorries carrying supplies for the mining industry decided not to enter Zaire when the troubles started and papers were destroyed 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 $300m 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 eligible to borrow 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 $13m 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, after 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 devastated the capital and killed more than 100 people. — Reuter.

Cabinda to get some autonomy

B/Day 9/10/91

LUANDA — Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos says his government is in contact with unidentified forces in oil-rich Cabinda and aimed 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 carrying out acts 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.

Zambia's battered economy put on hold

B/Day 9/10/91 (357)

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 31.

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 keep changing," said one Western diplomat.

Zambia's international aid was cut off when it defaulted on a $20,8m arrears payment to the World Bank in September.

A key factor in Zambia's off-again on-again economic 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 price rises, but these are being eroded by inflation.

There is general agreement that Zambia's eight million people, burdened by $7,8bn 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 $106m this year ($61m last year).

Meanwhile, bankers say 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.

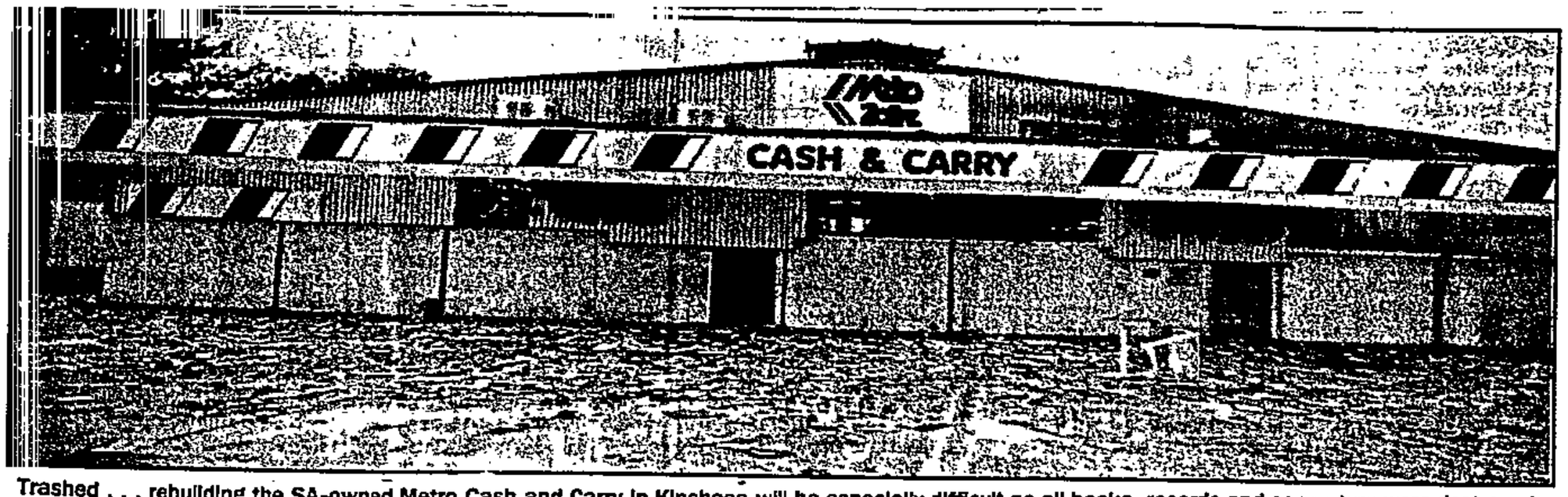
Economists estimate year-on-year inflation at more than 100%.

The maximum lending rate for banks is 46%. The government-controlled savings account deposit rate is 33% — with banks obliged to hold 30% of deposits in non-interest-bearing Treasury bills.

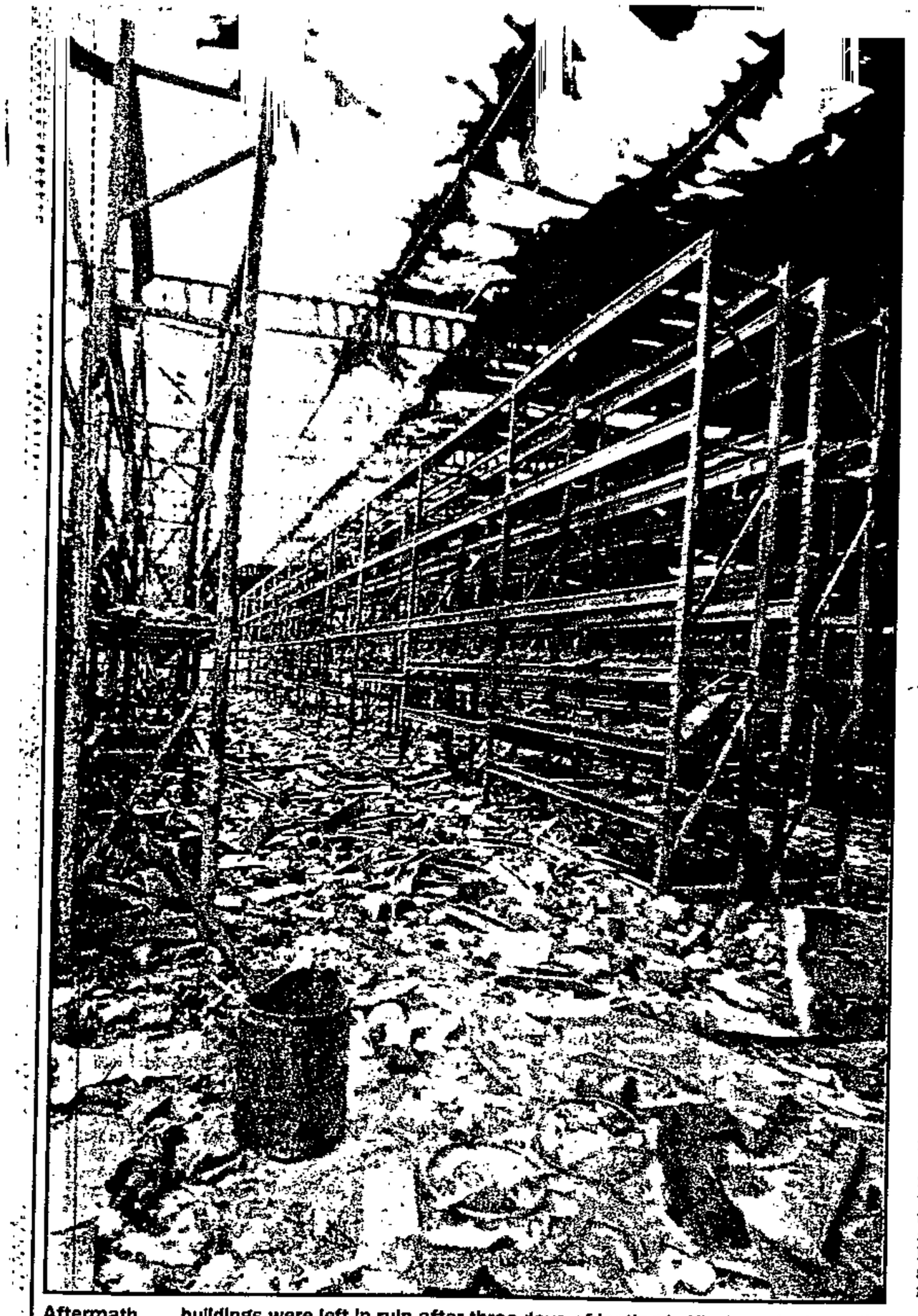
Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) leader Frederick Chiluba, Kaunda's presidential rival, admits immense problems lie ahead.

"If we accept that we must win the election, we must also accept the idea that there are problems we must solve," he said. — Sapa-Reuter.

; Vitamin B12 0,75 µg; Choline bitartrate 50 mg; Cysteine 10 mg; Inositol 12,5 mg per tablet.



Trashed . . . rebuilding the SA-owned Metro Cash and Carry in Kinshasa will be especially difficult as all books, records and computers were destroyed.



Aftermath . . . buildings were left in ruin after three days of looting in Kinshasa last month.

Zaire seen as golden business opportunity

Star 9/10/91 (358)

Zairean businessman Tass Antippas, seen here with his son Aristotle in Johannesburg this week, believes SA businessmen should take advantage of the present "tremendous opportunity" to invest in the turbulent country. By JACQUELINE MYBURGH and KEN VERNON.



WITH MUCH of Zaire still smouldering after last month's outbreak of rioting and looting, a top Zairean businessmen has challenged South African businessmen to invest there "because it is an excellent opportunity for them".

Tass Antippas, a fourth-generation Zairean, says up to 80 percent of the commercial and manufacturing infrastructure of Kinshasa was destroyed in the orgy of looting led by disaffected army units.

"Now is the time for South African businessmen to take advantage of the situation and invest. Zaire needs just about everything and the logical place for it all to come from is SA."

Mr Antippas is a 40 percent shareholder with Premier South Africa in the Metro Cash and Carry supermarket that was totally destroyed during the three days of frenzied looting.

He and his three brothers lost six supermarkets and a factory worth an estimated R40 million in the rioting, but they are already busy planning to rebuild.

"In the more than 100 years my family have been in Zaire we have been burnt out six times; in 1960, '61, '67, '74, '78 and now. But I am a Zairean, I love Zaire and would not consider going elsewhere. We will rebuild.

"Zaire is on the threshold of a new era of democracy. With that will come stability and then Zaire will really take off. South African businessmen, if they are smart, can get in on the ground floor — it's a tremendous opportunity."

Premier International deputy chief executive Gordon Utian seemed less optimistic. He said losses in the destruction of the Metro Cash and Carry store amounted to "many millions" of rands, but added that the company would probably rebuild its operation once peace could be ensured.

"Obviously we are wary and will still assess the situation, but they need us now more than they did before."

He said a warehouse and retail store in Lubumbashi belonging to Premier had not been damaged and had reopened once the worst violence had subsided.

Rebuilding the Kinshasa operation would be especially difficult, however, since all the books, records and computers had been destroyed when looters ransacked the store.

"Premier's attitude will also be influenced by how the world views Zaire and whether other countries help to rebuild the country's economy."

Such help may be less than forthcoming, given the far-reaching changes under way in Europe, reinforcing Mr Antippas's view that South African involvement may be crucial.

"What Zaire needs is for the World Bank or similiar organisation to guarantee investment in Zaire, then hundreds of millions of dollars would pour in," he said.

Negotiations were also already under way with the African Development Bank and others for funds to begin the rebuilding operation, he added.

Offical figures indicate that South African-Zaire trade amounts to about R1 billion annually. But Mr Antippas said South African investment and trade with Zaire was far greater than these figures suggested.

"Even fresh produce was flown into Kinshasa daily from South Africa because it was cheaper and of better quality than we can get from outlying parts of Zaire. Mining and manufacturing equipment, processed foodstuffs — everything you can imagine can come from South Africa."

Andy Maggs of the Southern African Foreign Trade Organisation said it was impossible to quantify either the extent of SA-Zaire trade or the loss by SA businesses in Kinshasa.

He said most South African businesses were wary of re-entering the market in Kinshasa.

"A lot of clients have put brakes on, for example, supplying mining equipment and allied products to Gecamines in the south of the country," Mr Maggs said.

Under the changing government, Gecamines, a parastatal mining company, might undergo a change in management and local businessmen would want to know whom they were dealing with before they renewed their contracts. The same applied to SNCZ, the Zairean railway which had been supplied by a local axle manufacturer.

South Africans who had had interests in Zaire were awaiting some stability in the country but he doubted there would ever be a mass exodus of SA businessmen.

Replying to a final suggestion that he is crazy and Zaire unsafe, Tass Antippas just smiles.

"Perhaps I am crazy, but I feel safer in Kinshasa than in Johannesburg.

"During the rioting I went among the looters trying to save our stores and many people greeted me by name, but eventually there were too many and everything was lost.

"But never was there any danger. People were not against me or other whites, whom they want to stay. The riots were a fiesta, not a war." □

's 'anger' call



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Croatia says truce is limited

(358) ARG 10/10/91

ZAGREB (Yugoslavia). — The Yugoslav army and Croatia have forged their most solid ceasefire in three months of conflict, but the rebel republic insists its terms do not go far enough.

The truce, which took practical effect yesterday, provides for the relief of besieged cities, the lifting of blockades and partial withdrawal by the federal army.

But the Croatians, who ratified their independence from Yugoslavia and said they were severing all ties with the Balkan federation, demanded that Yugoslav armed forces pull out of their territory completely.

"This is just the beginning of an army of occupation," said a senior Croatian official, referring to the fact that not all Yugoslav army formations would be needed to leave the republic under the ceasefire provisions.

"We will still have to deal with these units," said the official in the Croatian capital.

He said about 200 000 armed people were involved in the conflict in Croatia, which blew up when the republic's large Serb minority rebelled against Croatia's declaration of independence from the Yugoslav federation. — Sapa-Reuter.

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. (358)

"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". BDay 11/10/91

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 government 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 Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS) party. "He agrees to one thing in the morning and takes it back in the afternoon." — Sapa-Reuter.

Mass protests in Zaire

So we from 11/10/91.

SAPA AND REUTERS

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Unacceptable

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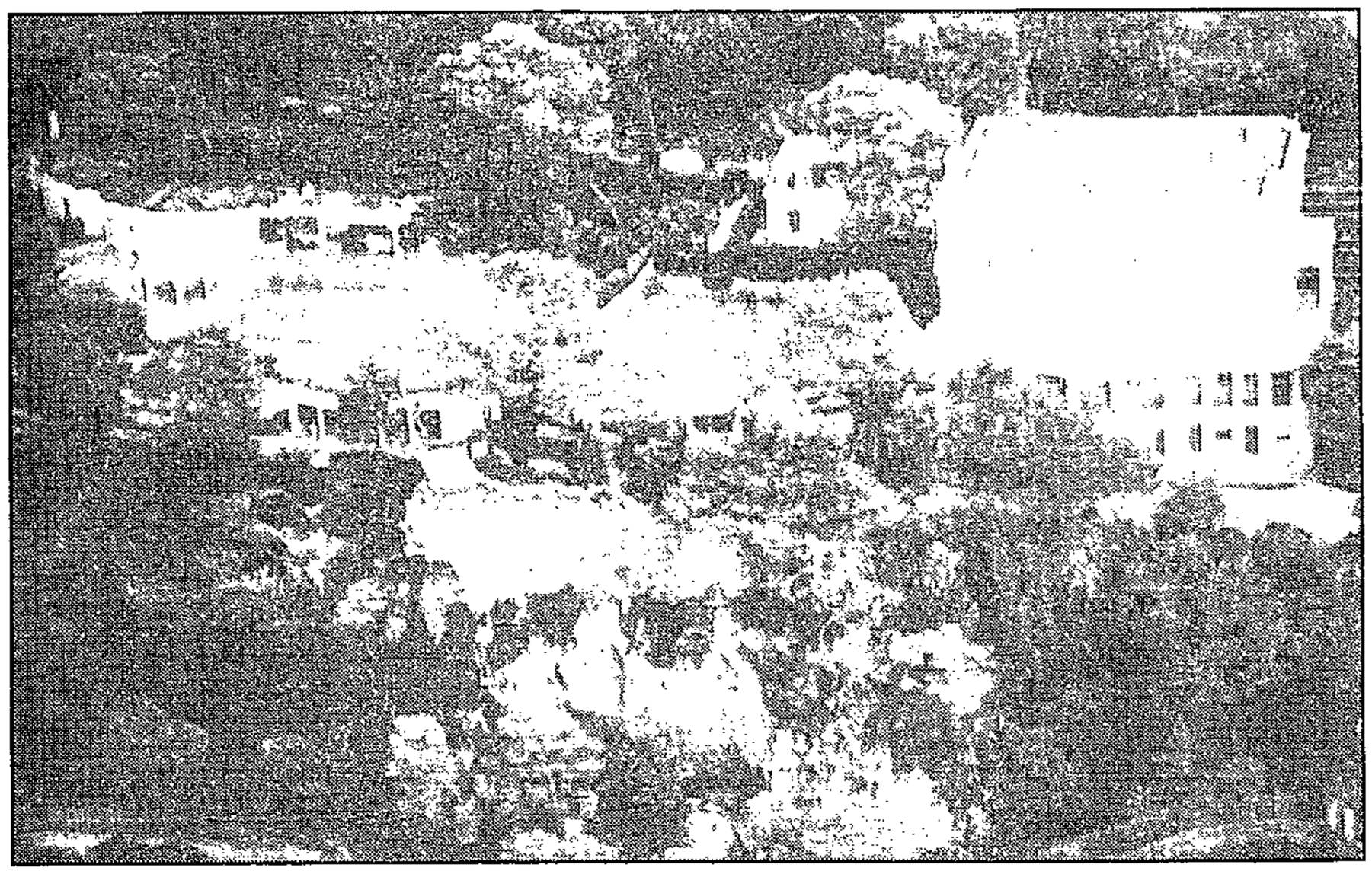
The coalition was also due to hold a strategy session yesterday.

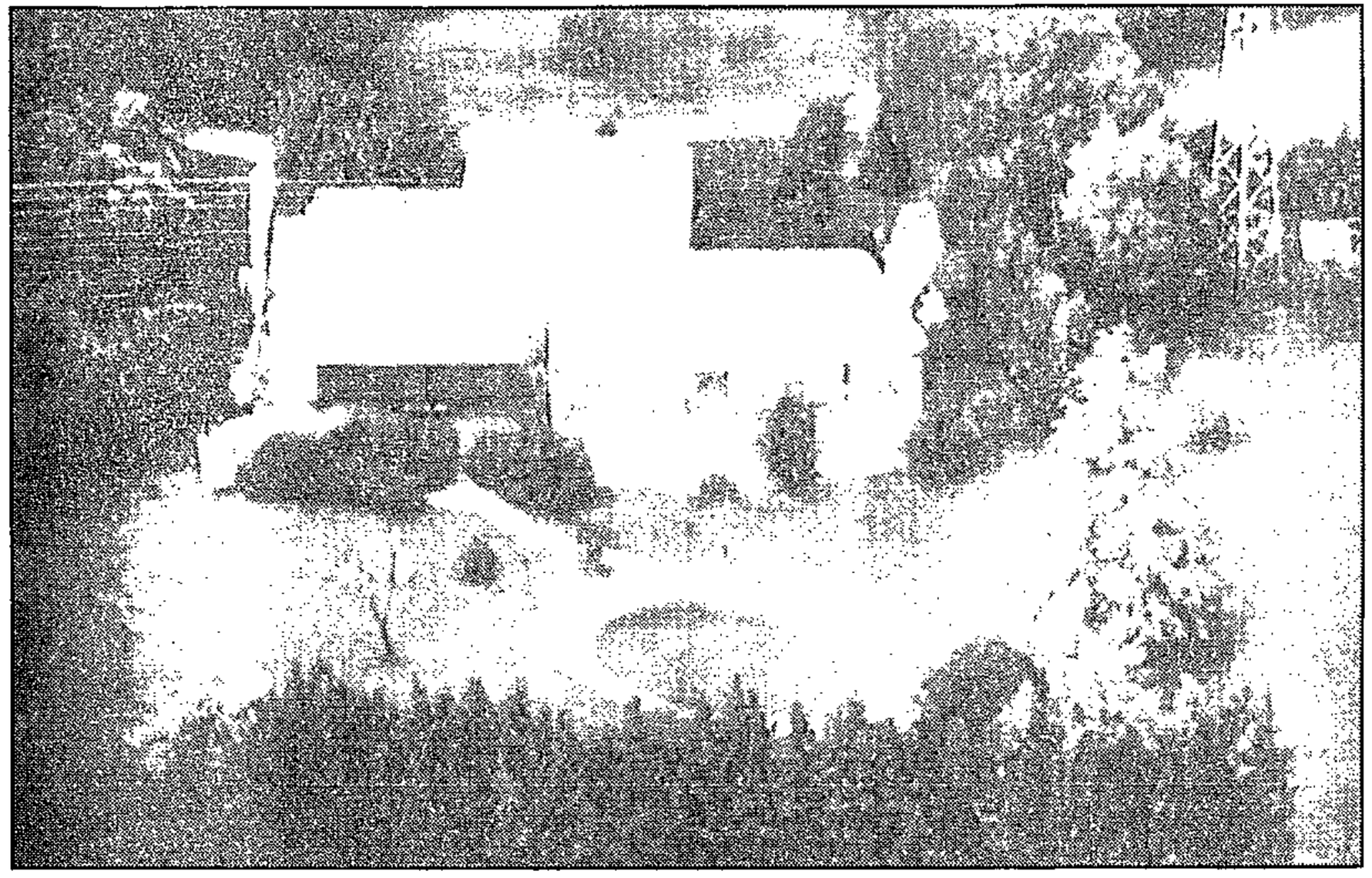
"Mobutu always goes back on his word," said Mr Mukenda, a high official of Tshisekedi's Union for Democracy and Social Progress party. "He agrees to one thing in the morning and takes it back in the afternoon."

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.

WORLD NEWS UPDATE



EXQUISITE HIDEAWAY . . . President Mobotu's villa in the South of France. His family arrived there by jet last week. President Mobutu has allegedly collected R9 billion in Swiss accounts.



DEPOSED IN LUXURY . . . the villa of Baby Doc in the Alpes-Maritimes district where he entertains countless women. He has amassed a personal fortune of about R2,5 billion.

Golden Gulag of tinpot dictators

Star 13/10/91.

358

Zaire's Mobutu is preparing for exile, cushioned from hard times by R9 billion





Haiti's 'Baby Doc' wines and dines armfuls of women on a lavish scale

IT is known as the Golden Gulag, but some of the world's most evil men refer to it simply as home. And what a home: all year round they can wallow under the Mediterranean sun, and the nouveau riche paradise of Monte Carlo, with its tacky casino, is just along the coast.

Within a mere limousine drive, you can treat yourself in the Cartier shops, expensive restaurants and nightclubs bursting with young women possessed of good looks and pliable morals.

Should you happen to be a former dictator of a tin-pot country and, like next-in-line President Mobutu of Zaire, have siphoned off enough of your people's money to keep yourself in luxury, then you will already know that the South of France is the place to fill those terribly difficult "in exile" hours.

It is a remarkable fact, but some of the most beautiful houses here, with the most beautiful views and the most staggering expenses, are lived in by former Third World dictators.

In a luxurious setting in the Alpes-Maritimes district, the current head of the Duvalier family, Baby Doc, entertains his friends and countless young women. He can afford it, his personal fortune is £500 million (about R2,5 billion).

Back in Haiti the subjects over whom his family once reigned brutally supreme live in desperate poverty, traumatised by internal violence.

It was the Duvaliers who held the tiny Caribbean island in their evil grip, terrorising the population with the vicious secret police, the Tontons Macoute, and plundering what little wealth it had.

With little to worry him now, the paunchy Duvalier is undisputed president for life of the Deposed Despots Society — the band of ex-dictators, failed military leaders or overthrown tyrants who fled to the Cote d'Azur.

They include Emperor Bokassa of the Central African Republic whose former master chef told how Bokassa ordered him to prepare a breakfast of part of a human body, stuffed with rice and flamed in gin.

He was also accused of leading the beating to death of 59 secondary school students who demonstrated against a government ruling that they must buy uniforms from a factory owned by Bokassa's wife. Bokassa fled to the Cote d'Azur many years ago.

More recently, ousted Christian General Michel Aoun, of Beirut fame, who was sped away by the French government from Lebanon, moved to Marseilles amid formidable security. He will be moving soon to a villa near Nice called Lou Soubran.

General Aoun helped keep Beirut's civil war on the boil, adding to the ruins of a cosmopolitan capital that was once as elegant as any in Europe.

Within speedboat distance of him, on Cap Martin overlooking Monaco, is the Villa Del Mare, owned by President Mobutu. His personal jet touched down at Nice last week, bearing his wife and an army of servants and bodyguards fresh from the mayhem of his country.

President Mobutu himself will arrive soon. He has allegedly salted away R9 billion in Swiss bank accounts. Thanks to his 26 years of mismanagement, Zaire's inflation is up 3 000 percent a year, and half the children die before they are five.

Despite the fact that France is run by socialists, these dictators are allowed to live it up on the Cote d'Azur because, one feels, the French revel in the art of going against the grain, of clasping to their hearts people the rest of the world wouldn't touch with a barge-pole.

It also helps that the Cote loves money, and this crowd have plenty of that. No matter that they have blood on their hands, as long as they have cash. The dictators shun credit cards, they like to settle their debts in cash, almost as if that is the one piece of security they now have.

Baby Doc has almost single-handedly kept some restaurants here in business during the recession. He swoops in with his entourage of lady friends and hired heavies.

However his 5½ years of exile have not been entirely a bed of roses.

He has lived in three different homes so far, being forced to leave his offical residence in Grasse because of local objections. His present abode is a sumptuous villa with extensive private grounds in a quarter known as SuperCannes. Neighbours include King Hussein of Jordan, the Sultan of Oman, various Gulf sheikhs and an executive directly involved in the BCCI scandal.

Meanwhile, President Mobutu, doubtless this second planning his escape, could win the Donald Trump Award for interior design for his residence — a pink and white marble palace set in 10 hectares of sub-tropical greenery.

Its four floors boast gold-fitted bathrooms and a banqueting hall which is being prepared for a spectacular party for his 61st birthday this month.

In the grounds there is a hunter's lodge for the housekeeper, a two-storey villa for the family's bodyguards and a separate holiday home for guests with an open-air pool, indoor pool, jacuzzi and sauna. Tennis courts and the mandatory helipad complete the picture of domestic bliss.

It could only happen in France, but the most wonderful irony of this arrival of despots is the fact that General Aoun's new home was seized by the French government earlier this year.

It had previously belonged to the corrupt Mayor of Nice, Jacques Medecin, who fled the city 12 months ago on fraud charges. He is now 14 000 kms away in Punta del Este, Uruguay, in self-imposed exile — paying cash, of course.

358

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 supporters. Sept 15 | 1e[illegible]

(368)

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 "crisis government" that Western nations had been pressing Mr Mobutu to appoint.



President Mobutu

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 portfolios.

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 Zairean troops mutinied and looted and ransacked businesses and homes in Kinshasa and other major cities. — Sapa-AP.

Zaire on edge as new govt awaited

(358) CT 14/10/91

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-Reuter

WORLD

Zaire's economy goes underground

(358)

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 Zairean 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. B10ay 17/10/91

In 1989, the latest year for which figures were available, total exports were valued at $2,19bn. Foreign debt for that year totalled almost $8bn.

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.

Sabena, the Belgian airline, said it was unlikely to resume flights to Zaire, in the near future. They had been an important income-earner for the airline.

Inflation at the beginning of the year was more than 1 000%. 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 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.

Zaire's cabinet forced to meet in the blazing sun

BDay 21/10/91 (358)

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 communique after the meeting but about 200 Tshisekedi supporters made the "V" for victory sign.

The latest power struggle between the two arch-foes came the day after a spokesman for Mobutu declared that Tshisekedi's government formed last week was illegal because the prime minister had struck out key parts of his investiture document.

Earlier, a defiant Tshisekedi pleaded with civil guardsmen to let him into his office and when that failed he sat down in a nearby grassy area and said he would meet with his cabinet there later in the day.

"You should not obey orders from a thief," the 58-year-old Tshisekedi told the 50 or so guardsmen who barred his way to the prime minister's office.

Tshisekedi has been attempting to take control in the country whose economy was left in a shambles by recent riots.

National radio claims 250 people have been killed in the riots, more than doubling the figure from the previous official figure of 117 dead. — Sapa-Reuter.

358

Zaire sacks new Premier

Star 21/10/91

KINSHASA — Zaire plunged back to political chaos yesterday when President Mobutu Sese Seko disavowed his arch-foe 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

(358)

Star 22/10/91.

KINSHASA — Zaire's strongarm 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 15 000 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.

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 oath 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 4 million people, where most shops and businesses were wrecked in two days of rioting last month. — Sapa-Reuter.



Turmoil as Mobutu sacks his new prime minister

B/Daily 22/10/91 358

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 250 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.

Zaire chaos as looting starts again

358

Soweta

23/10/91

KINSHASA - Looting has started again in Zaire's major copper-mining town of Lubumbashi, witnesses arriving in the capital Kinshasa yesterday.

The witnesses said looters ransacked the south-eastern city on Monday night as the central African country was locked in a power struggle between President Mobutu Sese Seko and opposition Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi.

"They looted everything, all night," said one resident contacted by telephone. "They've stripped the face of the town. They've even taken corrugated metal from the houses."

Air links with Lubumbashi, in Zaire's copper-rich Shaba province, were cut.

An eyewitness said soldiers carried out the looting, firing automatic weapons 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 yesterday.

Belgian nationals in the town had been placed under the protection of Belgian troops, sent there several 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 impoverished central African country into political chaos again. - *Sapa-Reuter*

Fresh wave of riots, looting racks Zaire

KINSHASA — Soldiers and civilians have gone on a fresh looting rampage in Zaire, gripped by a bitter power struggle between President Mobutu Sese Seko and the powerful opposition, witnesses said yesterday.

Residents fleeing to Kinshasa from Lubumbashi in the southeast of the vast country said troops firing automatic weapons into the air ransacked the copper mining city on Monday night.

"They looted everything, all night," one witness said. "They've stripped the face of the town. They've even taken corrugated metal from the houses."

Another resident, speaking to Belgian radio by telephone from Lubumbashi, said there was major damage but no deaths.

Western diplomats in Kinshasa said rampaging soldiers were joined by civilians and the pillage continued yesterday morning. B/Day 23/10/97

They said half of Lubumbashi's 1 400 European residents had taken refuge in a school ready for evacuation by Belgian troops to Europe, SA, Congo or nearby Rwanda. The rest were in their homes awaiting rescue.

Belgium and France sent troops to Zaire to protect their nationals when riots and looting exploded on September 23 and 24. About 250 people were killed in the violence, which caused hundreds of millions of dollars worth of damage.

Lubumbashi was the only major town to be spared in last month's violence, but diplomats said Monday's outburst was as bad as anything the capital had seen.

They said there was also less serious looting on Monday in the central town of Mbuji-Mayi and in Kasai, home of opposition Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi.

Mobutu, forced by last month's violence to share power with his political enemies for the first time in his 26-year rule, appointed Tshisekedi to form a crisis transitional government.

But the country was plunged into fresh political turmoil on Monday when Mobutu sacked Tshisekedi after he struck out clauses in his oath of office swearing allegiance to the president.

Tshisekedi told reporters yesterday he still considered himself prime minister and said he expected the crisis with Mobutu to be resolved.

"We are condemned to get along."

The main opposition coalition, the Sacred Union, was scheduled to meet yesterday to consider its next move. Political sources said it might put forward Tshisekedi's name again as prime minister despite Mobutu's order to nominate someone else. 358

Elite presidential guards used teargas and fired into the air yesterday to scatter fresh anti-Mobutu demonstrations in several parts of the capital. Thousands of Tshisekedi supporters demonstrated in Kinshasa on Monday.

Zaire's official news agency Azap said civil service unions announced they would restart a pay strike lifted last week.

Lubumbashi, a stronghold of opposition leader Nguza Karl-i-Bond, is Zaire's second most important copper-producing town after Kolwezi.

It is home to Zaire's state-owned mining giant Gecamines, which provides nearly all the country's vital copper and cobalt exports. Diplomats said Gecamines, which relies heavily on a huge European workforce, would be gravely hit by the evacuation of foreigners. — Sapa-Reuter.

Riots follow Mobutu choice of premier

Star 24/10/91

358

KINSHASA — Fresh rioting broke out in Zaire's capital Kinshasa today after President Mobutu Sese Seko named a replacement for dismissed 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 carries 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-Reuter.

WORLD

Mobutu's grip on Zaire weakening

B1Day 24/10/91 358

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 Chritochedou.

Nicolas Chlasnos, a Greek who also fled, said: "I've got only the clothes that I have been wearing since Monday." — Sapa-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 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 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.

"Mungul 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.

"Mungul 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

Guardian 25/10-31/10/91. (358)

By Mark Huband

BELGIUM'S decision to retain 800 troops on an almost permanent basis in Zaire, to protect both foreigners and Zaireans, is a sign of how unstable it believes its former colony to be.

While most of the troops will be stationed in Kinshasa, others will patrol the rich but increasingly volatile mineral-producing region in the south.

The towns of Lubumbashi and Kolwezi, in the southern province of Shaba, grew up in the 1930s when the commercial extraction of copper and cobalt began. Now these metals are Zaire's main foreign-exchange earner, with 50 years of reserves left.

The state-owned mining company Gecamines is supposed to hand over 55 percent of its foreign currency earnings to the Bank of Zaire in return for worthless local currency, but it has not paid anything into the bank since April because of a slump in profits.

The fortunes of Zaire's ruling elite stem from mineral earnings, which are channelled to Kinshasa and abroad. Since independence in 1960, no schools have been built in Shaba.

During last month's riots, Kolwezi's shops were looted and the mines closed for two days because nobody turned up for work. Gecamines lost a vast amount of equipment to looters, who drove their booty away in lorries stolen from the mines.

Now the shops are all empty. Some have been burnt to the ground. Belgian troops stand in the shadow of the Catholic church, waiting to see what will happen next.

In Shaba, which means copper in Swahili, the discontented soldiers who led the riots have grown rich. The people whose homes were looted say they know where their property is, but they dare not reclaim it.

"The soldiers shot at my house before they broke in," says Laurent Tshimbye, a mine employee. "They didn't shoot at me, they just took everything I own.

"Now all our property is in the army barracks, just on the other side of that fence over there."

In March, workers at all three Gecamines sites in Shaba went on a month-long strike. Gecamines finance director, Edward Lyssan, says: "People weren't making a living wage any more. We awarded a 60 percent pay increase in September." The increase will have been cancelled out by 50 percent monthly inflation by the end of the year.

Beneath exploding jacaranda blossoms, in the shadow of a burnt-out shop, a boy sells Shaba's leading weekly newspaper, *L'Espoir* (Hope). A front-page headline reads: "The emergence of the Baltic states of Zaire: Katanga, Kasai, and Kivu."

An article by the editor argues that Zaire's three richest provinces should follow the example of the Soviet Baltic republics:

"These provinces could be self-sufficient today, and could organise themselves without the direction of one 'guide' and a class of looters living in a distant capital." — The Guardian

WORLD

Zairean army goes on the rampage

BIPday 25/10/91. 358

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, looted 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, 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 1983 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.

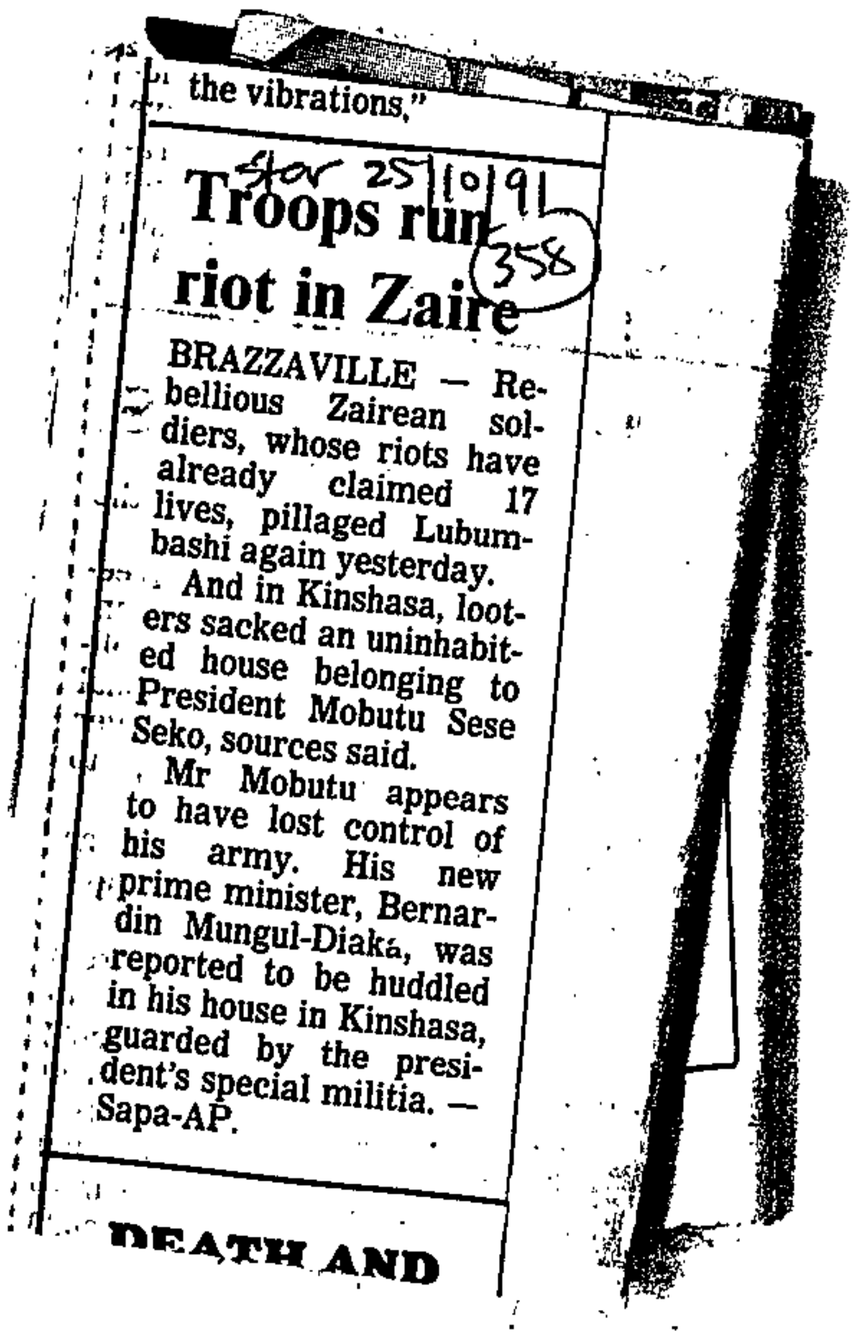
"We will insist, together with our French and US partners, that a government is formed that can tackle the situation," Martens told reporters. — Sapa-AP.

QUESTION 1

SUGGESTED SOLUTION

1. (10 marks)

Sidelsham Service Station
Trial Balance at 28 February 1990



the vibrations."

Star 25/10/91

Troops run riot in Zaire

358

BRAZZAVILLE — Rebellious 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 Sese Seko, sources said.

Mr Mobutu appears to have lost control of his army. His new prime minister, Bernardin Mungul-Diaká, was reported to be huddled in his house in Kinshasa, guarded by the president's special militia. — Sapa-AP.

DEATH AND

Zairean PM under siege

CT 26/10/91 (358)

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

358
Star 26/10/91.

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.

Britain told its 160 nationals to go to safe houses and await further advice, in broadcasts yesterday on the BBC World Service radio. — Sapa-AP.

'Get out of Zaire!'

Foreigners urged to leave as protesters go on a rampage

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 urging 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 3 500 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 siezed 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 centre 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 Mungul-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.

Nguza Karl-I-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'

358 CT 26/10/91

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 charges, he was fuelling unrest as an excuse to impose a military government as he did when he seized power 26 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 Mungul-Diaka, a minor opposition leader branded a traitor by his colleagues.

Mr Mungul-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, was not in the villa that was torched. He has recently been staying on a yacht moored 30km from the capital. — Sapa-Reuter-AP

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

S/Times 27/10/91. 358

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.

SUNDAY TIMES FOREIGN DESK

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-Seko'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.

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 3 500 Belgians, 160 Britons and hundreds of Nigerians and Lebanese.

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.

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 thus 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 Forke 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 Elseman 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 500 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 800 paratroopers in the country.

Britain, the US and Nigeria also have urged their nationals to evacuate. — Sapa-Reuter.

Zaire blast targets the opposition

Sowetan 28/10/91 (358)

KINSHASA - A huge explosion destroyed the premises of Zaire's main opposition newspaper *Elima* yesterday, witnesses said.

The blast, at about 5am, 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 media critic.

AROUND THE WORLD

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-Reuter.*

Mobutu holds on as Zaire crumbles

(358)

Star 28/10/91.

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 fleeing French who reached Brazzaville, 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 planeload 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 R500 million in the past five years.

The last straw appears to be the tribal violence in Lubumbashi, formerly Elizabethville, 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 Tshombe'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, Lukala, Inkisi, Boma and Mbanza-Ngungu.

The petrol refinery and oil storage facilities, owned by the state-run company Zairep, 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. — Sapa-Reuter.

Explosions as whites flee Zaire violence

ARG 28/10/91 (358)

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 used to be 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 2 000 troops who safeguarded the evacuation of 10 000 foreigners. About 800 Belgian and 150 French paratroopers remain to protect what Western governments say will be a final evacuation of about 3 500 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 Matadi, 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

CT 28/10/91 (358)

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

Kaunda's ruin of Zambia is likely to be his downfall

(358) CT 28/10/91

By FRED BRIDGLAND

LUSAKA — Kenneth Kaunda returns home from the Commonwealth summit in Harare to face a gale which is likely to blow him from office.

With the Commonwealth focus having moved from the issue of South Africa towards promoting "good government", human rights and an end to dictatorships, Kaunda suddenly looks like an emperor with few clothes.

Next week Kaunda faces, against his will but under pressure from the international community, the country's first multiparty elections in nearly 20 years. He is widely tipped to be ousted, if the polls are fair.

If Kaunda goes, few tears will be shed at home or abroad. When he came to power in 1964, on Zambia's independence from Britain, the prospects looked good. The country had abundant rich soils, good rainfall and a blissful climate in which nearly every kind of crop could be grown. There were valuable mineral deposits. The British left Kaunda with R10 bn of foreign reserves. The population was three million. In 27 years of increasingly dictatorial rule, Kaunda has systematically destroyed the economy in the name of creating a "humanistic paradise on earth". At the same time the population soared to 7,5 million.

Incompetence

For a long time Kaunda was virtually above criticism. He had great personal charm. He was regarded as a great African moral force, an impression he reinforced by constant references to God and his propensity for crying in public over others' shortcomings. Out of a combination of colonial guilt and racial patronising, British academics, journalists and clerics reinforced Kaunda's "redeemer" image.

It eventually took the Zambian people themselves — easy-going, passive and long-suffering — to see through Kaunda's trick, to demand an end to one-party rule and gain a contested ballot for the presidency.

Gaze in any direction and the Zambian post-independence story is one of mammoth incompetence and disaster. With foreign debt standing at nearly R23 bn, the World Bank last month cancelled a R750 m loan Kaunda needed to feed his people after Zambia defaulted on an earlier loan repayment. Per capita income has fallen by more than 30% in 14 years.

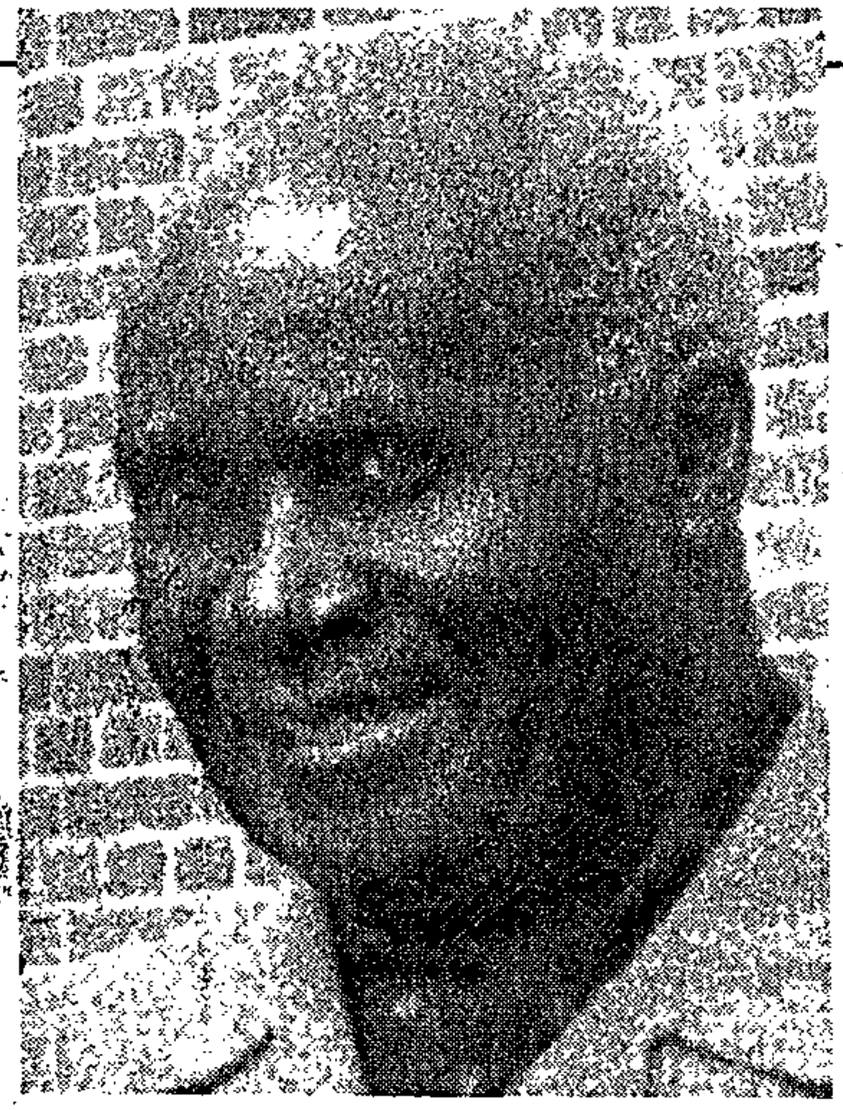
The drastic fall in living standards led to waves of labour unrest and the increase in strength of the opposition Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), led by Frederick Chiluba, chairman of the Congress of Trade Unions, who after next week could become Zambia's new president.

Hospitals and pharmacies are low on essential drugs and a cholera epidemic was exacerbated by collapsing water services and rural health facilities. Inflation is at 100%. Spending on education is only a third of the level it was 14 years ago. Richard Musaka, a businessman in the Copperbelt town of Mufulira, has two teenage boys at secondary school but says they remain illiterate. He said: "Standards have gone to hell. I'll be voting MMD."

Nationalisation

It is easy to point to the reasons for Kaunda's failure. He embarked on an early programme on nationalisation: those big companies became huge loss-makers, staffed by high-salaried Kaunda appointees. They drained wealth instead of creating it. A classic error was the '60s nationalisation of copper mines, which account for 90% of the country's foreign exchange earnings.

Millions of dollars in compensation went to South Africa's Anglo American Corporation. Then the copper price collapsed and for years Zambia made great losses from the mines while continuing to pay big fees to Anglo American for technical advice and materials.



KENNETH KAUNDA: In 27 years of increasingly dictatorial rule, he systematically destroyed the Zambian economy in the name of creating a "humanistic paradise on earth".

Another epic mistake was to place severe controls on the price of maize, the country's staple food, to keep miners and other urban workers quiescent. The controlled price was below the costs of production. Peasants stopped growing maize for any purpose other than subsistence. The net result was that Zambia, which nearly all experts agree is so fecund that it should be feeding the whole of Africa, became a supplicant for world food aid.

Signs of decay

Lusaka, once a spic and span city with supermarket shelves packed with produce, is rapidly marching back to the Year Zero. The signs are immediately visible at Lusaka's once-glittering international airport. The air-conditioning does not work. Broken light fittings hang drunkenly.

In the main thoroughfare, dust lines supermarket shelves. The tallest, building, the headquarters of Unip; was abandoned half completed because money ran out. With two million people unemployed, crime has taken off. Ten percent of town dwellers are HIV positive.

Even beer production has collapsed. The state-owned Mosi Breweries had no competition but was hamstrung by price controls.

If Kaunda loses the election he has said he will retire to his peasant farm in eastern Zambia rather than to one of his many luxury mansions. If he does so, he will need more luck than his fellow peasants, whom he has so comprehensively impoverished in 27 years of the rule by error. — **Daily Telegraph**

Mobutu in talks with opposition

(358) ET 29/10/91

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 Wilfred 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. — Sapa-AP

Kaunda report smears opponents

358
29/10/91

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 1986 after a specially appointed 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-Reuter

WORLD

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 citiziens 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 950 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. — Sapa-AP-Reuter.

Diplomats flee war-torn Zaire

Sowetan 30/10/91 358

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 Thisekedi 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 "spendid job in difficult and risky circumstances". He added that the diplomats' evacuation was only a temporary measure.

Relations between South Africa and Zaire had not been cut. - *Sowetan Correspondent.*

SA evacuates Kinshasa mission members

JONATHON REES

SA EVACUATED its remaining diplomatic staff from its Kinshasa mission and flew them and other foreign nationals to Johannesburg yesterday. B\Days 30/10/91

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 SAAF Hercules, said the evacuation was a temporary measure and would not disrupt relations with Zaire. 358

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.

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He described the situation as "very difficult and too risky", but said that the SA mission would be restored as soon as the situation normalised.

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 Wynne, 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 burned, 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 skilfully decentralised by President Mobutu Sese Seko.

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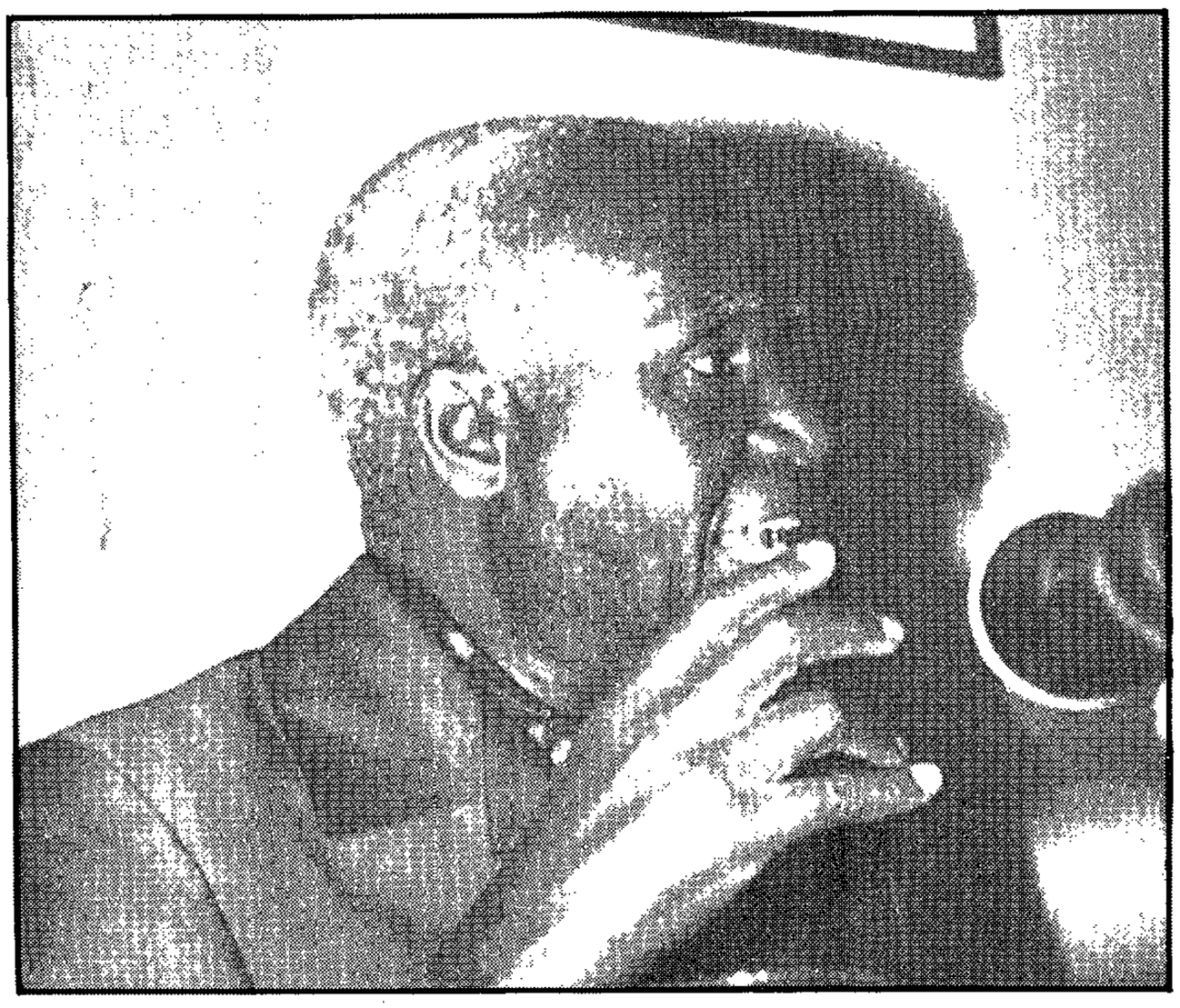
KK's moment of truth

ALMOST a year of campaigning comes to a head tomorrow when Zambian voters go to the polls in the first truly multi-party election since independence from Britain in October 1964. BARNEY MTHOMBOTHI, of the Argus Africa News Service, reports from LUSAKA.



Has President Kaunda's hour of reckoning arrived?

"HAVE you heard the latest?" President Kenneth Kaunda asked his supporters at a rally in Lusaka on Sunday. And he went on to relate what he calls lies, insults and character assassinations aimed at him by his opponents in the opposition Movement for Multi-party Democracy (MMD).

As tomorrow's election day approaches, the level of political discourse between President Kaunda's United National Independence Party (Unip) and its chief rivals has steadily descended to the political gutter.

Both parties are going straight for the jugular. After almost a year of campaigning the ordinary Zambian is as uninformed on how the two parties hope to heal the ills of the country as he was at the start of hostilities.

President Kaunda says he is the innocent victim of MMD character assassins. He told his supporters: "They say my poor son Kambarage (sentenced to death for murder) has been sent out of the country. My son is in prison.

"The next lie is that Mrs Kaunda poured hot porridge on a maid at State Lodge. Mrs Kaunda poured no porridge on any woman."

But Dr Kaunda is not the innocent victim he claims to be. An unruly mob believed to be Unip supporters last week attacked the home of Mr Dipak Patel, an MMD candidate in one of the Lusaka constituencies, wrecking his two cars.

Dr Kaunda said he deeply regretted the attack on Mr Patel's property. But he immediately launched a scathing attack on Mr Patel, questioning his allegiance to Zambia and claimed Mr Patel had a dual Zambian and Canadian citizenship. Mr Patel has denied the charge.

Dr Kaunda has even tried to infer that the man who wants to dislodge him from State House, Frederick Chiluba, the MMD president, is not a Zambian and did not go very far at school and therefore not up to the job of being president.

Dr Kaunda has promised "to deal mercilessly" with his opponents after the elections. His implied confidence to win tomorrow, however, seems to fly in the face of a general consensus that he will lose the elections. Some observers here expect Unip to be decimated.

But he has also said that should the unthinkable happen, he will retire to his farm in the Chinsali District in Northern Province.

THE opposition has accused Dr Kaunda of inciting the nation into a riotous frenzy by repeatedly warning of chaos should Unip be defeated in this week's presidential and parliamentary elections.

They also claim to have uncovered a training camp for a private army of some 400 who will be let loose by Unip. The ruling party has denied the allegation and the police say they are training the men at the request of a private company.

But Dr Kaunda's party has not only taken on its opponents. It has also riled the numerous teams of observers who are here to monitor the elections.

A Commonwealth team say they have been outraged by allegations made by Unip that they had come to work for the downfall of the government. Leader of the 13-man team, Mr Justice Telford Georges this week demanded a public retraction of the allegations.

A Unip advertisement said it was the strategy "of imperialism to use the so-called monitors to influence the outcome in favour of MMD. In the event that the Unip wins the elections, which is unlikely, the observer group will certify that the elections were not free and fair."

The American embassy also said it was "surprised and perplexed by the accusations against the US and unnamed imperialists" in the Unip advert.

The mood in the country was summed up by a newspaper poster this week: (Zambia) "Facing an uncertain future" it said. There is apprehension and intense speculation as to what will happen tomorrow and Friday. Diplomats and other foreign nationals are reported to be taking precautionary measures by moving their families out of Lusaka and other major centres.

The government has been moved to issue a statement assuring them that their safety will be taken care of. Indian shopkeepers are understood to be moving goods out of shops for fear of looting.

It is the fear of the unknown. Zambia has never been on this road before. Nobody knowns for sure who will win (there are no surveys) and how Zambians will react to the results.

And Unip has been quick to exploit this fear. News of civil strife in other African countries such as Somalia, Sudan and Ethiopia are highlighted in the government-controlled media. The chaos in nearby Zaire has been a godsend to Unip spin doctors.

The inference is quite clear: Kaunda and Unip has given you 27 years of social stability.

Their slogan says: "Vote Unip. Vote for reason." It is a message that Dr Kaunda has hammered home over and over at every rally. He does not mention the economy, which is of course in a mess, or who is responsible for it.

But he has sought to exploit the fears of civil servants and ordinary mineworkers — the mineral-rich Copperbelt is the MMD stronghold — in the huge parastatals by saying privatisation will lead to huge redundancies should the MMD come to power because it seemed they were "only interested in profits".

The fear of violence has been exacerbated by reports at the weekend that a government officer was allegedly apprehended with an AK-47 rifle and 30 rounds of ammunition at a rally addressed by Chiluba on the Copperbelt. Mr Chiluba said the man was sitting "at a vantage point" ready to assassinate him.

Mr Chiluba and his party are not a threat to Dr Kaunda and Unip only. In the past three decades, hundreds of acolytes have benefitted from the gravy train, earning top salaries in government and the huge parastatals which have provided something akin to sheltered employment for Dr Kaunda's supporters. This week's elections could therefore decide their fate as well. An MMD victory is as unwelcome to them as it is to Dr Kaunda.

FOR Dr Kaunda defeat would bring to an end a political career which began in 1958 when he, as a young schoolteacher, led a group of young radicals from Harry Nkumbula's Northern Rhodesia African National Congress to form Unip.

In 1962, after a massive campaign of civil disobedience organised by Unip, the British government introduced a new constitution, and Unip and the congress formed a coaltion government.

Pre-independence elections were held in January 1964, and Dr Kaunda formed an all-Unip government with substantial control of internal affairs.

In October 1964 Zambia was granted independence with Kaunda as president.

Dr Kaunda has made many enemies in his 27 years in power, and some of them, former associates, are in the MMD, plotting his downfall which they hope to achieve this week.

But some of the leading lights in the MMD are people of very suspect background. They are said to have made their wealth in the drugs trade. Stephen Chan, an expert on Zambia, once told a meeting in Johannesburg, some Zambian businessmen, now in the MMD, had made a not inconsiderable contribution to the drug market in Johannesburg.

"Most of the mandrax which finds its way into Johannesburg is manufactured, in the first place, in India, and Lusaka is the major trans-shipment point," Mr Chan said. The government was expected to exploit the drug issue from the very beginning. It did not, and many observers thought it was reluctant to do so because some people in government may not have clean hands themselves.

But this week Dr Kaunda suddenly released a report of a commission of inquiry into drug dealing he appointed in October 1985.

The commission completed its work a later but the report was not released. Dr Kaunda said he was releasing it this week because of insinuations from some quarters that the government had something to hide.

The report alleges that senior MMD members Sikota Wina, his wife Princess Nakatindi and Vernon Mwaanga are the brains and financiers of the mandrax operations. How serious a damage this revelation would do to the election prospects of the MMD, coming as it does at this late hour, is not yet clear.

The MMD should it win the elections will have to contend with the problem of raised expectations. It has concentrated all its fire on Dr Kaunda to such an extend that an impression has been created in the minds of ordinary people that Dr Kaunda was the problem. Remove him and you've removed your problems.

That simplistic assessment may return to haunt them.

Some observers here also expect a split in the MMD should they win. The only thing that seems to be holding these disparate factions under one umbrella is their hatred of Dr Kaunda.

The ideological chasm between the factions — raging from the socialist left to businessmen who believe in a laissez faire economy — are said to be so vast it will be difficult to agree on and carry out policies once in government, without a Kaunda for a scapegoat.

"The only thing thet ill hold the MMD together after October 31 is for them to lose the elections," one diplomat said here.

The slogan of the MMD, "The hour has come" has caught the imagination of ordinary Zambians.

And for Dr Kaunda, it seems his hour of reckoning has truly arrived.



Fighting for survival ... President Mobutu Sese Seko

Soldiers join in the ransacking of Zaire

358

w/Mail 25/10 - 31/10/91

While President Mobutu Sese Seko clings to power, soldiers expressed their anger in a looting spree this week.

By MARK HUBAND

SOLDIERS and civilians in Zaire's southern city of Lubumbashi looted shops this week in a violent response to the political impasse which has followed the sacking of the opposition prime minister Etienne Tshisekedi by President Mobutu Sese Seko.

Zaire Radio said riots also broke out in the other southern towns of Kolwezi, Likasi, Mbuji-Mayi and the northern town of Kisangani. Residents fleeing to the capital, Kinshasa, from Lubumbashi said troops firing machine guns into the air ransacked the copper-mining city on Monday night.

"They looted everything, all night. They've stripped the face of the town and have even taken corrugated metal from the houses," one witness told Reuters news agency.

Up to 700 foreign nationals took refuge in a school in Lubumbashi while awaiting evacuation by Belgian paratroopers stationed in the city since rioting began on September 23. Hundreds of other foreigners are believed to be in their homes awaiting evacuation.

No deaths were reported and it is unclear whether the soldiers' anger stemmed from their support for or opposition to Mobutu.

The opposition coalition, Sacred Union, is believed to be planning to repropose Tshisekedi as prime minister in defiance of Mobutu's order to put forward a new name.

Tshisekedi, who has refused to accept his dismissal, was sacked on Monday after deleting references in his oath of office which acknowledged the authority of Mobutu and the constitution upon which his power is based.

"Such a move by the opposition would mean the Sacred Union had deliberately chosen to block the situation," the vice-president of Mobutu's Popular Movement for the Revolution (MPR) party, Banza Mukalayi Nsungu, said on Tuesday.

Frederic Kibassa Maliba, deputy leader of Tshisekedi's Democratic Union for Social Progress (UDPS) party and spokesman for the Sacred Union, claimed the opposition had side-stepped Mobutu's attempt to divide them by refusing to nominate an alternative candidate for the post of prime minister.

But Mobutu's tactic is provoking the opposition and delaying a resolution to the crisis. His single-minded intention is to cling to power whatever the cost. As the crisis deepens, Mobutu will try to discredit his opponents and present himself as the only security the people have left.

When Tshisekedi accepted the prime ministership two weeks ago it was as the choice of a committee which had Mobutu as its chairman, thereby recognising the role of the president he openly despises.

Critics within the opposition say Tshisekedi should have awaited the reconvening of the suspended national conference. Instead he has taken on the entire weight of opposition to Mobutu, personalising the battle with the regime instead of first securing the formal backing of thousands of opposition delegates at the conference.

The conference had secured at least nominal sovereign powers and would have been a much more formidable force than the demonstrators whose recognition by the regime is, on the most cynical level, merely in proportion to the degree of destruction they cause when they take to the streets.

Tshisekedi's acceptance of the post also stemmed from the pressure both sides are under from Zaire's main foreign donors — France, Belgium and the

Zaire simmers as Cabinet is named

Star 31/10/91. (358)

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 Farouk, 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. — Sapa-Reuter. Staff Reporter.

Bloodbath feared as troops leave Zaire

B1 Day 1/11/91

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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 Mungul-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 Mungul-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 beggared 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. — Sapa-AP.

AFRICA

Western troops to leave Zaire

358

w/Mail 1/11 - 7/11/91.

There seems to be no reprise for Zaire's uncertain future as scandal erupts and Mobutu demands the removal of French and Belgian troops.
MARK HUBAND reports

ZAIRE'S diplomatic onslaught against Western powers intensified earlier this week after Belgian and French troops were told to leave the country and the French ambassador was accused of planning the destabilisation of President Mobutu Sese Seko's regime.

On Tuesday night Mobutu appeared to have confirmed his appointment of Mungul Diaka as Prime Minister. The appointment comes after Mobutu dismissed the opposition leader, Etienne Tshisekedi, from the post a week ago. Demonstrators immediately took to the streets of Kinshasa.

Mobutu's attack on Western diplomats came as splits over strategy opened further between the US on the one hand and France and Belgium on the other.

The US believes chaos will result if Mobutu is forced out. France and Belgium have made it clear that he should accept that his credibility has disappeared and relinquish power.

The pro-government newspaper, *Conscience,* cited taped telephone conversations between the French ambassador, Henri Rethore, and the French foreign ministry. The tapes are in Mobutu's possession and allegedly reveal plans to undermine the 26-year dictatorship.

The French embassy in Kinshasa has made no official response to the recordings, which were apparently made in defiance of rules guaranteeing the privacy of diplomatic communications.

Attempts by Belgium, France and the US to present a united front in their dealings with Mobutu are now in jeopardy. Belgium has put forward plans for a military force to be sent to Zaire under the banner of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

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. Zairean opposition officials also rejected the Belgian proposal.

The Brussels decision-making process appears to be in particular disarray: no African government was consulted before the plan was put forward and Belgium's embassy in Kinshasa was not given notice before the announcement by its foreign minister, Mark Eyskens. Neither France nor the US was aware of the plan, emphasising the gulf between the three.

Mobutu has now put further pressure on Belgium by demanding that it withdraw its 850 paratroopers sent to Zaire five weeks ago to oversee the evacuation of foreign nationals. The demand took Belgium completely by surprise, as plans to retain a permanent military presence had not been ruled out.

A Belgian Foreign Ministry spokesman has since told reporters that the government had not yet decided on an exact date for the withdrawal of the elite paracommandos, but he added: "We note that in the next few weeks the Belgian and French troops will be withdrawn, as 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.

The French Defence Ministry said it would withdrawal its remaining 150 troops from Zaire on Thursday.

The extent to which the security situation has worsened has become clearer. Big towns in the interior are now reported to have been completely looted. Worst hit were the towns of Kananga and the diamond centre of Tshikapa. Belgium evacuated 500 foreign nationals from 15 town in the interior on Monday, as part of its fin evacuation which will be completed today.

An army takeover if the political deadlock is not broken has become more likely, senior military sources in Kinshasa believe.

Hardliners in the regime, particularly Zaire's ambassador to Israel, General Eloki, are thought to be close to preventing further change, even if it means confronting Mobutu.

The army chief of staff, General Mahele, announced at the weekend that soldiers would immediately execute looters, a strong sign that the army intends to take an active role. "If the situation deteriorates further, military action is inevitable," one Western source said.

The Zairean army has about 100,000 personnel. The largest sector, the Zairean Armed Forces (FAZ), numbers 81,000, of whom 60,000 are armed.

Next in size is the 12,000-strong Civil Guard, headed by General Baramoto, brother-in-law to Mobutu. But it is the Special Presidential Division (DSP), with 6,500 under arms, which represents the strong arm of Mobutu's rule.

Both the Civil Guard and the DSP are answerable to the president, while the FAZ is controlled by the ministry of defence.

Senior army officers are largely from Mobutu's Equateur region and have been trained by France, Belgium, China, and Egypt. South Africa now has a military training role, while Israel is responsible for training the DSP. - The Guardian London.

Call for force against Mobutu

(358) ET 1/11/91

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 bloodath" if Belgian troops left as scheduled, said Mr Buana Kabwe, president of the Zairean Human Rights League. — Sapa-Reuter

Zambians dance in Lusaka streets to celebrate new era

Kaunda defeated by landslide

358 AEG 2/11/91

BARNEY MTHOMBOTHI
Weekend Argus Africa Service

LUSAKA. — President Kenneth Kaunda was last night contemplating a future in the political wilderness as news came in from all corners of Zambia of his stunning defeat at the hands of the fledging MMD.

The Movement for Multi-Party Democracy was expecting President Kaunda to throw in the towel as the scale of its landslide victory became known.

It was a stunning achievement by an organisation which only came into existence in March this year.

In Lusaka, people danced in the streets to celebrate the downfall of President Kaunda, who has been leader of this country for almost three decades.

Counting was still continuing last night but so far the MMD has swept everything before it in all but one of the nine provinces. The opposition had won 44 of the 49 seats in the 150-seat assembly in which results were declared — and by very high margins.

The ruling United National Independence Party had managed to win only five seats—four of them in the Eastern Province, a Unip stronghold.

The MMD was well ahead in most constituencies where counting had not yet been completed. Among those who lost their seats were the Minister of Home Affairs, Mr Kinge Chinkuli, the Minister of Co-operatives, Mr Justin Mukando and his deputy, Mr Simon Kalabo, the junior Minister of Information and Broadcasting Services, Mr Noel Mvula, and the Agriculture Minister, Mr Biggie Nkumbula.

Also defeated was former Prime Minister Mr Kebby Musokotwane, now the High Commissioner in Canada, who failed to win the seat of Livingstone.

All senior MMD candidates including its vice-president Mr Levy Mwanawasa, Mr Sikota Wina, Mr Humphrey Mulemba and Mr Henry Kristafor, who are likely to form an MMD adminstration, won comfortably.

In the presidential race the MMD leader, Mr Frederick Chiluba, beat President Kaunda by a two to one margin.

Mr Chiluba had accumulated more than 200 000 votes throughout the country. Mr Kaunda was still way below 100 000.

A characteristic of the elections was a poll and both parties blamed this on the outdated voters roll which had not been updated since the 1987 elections. As a result many young people did not vote, a fact which must have affected the MMD majority. The opposition could have won more votes had the roll been up to date.

There was no word from President Kaunda last night. The two parties have not agreed on arrangements for the transfer of power or when it will take place, but word from the MMD campaign headquarters was that they wanted President Kaunda out of State House as soon as possible.

"As soon as we get 51 percent of the vote we're going to see the Chief Justice (to swear in the new president)," an MMD spokesman said last night.

But not everything was doom and gloom in the Kaunda household. The President's son, Mr Wezi Kaunda, a junior minister in the Home Affairs Department, won convincingly in his Eastern Province constituency.

The Commonwealth Observer Group yesterday declared the elections to have been free and fair.

The counting was delayed in most outlying areas and did not start until midday yesterday. Most results, however, are expected to be in by today when President Kaunda and his government are expected to step down.

Mr Chiluba, arriving in Lusaka from Ndola last night, said President Kaunda had made a contribution to Zambia and would be treated with respect by his administration.



□ **THE WINNER SO FAR:** Frederick Chiluba, leader of Zambia's main opposition political party, the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy, raises his hands in jubilation on hearing the early results of Zambia's first multiparty elections. Final results are expected today.

Mobuto accuses West of meddling

358
ET-4/10/91

PARIS. — Embattled Zairean President Mobutu Sese Sekó 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. — Sapa-AP-Reuter

Zaire to compensate

(358)

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 Bernadin Mungul-Diaka said at the weekend.

"I am for the return of Belgians and the other foreigners," Mungul-Diaka told an informal news conference. B/Dcug 4/11/91.

"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," Mungul-Diaka said.

He appealed to France and Belgium to restore aid severed in protest over President Mobutu Sese Seko's refusal to hasten reforms.

Mungul-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-Reuter.

First Belgian paratroops leave Zaire

(358)

Star 4/11/91

BRUSSELS — The first Belgian paratroops sent to evacuate foreigners in Zaire returned home yesterday as Belgium began the withdrawal of its 750 troops, the Belgian army said.

A spokesman for the armed forces said 103 paratroops, who had been evacuating Belgians and other foreigners from Lubumbashi in Zaire's south 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 has left. — Sapa-Reuter.

Last Belgians leave Zaire

BRUSSELS — The last Belgian para-commandos left Zaire yesterday after a seven-week mission to evacuate foreigners, an armed forces spokesman said.

The bulk of an 850-man force sent to Zaire and neighbouring countries to co-ordinate the evacuation of thousands of Belgians and other Westerners had been flown home by yesterday evening, the spokesman said.

He said a small contingent would stay in nearby Gabon to tidy up after the operation, Belgium's fourth military intervention in its former colony since Zaire became independent in 1960.

Embattled President Mobutu Sese Seko, apparently irked by Belgium's tough line on the need for serious democratic reform, had told Belgium to pull out as soon as the evacuation was over.

● Zaire's powerful opposition plans to launch a campaign of strikes and civil disobedience to force the departure of the president, chief opposition leader Mr Etienne Tshisekedi said yesterday. — Sapa-Reuter

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MONKEY GOES TOO . . . A Belgian paratrooper plays with his monkey in Brazzaville, Congo, after yesterday's withdrawal of the Belgian troops from Kinshasa, Zaire. Picture: AP

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 R20m, 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 Cammell 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 R20m 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, par-

CHERILYN IRETON

ticularly 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 Clive 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 R859m — a decline of 14% — and shareholders' funds of R3,8bn. This year, stock market analysts are pro-

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Barlows

☐ From Page 1

jecting a decline in earnings of between 12% and 16%.

The main causes of the decline will be companies in the mining division. Rand Mines' R485m loss — after writing 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 R30m. These figures will not be available until Barlow Rand reports.

Still awaited are the profits from C G Smith. At the halfway stage the company was the biggest contributor to earnings, chipping in 32% of the R348m total. Analysts are again looking for a strong performance, and better than expected results from Nampak and ICS should offset the moderate performance from Tiger Oats and the 77% decline in contribution from Romatex.

Romatex earlier reported sharply lower earnings of R8,6m, but this did not reflect an R8,7m 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

Globe Monday 6/11/91 (358)

KINSHASA — Zaire's currency, battered by political instability and economic collapse, had slid a further 16,6% against the dollar, bankers said this week.

Monday's official rate was fixed at 34 182 zaires for $1 compared with 28 000 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 Mungul 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 85 000 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 36 000 workforce was on strike.

The country's 30 000 barrels a day oil production has also been affected. — Sapa-Reuter.

Four Zairean detainees freed in raid

358

Sowetan 6/11/91

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 Mzambo 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. - *Sapa-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.

Shocked 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 with 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 remains 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 adminstration 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-Reuter.

Looting cost Zaire's mines large production losses

358

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. BIDay 8/11/91

State-owned Gecamines said the reduction was from 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-Reuter.

PHILLIP VAN NIEKERK is The Weekly Mail's man on the spot in Kinshasa

Dispatches from a heart of darkness

358

W|Mail 8|11 - 14|11|91.

Zaire is on the brink of total collapse — but political editor PHILLIP VAN NIEKERK managed to send through this report



Across the river ... Congolese paratroopers and their French instructor fool around after an exercise in Brazzaville Photo: AP

THE business district of Kinshasa is gutted, the stores looted and boarded up. The only commerce appears to be the roadside sale of hubcaps and stolen automobile parts.

The expatriates who ran Zaire's formal economy have mostly packed up and fled. Some still try to keep a watch on their remaining assets by cellular telephone from Brazzaville on the other side of the Congo River.

But the army officers who led the looting in September that precipitated the crisis in Zaire have cleaned out the homes of absent expatriates, hauling television sets and furniture back to their bases.

The few remaining foreigners, most of them closeted in the air-conditioned luxury of Kinshasa's last functioning hotel, the Intercontinental, face extortion at every turn — from taxi drivers to army officers waiting on the banks of the river to confiscate anything of value from people taking the ferry across from Brazzaville.

The private sector no longer exists, and copper production has been halted by strikes and the collapse of the transport system. Hardly anyone in Kinshasa, other than bureaucrats, has a job anymore and the Zairean currency has declined by one third against the American dollar since last weekend.

Western diplomats speak in apocalyptic terms. "We wait for total collapse," says one Belgian officer.

At the heart of the crisis is a political impasse. President Mobutu Sese Seko, Zaire's dictator for 26 years, is so hated that he no longer can enter Kinshasa without fear of sparking a riot.

Last week the opposition's printing press was blown up, but still the streets are lined with people hawking anti-government newspapers, calling for the downfall of the tyrant and declaiming against "state terrorism".

"Most of Kinshasa would like to get him and kill him," says Matthieu Iyola, an unemployed electrician and one of Kinshasa's three million slum-dwellers. "He used to say that we would be the best country in Africa — we had diamonds, gold, a big forest, a river full of fish. We believed him, but the profits went for him and his family. It's as if we didn't exist."

Mobutu clings tenaciously to power from a boat moored at N'Sele, 30km up the Congo River.

How is it possible that one man ruling such a vast country, without national or international support, is so difficult to dislodge?

His chief opponent, Etienne Tshisekedi, who was sacked as prime minister two weeks ago and has set up a symbolic rival government in Kinshasa, seemingly shares the supernatural belief that has kept most of the country in awe of Mobutu for almost three decades. He is the devil, says Tshisekedi.

A more rational answer is that Mobutu is a sharp operator who continues to pay patronage to those who wield real power, the military.

The soldiers who led the looting in Kinshasa and other cities in September were not only able to sell their spoils but were given tenfold salary increases. To afford this enormous new government undertaking, Mobutu is printing more money, fuelling fears that Zaire could soon have an inflation rate like Germany in the 1920s, when it took a wheelbarrow of bank notes to buy a loaf of bread.



Mobutu Sese Seko

Mobutu's newly installed prime minister, Bernardin Mungul Diaka, who was sworn in last week, has no money, no international support, no popular following and does not control the security forces.

But if his job appears thankless, one must look at that of Tshisekedi, who leads a coalition of opposition parties known as the Sacred Union, which has completely outplayed by the wily Mobutu in the poker game of power. Diplomats believe Tshisekedi has one option left: to use his popularity with the masses to call the people on to the streets. However, this would lead to an inevitable bloodbath and military retaliation.

For more than a year, the Western powers have been nudging the Zairean parties towards an agreement on multi-party democracy, but Mobutu has successfully obstructed it. Anger against him is so high that no settlement which includes him is likely to be acceptable to the masses.

No one quite knows how events will come to a head. The informal markets are still bustling, creating a sense of some normalcy, but there is food only for those with money.

The time Mobutu has bought with huge civil service and army increases will only last a few weeks until inflation eats away the gains. The military, already a law unto themselves, are viewed as a dangerously unstable element in the equation.

As food prices escalate, thousands of people have lost their jobs. And with each wage-earner supporting on average 25 people, it is just a matter of time before Kinshasa starts starving.

Canadian ambassador Claude Laverdure says that within weeks there will be real starvation and a total lack of drugs in Kinshasa.

There is still an extraordinary amount of chaotic traffic on the roads — sleek black Mercedes Benzes, 30-year-old Peugot taxis, lorries belching black smoke, army Jeeps. However, people start waiting in line at the gas pumps at 5am. Within weeks the gas, too, will run out.

Things are winding down. The elite Belgian paratroopers who maintained a semblance of order at the airports left on Monday, ordered out of the country by Mobutu. As the last Belgian nationals leaving the southern city of Lubumbashi said sad farewells to their black girlfriends and mulatto children, black prostitutes — aware of their vanishing trade — were on the last flight carrying expatriates out of the city last Saturday.

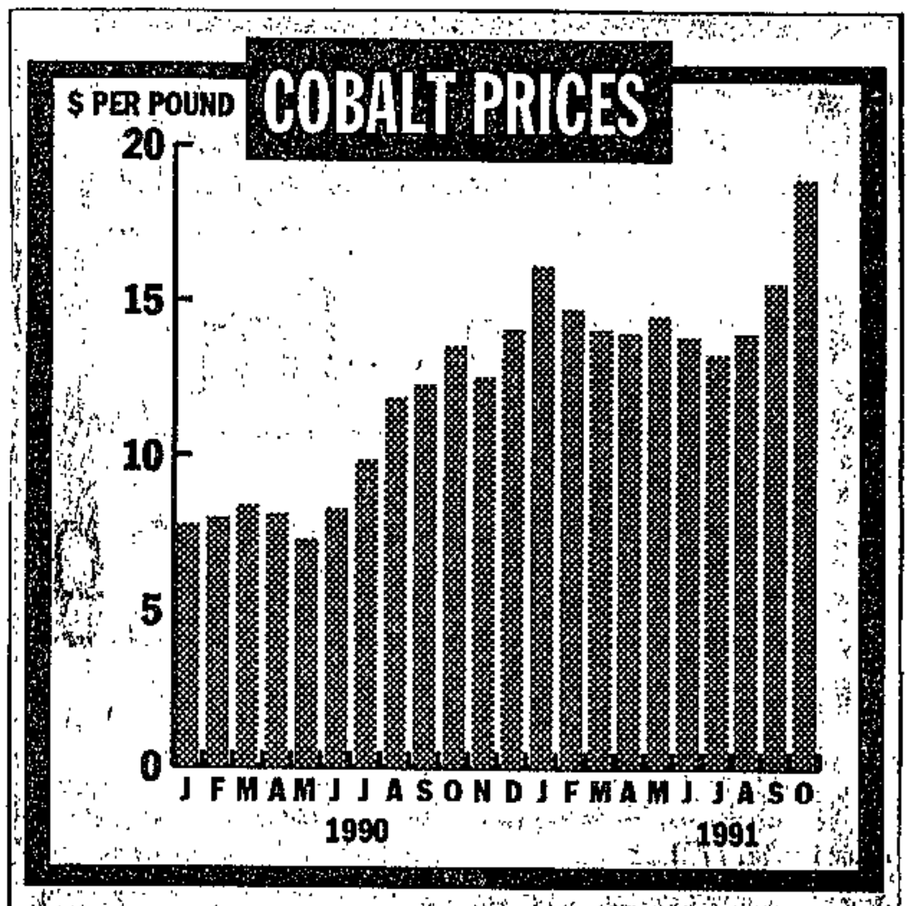
All Western countries have suspended their aid programmes to Zaire and embassies have been cut back to skeleton staffs.

Western diplomats are adamant that they can't intervene to save the situation. "We cannot stage a military coup for democracy," said a European diplomat. "Besides, Zaire is not an important country for Europe and America anymore."

Laverdure says the next step will have to be made by the Zairean politicians themselves. Failing that, he adds, "whether we like Mobutu or not, we can't abandon 40-million people. We have to find ways of bringing in food and drugs. We can't forget these people."

From the balcony of the Intercontinental Hotel, the Congo River — which takes half an hour to cross by ferry — is like a vast sea with a few canoes paddling at the shore. The view is reminiscent of *Heart of Darkness*, Joseph Conrad's bleak tale of the human condition set on this river.

The lights are going out in Kinshasa. One can sense that there is a darkness coming.



Zaire crisis boosts SA cobalt miners

S/Times (Buss) 10/11/91.

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 $15,50 a pound in September to $25,27 in early November.

By IAN ROBINSON

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 specialised applications.

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Feeds

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 5 000-ton shortfall in supplies this year.

Higher prices will benefit SA's cobalt producers — Rustenburg Platinum and Impala 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 about two-thirds in the form of cobalt sulphate, with a cobalt content of 21%. Impala produces cobalt metal in the form of powder.

Impala sells most of its cobalt on the domestic market, to drill bit and paint manufacturers. Cobalt salts are used as paint driers. Rustenburg's cobalt sulphate is not suitable for drill bits and it exports most of its output through agent Johnson Matthey.

Other smaller applications in SA include aluminium anodising as a trace supplement in animal feeds and in ceramics.

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

(358) CTS/11/91

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 Pelagie 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 Oma 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.

"It's 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 Manzila Tarande, 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 2 m 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

Riots cut output of copper

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Star 11/11/91

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, the national mining company Gecamines Exploitation says.

The state-owned company says 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 has given no figure for zinc losses.

Exports of copper and cobalt account for nearly 70 percent of the country's foreign earnings.

Exports of copper and cobalt account for nearly 70 percent of the country's foreign earnings.

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-Reuter.

17 die as bomb explodes in Zairean bar

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Star 12/11/91

KINSHASA — A bomb blew apart a bar frequented by pro-democracy supporters last night, killing 17 people.

Witnesses blamed soldiers of President Mobutu 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 Tadi-Zaire bar in Kingasani, 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 unest that led to massive loot ing 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 bombed 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

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ARG 12/11/91

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 cede 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 glowering 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.

WORLD

Zaire grinds to a halt after govt's collapse

Bloany 13/11/91 (358)

KINSHASA — Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko has yielded to foreign pressure and reconvened talks on sharing political power. But few Zaireans 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 35-million people remain shell-shocked by looting and rioting started by disgruntled soldiers on September 23.

Mobutu's new cabinet, headed by Prime Minister Mungul 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 Mungul'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 ($2,3) to 1,5-million zaires ($41). But the flour price leapt from 500 000 zaires ($13,6) per 50 kg bag to 1,3-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 Gecamines, which accounts for 60% of hard currency earnings. — Sapa-Reuter.

15 more die in Zaire (358)

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 dead from the weekend attacks to 42, the sources said. CT 14/11/91

Belgian Foreign Minister Mr Mark Eyskens and opposition sources said forces loyal to President Mobutu Sese Seko were involved in the attacks. The opposition sources said Mr Mobutu was trying tosuppress support for prodemocracy forces. — Sapa-AP

VAN NIEKERK reports from [redacted] doned by the world to its own self-destruction

The patron saint of corruption stares down benevolently upon the legions of petty thieves



Welcome to Zaire

w/mail
15/11 – 21/11/91.

(358)

YOU'RE sitting at the window of an Air Zaire DC10 watching the plane slowly — too slowly — leave the ground of Lubumbashi behind when the stewardesses come round and tell everyone to move to the front to balance the plane.

Air travel starts to take on a new meaning in Zaire. The bursts of spontaneous applause on landing are really sincere.

All the major carriers steer clear of Kinshasa these days, landing in Brazzaville instead. Zaire-bound passengers take the ferry across the Congo River.

Part of the motive appears to be to spare international travellers the hazards of Kinshasa's Njili airport. Even in normal times Kinshasa has a reputation as the most aggressively crooked town in Africa. But in the present crisis the huge, noisy concourse of the airport terminal has been turned into a bazaar.

Children hawk cigarettes and silver-papered rations left behind by the Belgian paratroopers who pulled out last week. Zairean soldiers, wearing dark glasses and bandanas and carrying guns of every nationality and vintage, swagger around. The Air Zaire window has two bullet holes, but you can still buy plane tickets there.

A large portrait of the patron saint of corruption, President Mobutu Sese Seko, with his rakish leopard skin hat and his intellectual black-rimmed glasses, stares down benevolently on the legions of petty crooks and scam artists that man the airport.

A man takes your passport and you run after him. He has it stamped for you but when you want it back; its $5. You want to use the toilet; its $5. You want a taxi? I show you; its $5.

Whatever one's distaste of this method there's simply no other route to clear Kinshasa airport — and it beats standing for hours in customs queues.

Then, after agreeing to a $10 taxi ride, you're on your way into town when the man in front in the passenger seat informs you that the trip into the city will cost $100.

You are in a strange car being driven to a place you have never been to by two men whose acquaintance you made three minutes before and who could just as soon slit your throat and take everything. Your bargaining power substantially diminished, you agree to pay well above the market rate.

The aiport is quite far from town, but Kinshasa is starting to whizz by. There are literally thousands of people on the sides of the road, the crowds becoming denser and denser as the outlines of an appalling squalor start to emerge.



Battered and useless, a car wreck is wheeled away on a stolen Air Zaire trolley. Why? It doesn't matter

Kinshasa, like a lot of African cities, is actually two cities — on the way from the airport you pass the slums, but downtown there is a loveliness to the wide tree-lined boulevards.

Kinshasa's streets are filled with beggars and an inordinate number of cripples propelling themselves around with hand pedal bicycles.

Poverty helps explain the looting that has ripped apart the private sector in town. However, this one-off redistribution of wealth has ironically made the longer-term hoped for recovery so much more difficult to achieve.

You are stopped in the road by people trying to sell looted goods. No, you don't want a private collection of videotapes, their contents handwritten on the spines in French. Nor do you want a monkey wrench or a box of printing paper.

The zoo has run out of funds, so crocodiles are killed to feed the lions ...

The main hospital, named Mama Yema after Mobutu's mother, has been closed for a month by a strike. Even before the crisis, though, it was a squalid place in which patients had to pay for their own medicine, their own food and their own blood. If you couldn't afford the blood, you brought your cousin with you.

Zaire is a cerebral malaria area and the chief surgeon at the hospital explains that the 40-odd children that were admitted every day and treated with quinine are simply dying at home.

The one island seemingly insulated from the mayhem and despair is the Intercontinental Hotel — where you can pay $1 000 for a satellite phone call to South Africa.

Downtown, the shops have been looted, the telephone exchange barely functions but in the Intercontinental you can cruise buy a telephone in the shape of Mickey Mouse or a German castle, some of the most up to date fashion clothing direct from Paris, or the airmail edition of the *Financial Times*.

A Zairean band plays Lionel Ritchie for the shady collection of residents hanging out at L'Atrium coffee bar. Lebanese businessmen burned out of their shops, plot a comeback on the diamond trade.

A US marine — recently from the Gulf and before that the invasion force in Panama — keeps in contact with his embassy through a constantly crackling walkie talkie.

At a nightclub on the second floor leggy prostitutes dance in front of mirrors to the beat of American disco and a strobe light, like some deformed image of Saigon.

Despite the exodus of some 90 percent of the expatriate community, there are still two excellent restaurants open in town — one Italian, run by an exuberant patron called Niccola, the other French, which boasts the most accomplished chef in central Africa.

Kinshasa's Greek Club is still open, but all that remains of what was once a robust community of 3 000 with a school and an Orthodox church are half-a-dozen elderly bakery owners playing backgammon on the porch in the heat of the long steamy evenings.

Unlike the rest of their compatriots, their businesses were spared by the crowds during the September riots. "They knew not to wipe out the bread shops because they would still have to eat," says Mina, a young Greek expatriate, whose own import-export business was gutted.

"We're here until the flour runs out and then we leave too," says a baker.

On the other side of town, Delfi Messinger, a 38-year-old zoologist from Austin, Texas, who has been in Zaire for seven years, won't leave because of the animals. Apart from a private menagerie that she is caring for at a biochemical research institute owned by the French government, she is looking after the lions and chimpanzees at Kinshasa zoo.

In a bankrupt country, the zoo has run out of funds. "We've had to kill surplus crocodiles in the zoo to feed the lions," she says.

When the violence erupted in September, Messinger saved the refrigeration equipment at the laboratory — which houses thousands of samples of the Aids virus — from being looted by slaughtering a sheep and writing "Sida" (French for Aids) on the wall with its blood.

Until the looting broke out Messinger was on a part-time salary with a European Community project. Now she is living on hand-outs from the embassies and a grant from a German foundation and battling to keep her animals going.

Her menagerie consists of a python, a rare cross between a gabon and rhinoceros viper, a mongoose, a genet, five dogs abandoned by fleeing expatriates, and four rare bonobo chimpanzees. There are 10 000 to 50 000 of this species of primate left in the Zairean jungle — their only habitat.

A small brown calf, born on the day of the looting to a dying cow, also hangs around the courtyard of the institute.

"We were called out to help the birth," says Messinger. "We didn't want to take it, but then I said, you know what this this means, life goes on. Despite everything, our chicks are still hatching."

Zaire's crisis

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From PAGE 9

His credibility has been undermined, however, as he has been in and out of Mobutu governments for several decades. At one stage he returned as Mobutu's ambassador to Washington after being detained and severely tortured.

Western diplomats concede that the older generation of Zairean 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 Murphy Morobe, Terror Lekota or Cyril Ramaphosa could ignite the opposition in Zaire.



Etienne Tshisekedi

Most of the action comes from Western embassies, where diplomats continue to push, prod and cajole Zaire 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 Kinshasha to Cohen's statement is itself symptomatic of Zaire'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 US.

Okanje Kenishye, a Kinshasha slumdweller, 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, Zaire was a key bastion in the Cold War.

But American strategic interest in Zaire 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. Zaire'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. Frederick Kibasa Maliba, one of the younger more competent politicians, would support a US invasion of Zaire to get rid of Mobutu. He points out that it would not be the first time that the US has invaded another country to oust a dictator.

But, while the US appears to have abandoned Mobutu, Western diplomats rule out any prospects of an invasion: "Everybody thinks we can do more than we can, but its just not possible. Not only do we not have the buttons to push. We really would like to see a true Zairean solution."

One European diplomat said they could have intervened at Tshisekedi's insistence when he was in power, but "the request never came. Only after he had been demoted as 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 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."

There are no leaders. One Murphy Morobe or Terror Lekota could ignite the nation.

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By PHILLIP VAN NIEKERK

WHEN Polish journalist Ryszard Kapuszinski went to the Congo in 1960 to cover what he imagined was a war, he found only absurd quarrels and heavy-handed imperialist intrigue.

Thirty years later, virtually nothing has changed in Zaire. The opposition get bogged down in passionate debates about trivia and most of the action revolves around the three key embassies in Kinshasa — the Belgian, the French and the American.

When Zairean politicians meet at a national conference today in another attempt to plot a pathway to multiparty democracy, they will be hindered as much by the weakness of his opposition as by President Mobutu Sese Seko's reluctance to relinquish power.

For more than quarter of a century the personality of Mobutu has dominated, defined and ultimately deformed Zairean politics. Most of the politicians who now find themselves in the opposition camp grew up and received their political grounding at Mobutu's knee.

Mobutu still maintains some form of a strange psychological hold on the opposition — fear mingled with hate.

His chief opponent, Etienne Tshisekedi, head of the Sacred Union opposition group, has widespread popularity in Kinshasa. However, he has displayed a singular lack of political subtlety, obsessively driven by a desire, above all other political goals, to humiliate Mobutu who once jailed and tortured him.

Instead of working quietly from within the system to shift the country towards democracy during his brief spell as prime minister, Tshisekedi alarmed Western diplomats by using his platform to publicly condemn Mobutu as a "monster".

Questioned about his strategy, Tshisekedi constantly says he will call the people to rise up in protest and march on the city of Kinshasha. It is a boast that he has been making for months and no one takes it seriously anymore.

His reluctance to go for street confrontations is not surprising — if few people show up his credibility will be destroyed; if they do turn out they will probably be met with brutal force, with even more catastrophic results.

Waiting on the sidelines is veteran politician Nguza Karl-i-Bond, head of the Union of Federalists' and Independent Republicans which has remained independent of both Mobutu and the Sacred Union.

• Continued on PAGE 10

Barlows clams up on losses in Zaire

ST Times (Buss) 17/11/91 358

By JULIE WALKER

BARLOW RAND directors believe the group's figures should have pleasantly surprised both shareholders and analysts.

Chairman and chief executive Warren Clewlow and vice-chairman Derek Cooper replied to questions at a sparsely attended news conference this week.

Reporters who could not substantiate their speculation about the company's Zairean losses other than to say they were the estimates of analysts were put in their places by the pair.

One estimate of the loss was published at R20-million. Mr Clewlow made it plain that was not the kind of speculation the group approved of.

Acceptable, however, is when Barlows' actual earnings a share are not down by as much as these self-same analysts speculated. The news releases almost gloated on this point.

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 R25-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 highhanded that Barlows management should keep it a secret from its very owners.

Cash

The group's turnover of R32-billion was a tenth more than in the year to September 1990 and taxed profit edged up 1% to R1,5-billion.

More attributable to outside and preference shareholders and a higher number of shares in issue meant a 7% 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 119c.

Below the line came an extraordinary write-off of R433-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 cause 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.

Daggers drawn under the cloak of crisis in cobalt

B1 Day 19/11/91 358

THE London Metal Exchange, centre of world trading in everything from aluminium to zinc, is in a state of turmoil.

The chaos in the market has been triggered by a critical shortage of cobalt, an element indispensable in making videotapes, radial car tyres, high-performance aero-engines, magnets and missiles.

Own Correspondent

Customers were dismayed that the price of the key metal, $11/lb in January, was $25 last Thursday. By Friday, in response to unprecedented requests to London traders from an important buyer, it was $29.

Frederick Forsyth said last week that there was a parallel 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 $10bn mountain of platinum in the African republic of Zangaro". Swap cobalt for platinum and Zaire for Zangaro, and the present story is not much different.

The problem with cobalt is that three quarters of the world's annual 20 000-ton production comes from two central African countries: 10 000 tons from politically unstable Zaire and 5 000 tons from Zambia.

London traders realise that if they can get their hands on cobalt, they can go for a financial kill. Nicholas French, 39, one of London's most experienced metal traders, acknowledged: "We are like sharks coursing the sea."

French, a former Cambridge University rugby blue, now a director of the London metals trading firm Wogen Resources, will shortly travel to the Urals where he thinks the Russians have secret stores of cobalt they might be persuaded to sell.

Reports from Zaire indicate that mining has been disrupted by rioting and killings unleashed by President Mobutu Sese Seko's attempts to extend his 26-year dictatorship. In Zambia, the new president, Frederick Chiluba, an ex-trade union official, wishes to ease his country's $5bn debt by selling cobalt at the highest possible price.

Engineers

Three years ago, when world consumption outstripped production by 2 000 tons a year, French saw portents of the gathering crisis. By August this year, the signs were unmistakeable. French's files tell the tale: on September 5, the Belgian foreign minister announced that Zaire — formerly the Belgian Congo — was "facing collapse". On September 23, Belgium began to evacuate its nationals, some of them senior mining engineers. The cobalt price moved from $15 to $19.

On September 27, rioting forced Zaire to shut its biggest mines. Its head of mines said production would be "further cut back" and told Japan its 1991/1992 quota would not be met.

At French's home in Hammersmith, west London, the birthday dinner his wife had prepared for him on November 1 was spoilt as he took a series of frantic calls from buyers.

French recalls "the first cobalt crisis" in 1978 when Mobutu was saved by mercenaries and the US which needed him as a check against Soviet expansionism in Angola.

But with the end of the Cold War, Mobutu himself has become expendable. Since rivals inside and outside Zaire are now playing for high stakes, it would not be impossible for mercenaries to be used again.

"A few well-placed sticks of dynamite in the cobalt refineries in Zaire could send prices even higher," said French — Sunday Telegraph.

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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. (358)

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. B1 Day 21/11/91.

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-Reuter.

Chaos endangers Aids research

358

KINSHASA - The political and economic chaos that has engulfed Zaire is threatening important research into Aids. Sowetan 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-Reuter.*

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 Mungul 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. 358

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 Faustin Birindwa immediately accused Mobutu of breaking the agreement. BDay 27/11/91.

"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 26 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-Reuter.

STAR 27/11/91

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 GP-160, which delays the progress of Aids, have been suspended and other research may be halted.

358

STAR 27/11/91

Mobutu names new premier

(358)

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.

Supporters of rival opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi and outgoing prime minister Mungul Diaka staged protests in Kinshasa. Sapa-Reuter.

Zairean opposition threatens a strike

(358)

KINSHASA — Zaire's leading opposition parties have threatened a national strike unless President Mobutu Sese Seko revokes his nomination of a maverick as prime minister. B/Day 29/11/91

Kapita Shabangi, a spokesman for the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS) party, told a news conference on Wednesday night that Mobutu had 48 hours to remove Nguza Karl-I-Bond.

Should Mobutu refuse, the opposition Sacred Union coalition would call on civil servants, students, the army and the people to go on strike to end what he called "the last dictatorship in Africa".

Mobutu named Nguza to the premiership on Monday to end a government deadlock in the vast central African country which has been on the brink of chaos since the September riots in which 250 people died.

Nguza's Union of Independent Federalists and Republicans (UFERI) party was expelled from the opposition alliance last week after he broke ranks by agreeing to accept the premiership.

Nguza is expected to name a cabinet soon.

Zaire's opposition has threatened to break off relations with Mobutu over the naming of Nguza as the country's fifth prime minister this year and said it violated accords signed in September requiring that the premier be a Sacred Union member.

It said Mobutu had to respect his commitments and permit the country's stormy national conference on democratic change, currently suspended due to procedural wrangling, to make constitutional reforms. — Sapa-Reuter.

Taiwanese oil explorers withdraw from Namibia

B/Day 29/11/91

WINDHOEK — The Taiwanese Overseas Petroleum Investment Corporation (Opic) is to withdraw from Namibia after failing to find oil in the Etosha Basin, Namibia's ministry of mines and energy said yesterday.

"Petroleum exploration is a high risk business which operates in a highly specialised technological and scientific environment," the ministry said in a statement.

Opic, which had a lease agreement with the company Etosha Petroleum, completed a 700m exploration well in the Etosha Basin in October.

"Although the well was succesfully completed to target depth, potential for oil and gas in this structure was absent," the statement said.

It added that much of the Etosha Basin remained unexplored and there was little relationship between the geology, and, therefore, the potential for hydrocarbons indicating oil in this area and Namibia's offshore area.

The Namibian government has begun negotiations with oil companies that applied for petroleum exploration rights during the first bidding round which closed last month.

Opic GM David Chen said his company had been in Namibia since 1989 and spent about R30m in its search for oil in the 250 000km² concession area.

Opic reprocessed old data supplied by Etosha Petroleum as well as conducting its own seismic and aeromagnetic surveys in this first bid to find oil in an independent Namibia.

Contributed

The latest exploration well was the fifth to be drilled in the concession since the late 1960s.

"We were looking for oil and found nothing," Chen said.

The ministry said Opic had contributed extensively to the geological knowledge of the area during its exploration.

"The data will be of considerable benefit to further evaluation of the Etosha Basin which, to date, has only been seriously explored in its south-western part," the statement said.

It said SA had drilled more than 20 boreholes on its western shelf, with limited success. — Sapa.

Political disorder reigning in Zaire

Sowetan 28/11/91

358

KINSHASA - Tentative steps toward a resolution of Zaire's political crisis faltered this week as the country's rival governments disagreed over whether they had agreed on anything at all.

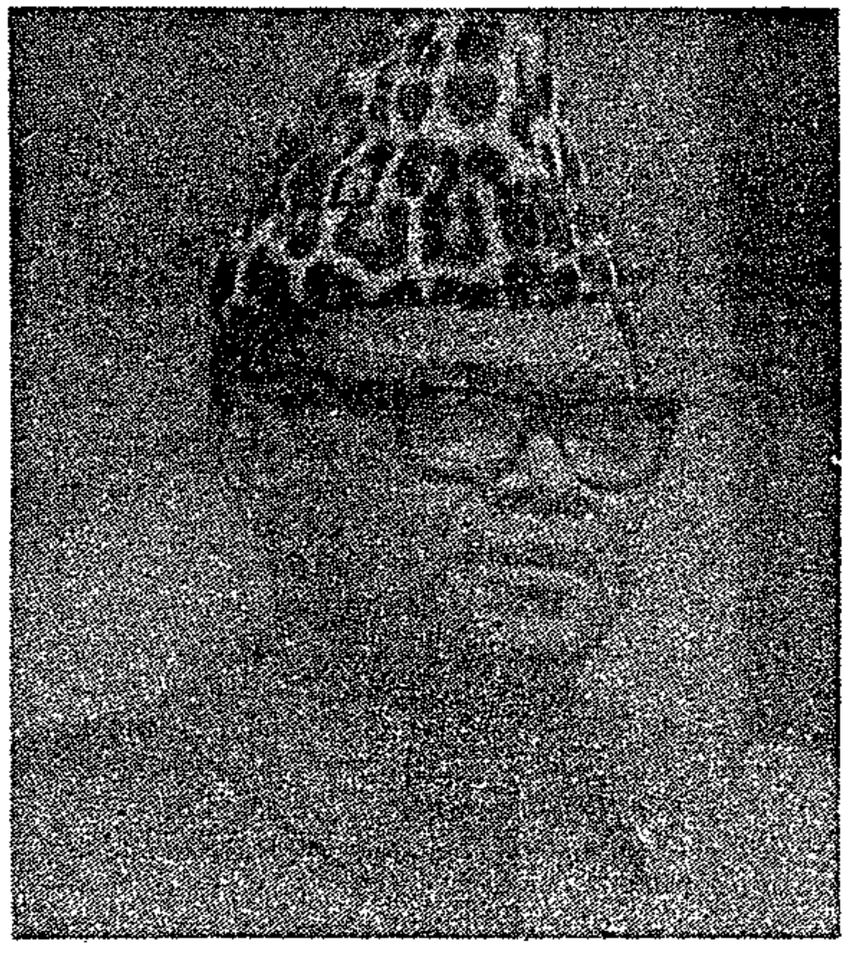
Confusion also reigned over a national conference designed to push Zaire toward democracy, but which has so far amounted to little more than a stalling tactic by President Mobutu Sese Seko.

Mobutu's strength is the weakness of an opposition more interested in quibbling over technicalities than seriously confronting the 26-year dictatorship.

Zaireans, suffering from growing food shortages, may blame their kleptomaniac president for their difficulties but they increasingly despair of the opposition's ability to do anything about it.

Senegalese President Abdou Diouf is scheduled to arrive in Zaire today to preside over the signing of an agreement, brokered by his country, to break the impasse that has left Zaire virtually ungoverned since military-led riots in September. He is probably wasting his time.

The deal supposedly set out a formula for choosing a new prime minister, but already the two sides disagree vigorously over whether it stipulates that the prime minister should come from the ranks of the Sacred Union coalition which has spearheaded the campaign against the dictatorship.



MOBUTU SESE SEKO

Reconvened

The prospects for the national conference are little better. Mobutu reconvened the meeting, which collapsed in August when he packed it with supporters, only after the United States warned him it was his last chance to avoid civil war.

The conference's priority is to come up with an interim government to take office when Mobutu's term expires on Dec. 4. But delegates cannot even agree on who should be chairman after a barely literate 17-year-old youth was appointed by default and then dumped.

Mobutu has again made clear his intention to retain power after December 4.

The opposition's failure to capitalise on the crisis reflects primarily on the Sacred Union's leader, Etienne Tshisekedi, for a decade a popular and effective critic of the government who nevertheless allows his hatred of Mobutu to cloud his judgment.

Mobutu was pressured by the French and Belgians into appointing Tshisekedi prime minister last month. The Europeans planned to recognise him as the legitimate authority in Zaire, in an attempt to isolate the president.

But Tshisekedi stood on principle and refused to pledge loyalty to the constitution. He was sacked the next day having achieved nothing.

He subsequently set up a rival government. At a recent meeting it spent five hours discussing whether to expel from its ranks a minor party that spoke out of turn. Ordinary Zaireans, burdened by inflation that has reduced the value of the largest banknote in the country to just 45 pence, are waiting for a strategy.

The growing disillusionment with Tshisekedi can be seen in the increasing discussion of tribal and regional loyalties which had been largely subordinated to the anti-Mobutu cause.

With the breakdown of an always shaky infrastructure, it is all but impossible to gauge loyalties across the huge expanse of Zaire. But in Kinshasa, crowded with people from around the country, there is an indication of shifting patterns of support. - *The Independent.*



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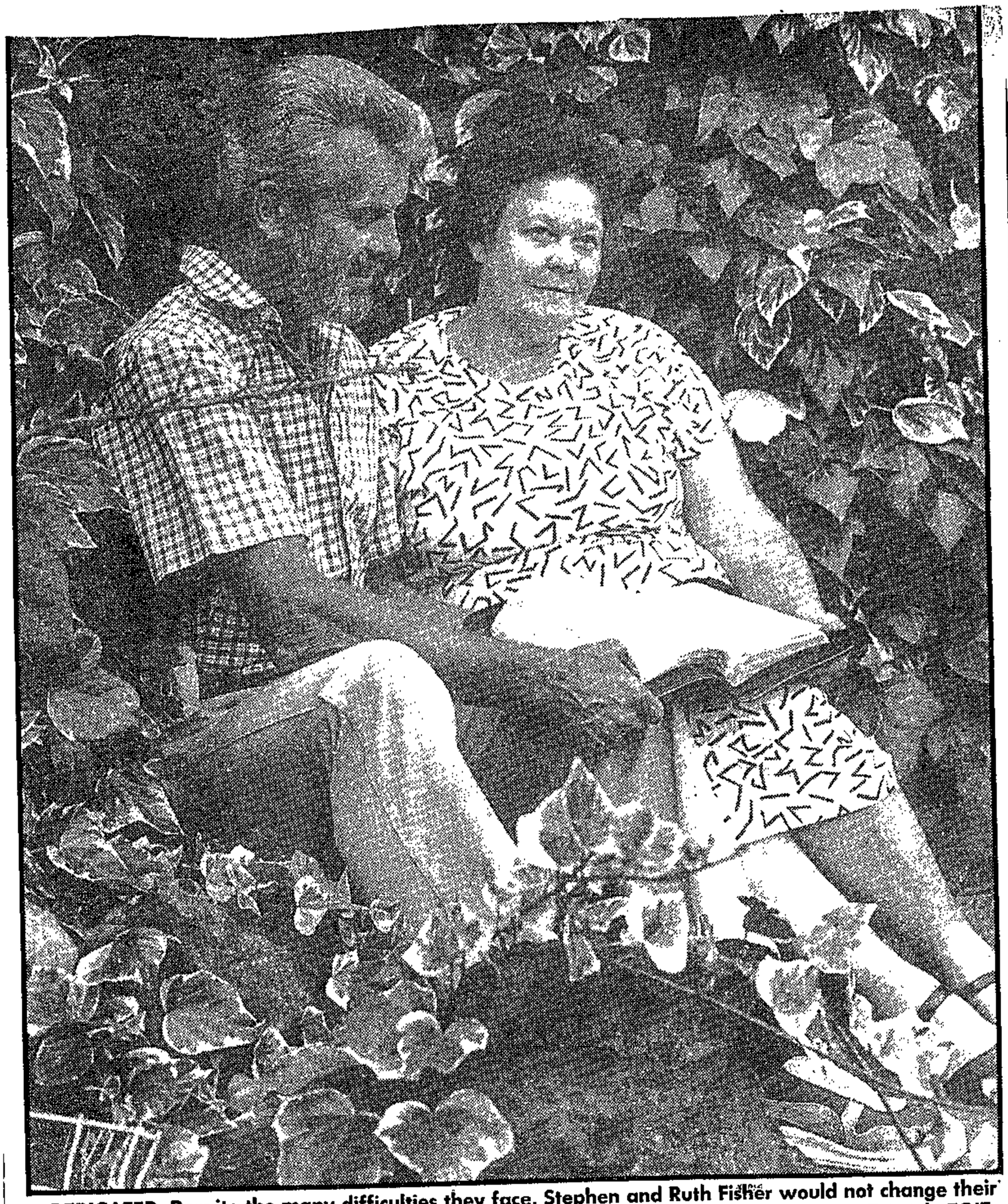

DEDICATED: Despite the many difficulties they face, Stephen and Ruth Fisher would not change their work for the world. ● Photograph: DUIF du TOIT.

Refugee missionaries long for troubled Zaire

STAR 30/11/91

GRANT WINTER 358

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 out in the bush in Zaire, the Fishers have been known to dream about the unobtainable — hamburgers, chocolate bars or Coca-Colas.

But through all this they have learnt 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-10th 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 Zimbabwe, 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 25 000 people in the immediate vicinity. Training her own staff, she established clinics in a far wider area reaching 100 000 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) 476-5130 (after hours) or Ted Franks (011) 679-5107 (after hours).

Unrest holds up funding for Gold Fields in Zaire

MATTHEW CURTIN

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 R47m 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 Genmin, the Gencor group's mining arm, was making towards a formal mining involvement in the country.

A source close to Genmin said the new government had more important matters to attend to now.

Senior Genmin mining teams visited Zambia in October, and there was speculation Genmin would be asked by the government to take over state mining company Zambian Consolidated Copper Mines.

Some Swapo members have been highly critical of the approach certain sections of the Namibian population have taken to the national policy.

ulation: "I don't foresee anything like that happening.

"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-Reuter.

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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.

Schools, offices 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, irate at 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 strongarm 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 Nguza Karl-I-Bond, who is due to travel to Europe and the US to get renewed Western aid.

Aides to Nguza 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-Reuter.

Bid to stop expulsions

ST Times 8/12/91

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. (358)

"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.

Foreign troops to leave Zaire

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 800 elite paracommandos 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 26 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. Zairean opposition officials also rejected the Belgian proposal.

President Mobutu Sese Seko and opposiston 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

Sowetan 6/11/92

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). - *Sapa-Reuter.*

Zaire's bumpy road towards democracy

358

STAR 14/11/92

Out of Africa

GERALD L'ANGE



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 multiracial 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: Monsigneur 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 was 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 talisman may be losing its power. There was the peculiar demonstration called by opposition politician Etienne Tshisekedi to protest against Mr Mobutu's decision to remain despite the expiration of his term last month.

Mr Tshisekedi 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

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By Duncan Guy
Star Africa Service

STAR 15/1/92

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 3 000-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 elimate 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 materiel 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."

By ROBIN HALLETT

Why Mobutu hangs in while forces of chaos grow in Zaire

CT 15/1/92

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IN KINSHASA, the capital of Zaire, local wits have taken to referring irreverently to their President Mobutu Sese Seko as "Noah". Noah built himself an ark; President Mobutu keeps his official yacht moored close to hand in the Zaire River to provide him and his family with a sure place of refuge in terms of dire necessity.

Noah, of course, survived the Flood but will President Mobutu find ways of effectively riding the rising flood of political troubles that now threatens to sweep him away?

Many, perhaps most, observers think Mobutu's days are numbered, that his 26-year reign is drawing to an end. But one cannot help feeling that there is an element of wishful thinking in this analysis.

President Mobutu is not an engaging character. He has shown no hesitation in detaining political opponents and silencing dissent but his record as an abuser of human rights is probably not as black as that of President Banda of Malawi, an African ruler still regarded with considerable esteem in certain quarters in the West.

Leopold's fief

So it is probably not so much Mobutu's shortcomings in the field of human rights as his consummate mastery of the techniques of corruption that has served to blacken his name. By acting on the simple principle that when one is head of state it is not necessary to draw a hard and fast distinction between private income and official revenue, the ruler of a state — most of whose people are desperately poor — has made himself one of the richest individuals in the world, owner, among other things, of a string of desirable residences spread around Western Europe.

Before condemning Mobutu out of hand, it must be mentioned that in his country's history he had an estimable model to follow. Modern Zaire has its origins as a unified state bringing together a wide range of previously independent African politics in the Congo Free State founded in the 1880s by King Leopold of the Belgians. King Leopold regarded this huge African territory, which he had secured by a combination of diplomatic guile and force, as his own private property. Not until 1908, when the abuses being reported from the Congo became an international scandal, did the Belgian government reluctantly agree to remove the Congo from the king's possession and attempt to transform it into a well-run colony.

So Mobutu has been doing what a European ruler did before him. And he has one massive achievement to his credit: in the years immediately after independence in 1960 the Congo, as it was then known, seemed to be falling completely apart with a powerful secessionist movement in Katanga (now Shaba) and a widespread revolt in the eastern provinces. Using the army as his base, Mobutu seized power in 1965 and managed to secure for his country a quarter of a century of political stability.

Western backing

But it has been a stability achieved not through progressive administration — services in Zaire have in fact suffered a disastrous decline — but through a blend of manipulation and propaganda. By allowing senior members of the bureaucracy to enrich themselves in much the same way as he himself has done, the president has secured their collaboration and acquiesence in his rule.

By regularly switching ministers around he has prevented the emergence of a possible rival. By dividing the security services into different organisations he has been able to play one group of soldiers against another. Future Third World dictators could learn a great deal by studying his methods.

Moreover, he has been able to count until recently on the backing of the West, especially the United States, France and Belgium. When thinking in Washington was obsessed by the imagined imperatives of the Cold War, Mobutu was seen as a valuable ally, especially when the Russians and Cubans began their huge intervention in Angola.

Now the Cold War is over and Mobutu is seen as the most exasperating of associates, a ruler who promises one thing but does another. But what is the West to do — abandon Mobutu and run the risk of seeing Zaire collapse into chaos? Mobutu's skill in manipulation applies not only to his own people but to his Western collaborators as well.

But Mobutu now finds himself facing the gravest crisis of his career. Aware of the new winds of change that started blowing through Africa after the revolutions in Eastern Europe in 1989, Mobutu announced in 1990 that Zaire would cease to be a one-party state but that only two other parties would be allowed to operate. He was unable to enforce this narrow restriction and last year about 150 parties emerged. But Mobuto ensured that more than 100 of these parties were made up of his own collaborators.

'Conference'

Nevertheless, the largest and most popular parties were those associated with the opposition, in particular the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDSP) and Union of Federalists and Independent Republicans founded by Nguza Karl I Bond. In its tactics the opposition was powerfully influenced by developments in Francophone Africa and especially in neighbouring Congo.

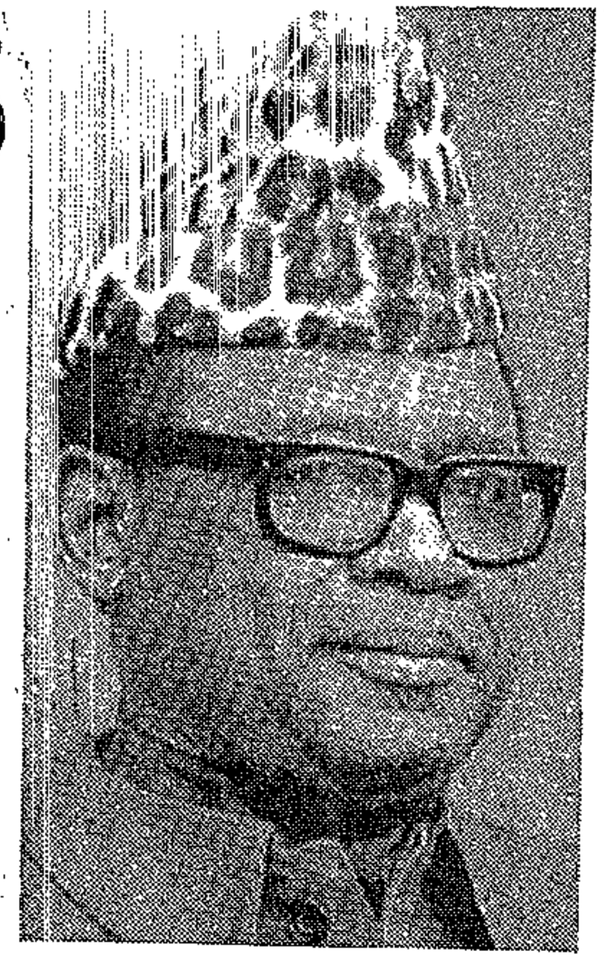
Here, between February and June 1991, a "national conference" was held at which opponents of the existing regime could express their opinions with total freedom. The proceedings of the conference in Brazzaville were broadcast live and could easily be picked up in Kinshasa.

Reluctantly, President Mobutu agreed that Zaire, too, should have a national conference. In the end the conference never took place but preparations for it provided Zaircans with their first opportunity for more than a generation to engage in open political activity. Then, in late September, riots broke out in all the major cities with soldiers going on the rampage and looting shops, businesses and houses in the richer suburbs. The soldiers, some said, had taken to the streets because the government could no longer pay them. But many people in Kinshasa accused the government of fomenting the riots to distract attention from the political crisis.

Mobutu then appointed the most prominent of his opponents, Etienne Tshisekedi, leader of the UDPS, as Prime Minister. The two men quarrelled bitterly and within three weeks Tshisekedi was dismissed and a more compliant Prime Minister appointed; Tshisekedi retaliated by setting up a parallel government.

Bomb attacks by unknown agents forced all the opposition newspapers in Kinshasa to close down but Mobutu agreed that there should be elections in the new year. Zaire's future is now hugely uncertain. The country looks set to become, as it was in the early 1960s, the scene of a really major crisis, a crisis in which no outside power is likely to wish to become involved.

Robin Hallett, a historian of Africa formerly of UCT, lives in Britain.



MOBUTU SESE SEKO: Mastery of techniques of corruption.



ETIENNE TSHISEKEDI: Set up parallel government.



HASTINGS BANDA: Wors record on human rights.

Study says Zaire's firms lost millions to looters

(358) B/Day 15/11/92

KINSHASA — Looting sprees led by unpaid soldiers last September cost Zaire's businessmen more than $890m, 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 ineffectual rule that led to the collapse of the country's infrastructure and economy.

Political unrest, riots and unprecedented pressure from former Western backers who have 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 $265m in assets. The agro-industrial and food sector estimated losses at $38m in goods and $12m in damages. Industrial manufacturers reported losing $137m in goods and $50m 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-Reuter.

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Kinshasa's rumbling lifeline

STAR 18/1/92 (358)

THE riot-wrecked capital of Kinshasa has become dependent for its very life on the humble lorry, following the devastation of most of Zaire's formal economy in September's rioting. DUNCAN GUY of the Africa News Service rode into the countryside on one of the crowded trucks and got a rare insight into life in Zaire today.

KINSHASA — Women and children sit on the floor of the lorry amid empty sacks, cartons of beer and packets of bread.

Menfolk perch higher up on the steel frame for the tarpaulin cover as the battered vehicle heads out of Kinshasa.

The lorry, known colloquially as a "camion", is bound for Kikwit, more than 500 km to the south in Bandundu province, centre of the "breadbasket" region which feeds Kinshasa's population of between 5 million and 6 million.

The Zairean capital has become dependent on the camions as never before since soldiers went on a looting spree in September that destroyed about 70 percent of the formal sector of the economy and caused about 15 000 expatriates to flee the country.

Since the pillaging, the price of fuel has climbed, contributing to inflation so severe — 100 percent a month — that most people in Kinshasa can afford only one meal a day.

The dilapidated state of the country's roads adds to the problem.

Ikulo Bosco bears the discomfort of lorry travel to and from Kikwit to buy the local staple, manioc (cassava), which he sells in Kinshasa for nearly four times the price. But he loses most of his profits to camion drivers who charge him more to transport the manioc back to Kinshasa than he pays for it in Kikwit.

It is evident from the numbers of people boarding camions between Kinshasa and the interior that more are leaving the city than coming in. Urbanisation in Zaire has gone into reverse.

Aboard the camion, conversation centres on politics, a topic that went undiscussed in the past. As recently as the early 1980s President Mobutu Sese Seko executed his opponents at public ceremonies and forced people, including the clergy, to watch.

Optimists say an election calendar will be announced this year by a national conference of 3 000 representatives sitting to draft a constitution for a multiparty Zaire.

Etienne Tshisekedi, who last year served as prime minister for a few days before refusing to swear allegiance to Mr Mobutu, is widely believed to be the person who will have the opportunity to lead Zaire out of autocratic rule and corruption.

However, some people fear he will be another dictator.

Mr Tshisekedi appears to be the people's choice. Camion passengers greet pedestrians and folk on other trucks with his party's "V" sign. They scream abuse at Mr Mobutu.

"We want to kill him. Even eat him," says a villager bitterly. But his words are not echoed very often.

Mr Mobutu's opponents are passive, fearing the "hiboux" (owls) they say are his hit squads who move about at night "driving Pajero jeeps".

Night falls and the camion cruises along one of Zaire's few stretches of paved road. All traffic is heavy-duty or four-wheel drive because patches of sand and potholes make most of the road network impassable to anything else.

The conductor, having collected passengers' fares, goes about his next job as choirleader. He gets everyone to sing their discomforts away, backed by the sound of a tin rattle containing mealie seeds.

Flames from kerosene lamps light up roadside villages where tea, coffee, manioc and fish are on sale 24 hours a day.

Later, the travellers grind to a halt behind a line of camions, the road blocked by one that is stuck. Women and children appear from the shadows, baskets on their heads, to sell fu-fu (the manioc equivalent of putu).

Unlike the bureaucrats who sit idly in stuffy office blocks in Kinshasa with airconditioning that does not function, these vendors represent the Zaire that works.

Closer to Kikwit, almost 24 hours after we have left Kinshasa, other villagers walk in single file along the roads carrying baskets filled to their brims with mealies and manioc. Their neat bamboo and palm-frond homesteads fringe fields demarcated by woven fences.

Further out, slash-and-burn clearing has given birth to new fields that penetrate the jungle. Mealies stand like matchsticks under trees that were too tall to fall victim to bush-clearing. Rice paddies add a light green touch to deep valleys.

Here food is cheap but cigarettes, soap, soft drinks and other imports brought in by camion cost twice their normal price in Kinshasa.

Palm wine sustitutes for beer. Calabashes often take the place of bottles.

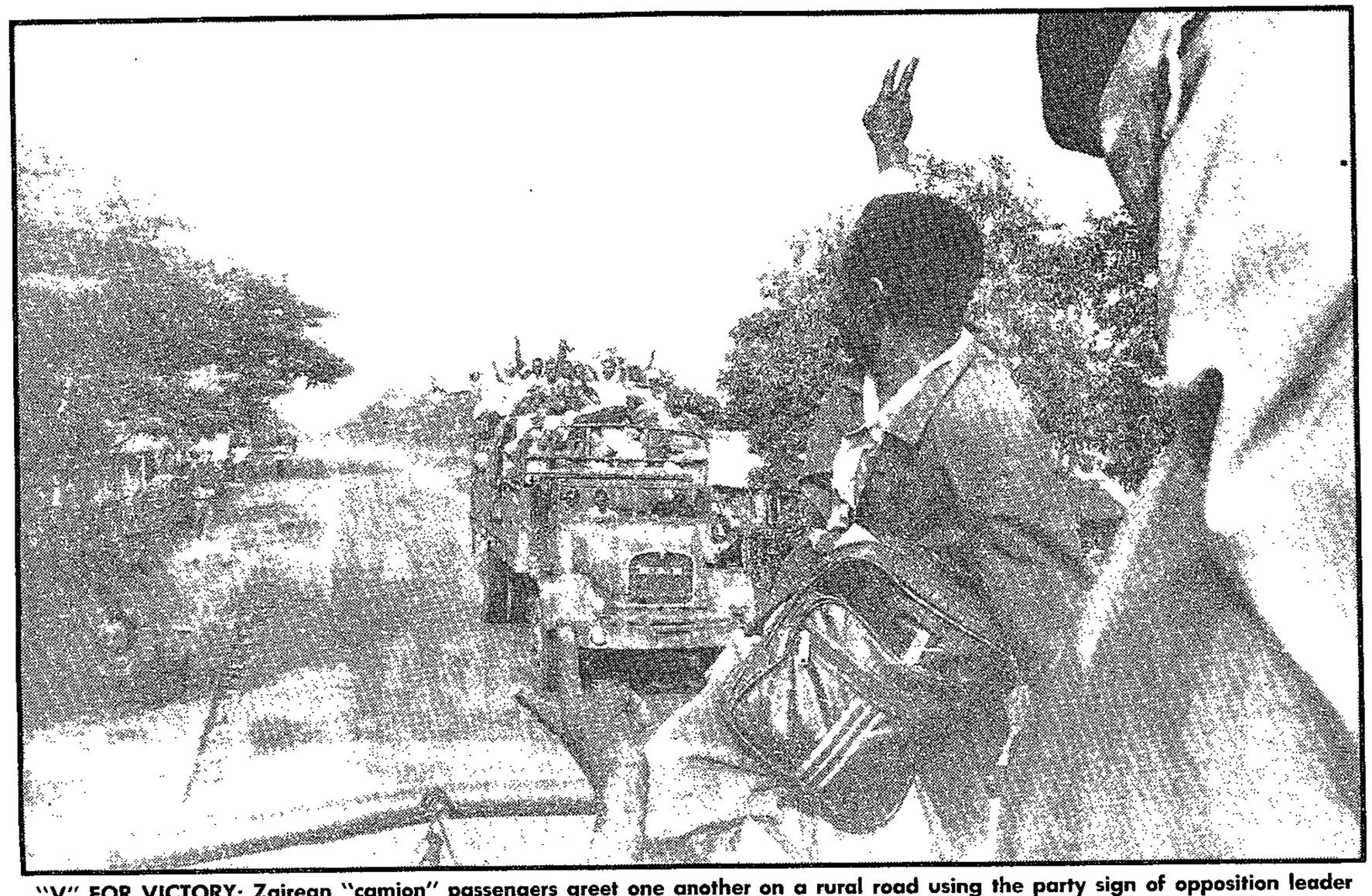
At the entrance to the town of Masi-Manima, gendarmes are greeted with a wave of abuse from the passengers (it is common practice in Zaire for soldiers and police to force money from motorists at roadblocks). The driver puts his foot down and the uniformed men scatter, rifles and all.

Perhaps a sign of changing times!

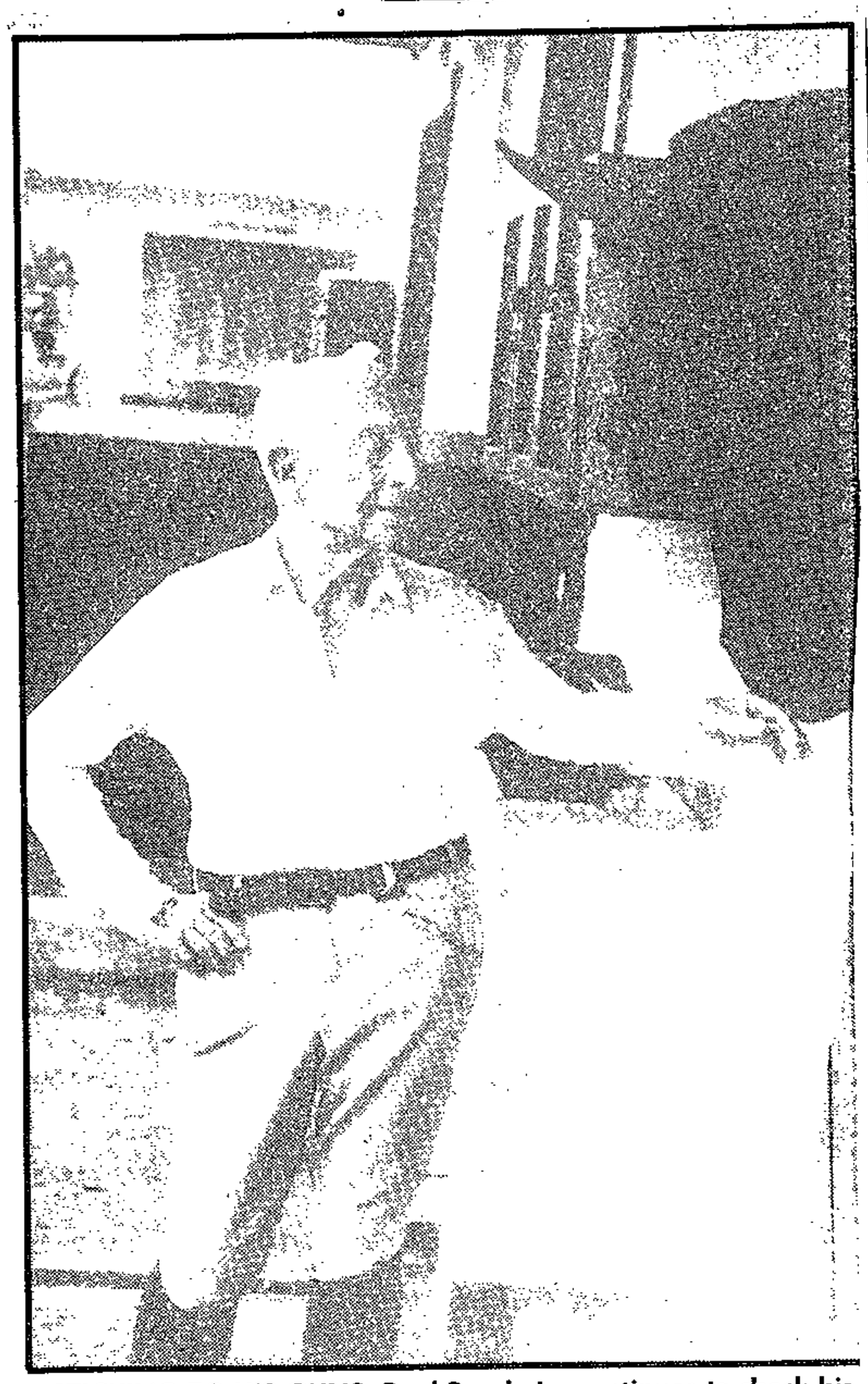
In Kikwit, bells ring for evening Mass, and a choir sings hymns from a decaying colonial-style cathedral.

The adjacent convent, run by sisters of the Marie au Kwango order, accommodates visitors, among them Zairean businessmen.

The businessmen lament that Zaire has gone to ruin. "We should be a country as rich as South Africa," they say.



"V" FOR VICTORY: Zairean "camion" passengers greet one another on a rural road using the party sign of opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi. ● Photographs: DUNCAN GUY



STICKING TO HIS GUNS: Paul Bernheim continues to check his horses at Mangafula, outside Kinshasa, in spite of the troubles.

Some are just riding out the storm

STAR 18/1/92 DUNCAN GUY (358)

KINSHASA — While soldiers continue to loot houses from time to time in the Zairean capital, retired businessman Paul Bernheim has not broken his daily routine of going horse-riding.

The 78-year-old Mr Bernheim, who has lived in Zaire since 1947, rejected his embassy's advice to evacuate to Belgium along with 15 000 expatriates who left Kinshasa after troops went on a looting spree in September.

"I'm old enough not to have to care about what people think of me. I just want to carry on my life here. I don't want to die in the snow, thank you very much," said Mr Bernheim relaxing at the pool of Kinshasa's Intercontinental Hotel where he is a permanent resident.

In September, he recalled, the hotel was alive with foreign journalists, and the unpaid Zairean military led the poverty-stricken masses in a fiesta of pillaging homes and businesses.

"I did not wish to get involved, so I went riding out at Mangafula, just outside town."

Mr Bernheim was one of about 600 expatriates who chose to stay. "People outside of Zaire think that just because there are troubles, normal life is impossible.

Belgian veterinarian Pierre Verhaeghe (33) also decided to stick it out.

"I was born here, in Bukavu in the east of the country, but left with my parents at the age of five," Dr Verhaeghe said.

"When I left Belgium to return here five years ago my friends were not surprised. And when I got off the plane at Kinshasa, I felt whole. Physically complete."

His surgery was pillaged in September. "I thought — this is the end of Zaire for me. But then my Zairean partner and I talked things over and since then I've been motivated to stay and rebuild the practice."

Staying involved putting down several pets belonging to people who left. For some animals he found new homes, and even air-freighted others back to their owners in Belgium.

Other stayers are Jean-Michel and Marie-Claude Turlot. "This is our country although we are Belgian citizens," they said. "If there's trouble, we stay."

Their apartment overlooking Boulevard 30 Juin — Kinshasa's main street — provided a full view of the pillaging.

"We turned the lights off and prayed they wouldn't come and loot us," said Mr Turlot.

But the Turlots' holida home at Moanda, on Zaire' narrow coastline wedged be tween Angola and Cabinda, wa stripped bare.

Back at the Intercontinental old Mr Bernheim spoke o Zairean dictator Mobutu Ses Seko as "the principal handica in any effort to restart norma life and foreign relations i Zaire".

"His problem is that he wil not admit his faults. He is als surrounded by people who tel him only what he wishes t hear," added Mr Bernheim.

"Zaire cannot be worse tha it is now. It's explosive.

"At worst it could turn into Liberia situation. But whatever happens, the country will onl settle down after a clash.

"I know that when the clash comes I shall not go riding. The next day, maybe."

Lifeline to looted capital

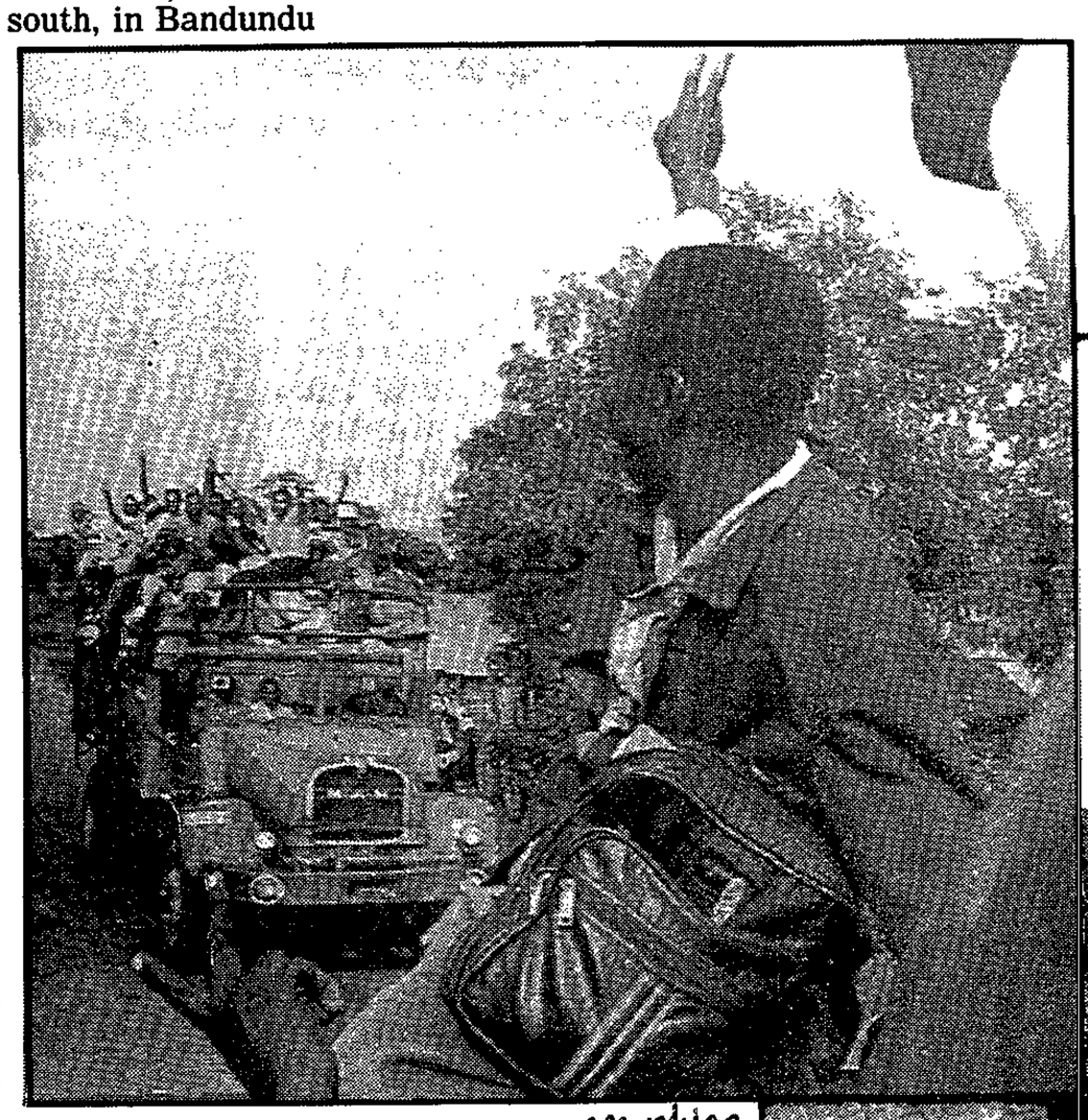
The riot-wrecked capital of Kinshasa has become dependent for its very life on the humble lorry following the devastation of most of Zaire's formal economy in the rioting last September. DUNCAN GUY of the Argus Africa News Service rode into the countryside on one of these crowded vehicles and gained a rare insight into life in Zaire today.



☐ **OPPOSITION:** Zaire opposition figure Etienne Tsishekedi on the right.

☐ **SIGNS OF TIMES:** Victory signs, left, of Etienne Tshisekedi's party are flashed by passengers from one camion (lorry) to another.

☐ **AT THE CROSSROADS:** Below, crossroads on part of Zairean "highveld".





Pictures: **DUNCAN GUY**

ARG 18/11/92 (358)

How hungry Kinshasa survives on the wheels of the lorry

WOMEN and children sit on the floor of the lorry amid empty sacks, cartons of beer and packets of bread. And their men perch on the tarpaulin frame as the battered vehicle heads out of Kinshasa.

The lorry, which people here call a "camion", is bound for Kikwit, more than 500 km to the south, in Bandundu Province. This is the centre of the "breadbasket" region that feeds Kinshasa's population of between five and six million.

The Zairean capital has become dependent on the camions as never before since soldiers went on a looting spree last September, destroying about 70 percent of the economy's formal sector and causing about 15 000 expatriates to flee the country.

Since the pillaging, the price of fuel has rocketed, contributing to hyperinflation so severe — 100 percent a month is the latest — that most people in Kinshasa can afford only one meal a day.

The dilapidated state of the roads compounds the problem, so camions have become crucial to the city's survival.

Ikulo Bosco bears the discomfort of lorry travel to Kikwit to buy Zaire's staple — manioc (cassava) — which he sells in Kinshasa for nearly four times the price he pays. But he loses most of his profits to camion drivers who charge him more to transport the manioc to Kinshasa than he pays for it.

"Life is too expensive now in Kinshasa," he says. "Next week I shall bring my wife and six children back to my village near Idiofa (about 700 km away) where at least there is food.

"Anything other than food, which we once enjoyed in the city, is just no longer affordable to us anyway."

It is clear from the numbers boarding camions to the interior that more are leaving the city than coming in. Urbanisation has gone into reverse.

On the camion, conversation centres on politics, a topic that went largely undiscussed in the past. As recently as the early 80s the dictatorial President Mobutu Sese Seko publicly executed his opponents, compelling people — including clergy and a bishop — to watch.

The camion stops beside a high wall and the laughing passengers glimpse a naked man showering in a garden. He becomes angry, but the exchanges soon become light-hearted and everyone links the incident to the political systems they are waiting for in the "new Zaire".

"C'est le democratie," they cheer.

Optimists say an election timetable will be announced this year by a National Conference of 3 000 representatives drafting a constitution for a multi-party Zaire.

Etienne Tshisekedi, who was Prime Minister for a few days last year before refusing to swear allegiance to Mobutu, is widely believed to be the person who will lead Zaire out of autocratic rule and corruption. But some fear he will be another dictator.

An engineer told me [illegible] our Ma-

Argus 18/1/92

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hatma Gandhi, the only difference being that he is a dictator. But we need one dictator to replace another. A proper democratic leader can follow later."

Tshisekedi certainly appears to be the people's choice. Camion passengers greet pedestrians and folk on other lorries with his party's "V" sign. They scream abuse at Mobutu.

"We want to kill him, even eat him," says a villager bitterly. But his words are not echoed very often. Mobutu's opponents are passive, particularly when fearing the "hiboux" (owls) they say are his hit squads who move about at night "driving Pajero jeeps".

"Our country should be rich but he is wealthy instead. Look how poor we are," the villager says. "The roads do not work and Mobutu does not care that we are suffering."

Night falls and the camion cruises along one of Zaire's few stretches of paved road. But all traffic is heavy duty or four-wheel drive because patches of sand and potholes make it impassable to anything else.

The conductor, having collected passengers' fares, becomes choir leader, backed by the sound of a tin rattle containing mealie seeds.

Kerosene lamps light roadside villages where tea, coffee, manioc and fish are on sale 24 hours a day. Later in the night a line of camions has stopped because one is stuck and blocking the way. Women and children appear from the shadows, baskets on their heads, to sell fu-fu (the manioc equivalent of putu or pap).

Unlike bureaucrats, who sit idly in stuffy Kinshasa office blocks with broken air conditioning, these vendors represent the Zaire that works.

Closer to Kikwit, after almost 24 hours, villagers walk in single file carrying baskets full of mealies and manioc. Their neat bamboo and palm frond homesteads fringe fields marked by woven fences.

Further out, slash-and-burn clearing has given birth to new fields that penetrate the jungle. Mealies stand like matchsticks. Rice paddies add a light green touch to deep valleys.

Here food is cheap but cigarettes, soap, soft drinks and other imports brought in by camion cost twice their price in Kinshasa. Palm wine called asangambi substitutes for beer. Calabashes often take the place of bottles.

At the entrance to the town of Masi-Manima, the passengers greet gendarmes with a wave of abuse (it is common practice in Zaire for soldiers and police to force money from motorists at roadblocks). The driver puts his foot down and, humbled, the uniformed men scatter.

In Kikwit, the bells ring for evening mass and the sound of a choir drifts from a decaying colonial-style cathedral. The adjacent convent, run by sisters of the Marie au Kwango order, accommodates visitors, among them Zairean businessmen.

The businessmen lament Zaire's descent to ruin, particularly the state of its roads and railways. "We should be a country as rich as South Africa," they say.

One says that since the National Conference began, repairs on the Kinshasa-Kikwit road have stopped because the conference is consuming a third of Zaire's annual budget.

Optimists expect the conference to deliver results in a few months. Pessimists say Mobutu could stage a coup instead.

But in a world where time means little, perhaps the camion run will continue to be a struggle. And if petrol runs out — as has happened with aviation fuel — Kinois will have to cut down even further on their meal-a-day lifestyles while the Kikwit food mountains continue to grow.

Zaire tests the water for trade return

ST Times (BISS) 19/11/92. (358)

By CIARAN RYAN

A DELEGATION of 18 Zairean 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 in Kinshasa have returned, leaving family members behind.

The South African Foreign Trade Organisation (Safto) 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. Tons 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 Safto's Africa desk.

Safto has halted all trade missions from SA to Zaire for at least six months.

Banque Commerciale Zaireoise, 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 Zairean 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 two 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 Rooyen 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 $28 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 Manda 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

Sowetan 21/1/92

KINSHASA - Prime Minister Mr Nguza Karl-I-Bond 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. (358)

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. - *Sapa-Reuter*

Zaire soldiers crush revolt against Mobutu

ARG 23/1/92 358

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.

An armed forces statement broadcast at 3.30am said regular forces were back in control. "The adventurers have fled," the broadcast said.

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 army-led 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 Liyeko, 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 Ngbanda Nzambo 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-Reuter.

Coup plot in Zambia exposed

Sowetan 24/11/92

(358)

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 Chisesa, 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 inspected a guard of honour at Arakan Barracks in Lusaka on November 15, but the plot had to be cancelled when it was uncovered.

Chisesa, 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 Geofrey Miyanda, reputed to be the second most powerful man in the MMD.

According to the witness, the meeting was also attended by police commissioner Ernest Nyirenda and a prominent Lusaka businessman, Mr Andrew Sardanis. The secret meeting is alleged to have taken place at Sardanis' home.

Chisesa 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 Sergeant 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. - *AANS*.

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

British newspa-

Brooke would apologise for his singing blunder when he made a statement to parliament. — Sapa-Reuter.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Zaire conference suspended

KINSHASA — Prime Minister Nguza Karl-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. (358)

In a speech on state radio and television, Nguza said on Sunday that the conference, dominated by opponents of the strongarm president, was contributing to violence in the country. BIDay 21/11/92

Berlin Wall guards convicted

WORLD

Loyalists foil bid to oust Mobutu

BD Day 24/1/92 358

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. Shops 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.

Gunfire 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 Zaireans were killed.

While the rebels controlled the radio they demanded the resignations of Mobutu and his prime minister, Nguza Karl-i-Bond, and the resumption of Zaire's pro-democracy national conference, which is dominated by opposition parties.

Nguza, who suspended the conference on Sunday accusing it of fomenting 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 Zairean people and army," he said. The Sacred Union, led by former premier Etienne Tshisekedi, was due to meet on the crisis later. — Sapa-Reuter.

Zaire troops held after death spree

358

ET 25/4/92

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 R56) a month.

"They came out of the building without any problem," Mr Kibabu Madiata Nzau 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 30 and 40 men — briefly seized the radio building, demanding President Mobutu Sese Seko's resignation. — Sapa-Reuter

Zaire troops surrender

(358)

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 Nzau 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 R50 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 putschists 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-Reuter.

Zaire – nation in stagnation

STAR 30/1/92 (358)

Zaire, once one of South Africa's major African trading partners, hangs precariously between anarchy and reformation. Everyday life continues colourfully — if sometimes oddly — amid the wreckage of September's riots. DUNCAN GUY reports from Kinshasa.

THE CAPITAL of Africa's second largest country is a bizarre combination of bustling activity and scenes of devastation.

Most shops and businesses in central Kinshasa remain broken and empty after the pillaging last September by the army that dictatorial President Mobutu Sese Seko could not pay.

"The proletariat, which followed the troops' example, now sells anything from movie cameras to tennis rackets among the usual mangoes and fish in the markets that line nearly every street.

Gucci clothes hang in the central market to which rusty minibus taxis, packed with passengers, head from all over the city of between five and six million people.

Their conductors hang out of the doors screaming "Zando, Zando, Zando", the local name for the market. There's always room for one more, and some passengers enjoy what they call "air conditioning" as they stand on the tack bumper.

On the other side of Boulevard 30 Juin, middle class Zairean women, dressed in flowing colourful "panya" cloth, operate the roadside black market called "Wall Street".

Calculators in one hand and wads of almost worthless Zaire currency in the other, they whisper "chaaange dollaaar" at potential passing clients.

Expatriates who fled Zaire, mainly to Belgium and France, are trickling back to see if they can pick up where they left off. The most desperate are middle-aged people with little hope of finding work in their home countries as the world recession tightens its grip.

Optimists among them say Zaire will be back in reasonable working order in about six months. Pessimists say it is unlikely to ever get back to "normal" — if there ever was such a thing.

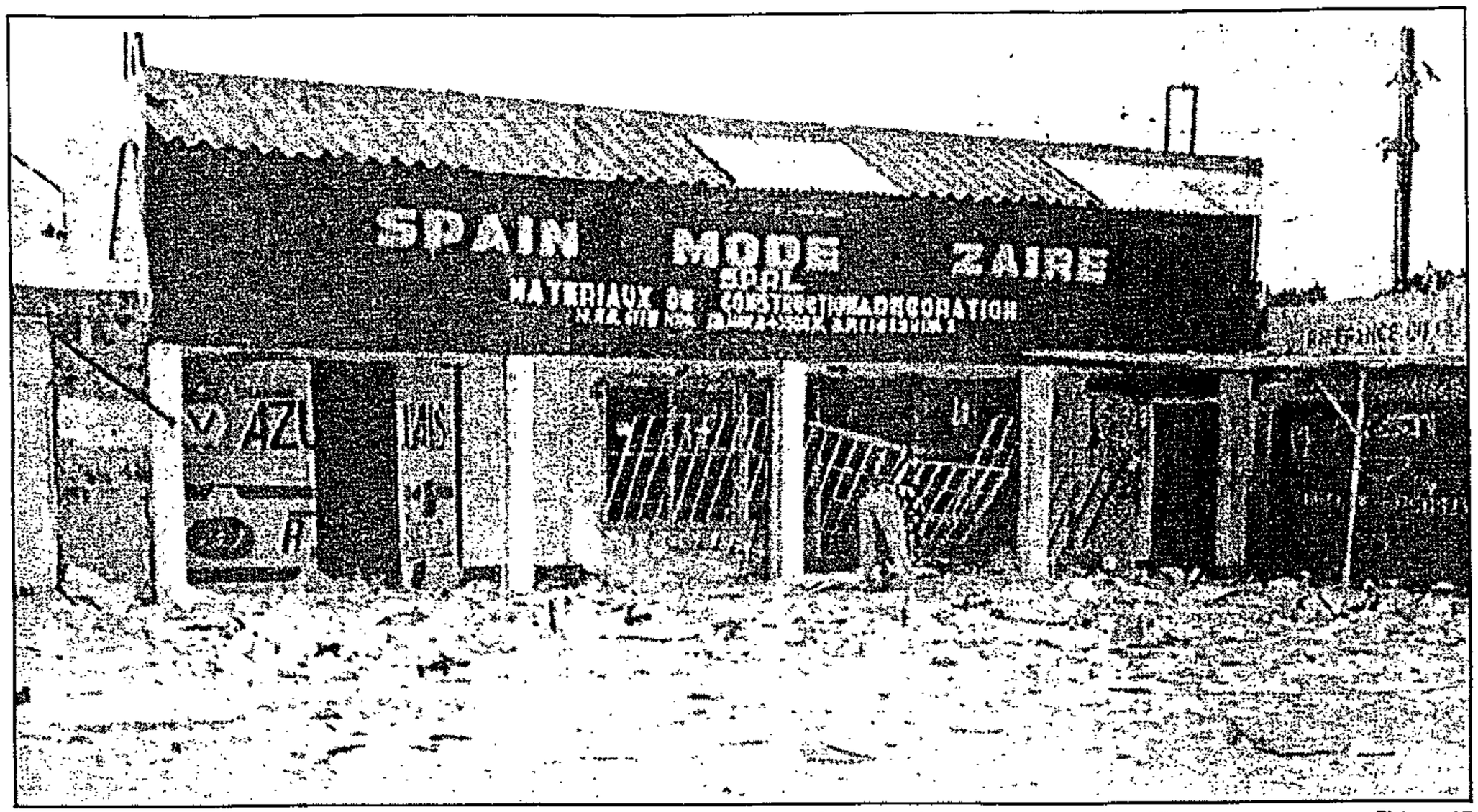
There is talk about privatisation of companies which were nationalised and later Zaireanised in the Seventies. Among them is the transport company which the Belgians developed to serve the rail and river system, and which is now ticking over with only the occasional ship in use.

Little, if any, reconstruction of Zaire's economy is likely to take place until a democratic system exists. A National Conference, which began sitting in August, and is made up of about 3 000 representatives from about 250 political parties, is the vehicle chosen to achieve this end.

Its brief: to draft a constitution suitable for a multiparty Zaire and set a date for national and presidential elections.

Mr Mobutu is said to have jumped on the bandwagon by creating many of the 250 parties himself.

But his ways of keeping himself in power have not really changed. One Zairean put it: "Those he pays don't want to slip into the poverty of the masses, no matter what they say. And the masses are so poor that an offer from anyone, even Mobutu, can be attractive."



Out of stock . . . a looted Kinshasa store photographed by a fleeing expatriate during September's rampage by unpaid soldiers. Picture: AP

The spectrum of opposition parties is made up of the "opposition" and the "radical opposition", the latter forming under the umbrella of the Sacred Union.

The conference started off reputedly filled with Mobutu clones. But then the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Kisangani, Monsigneur Monsengwo-Pasinya Laurent, whom Mr Mobutu publicly described as inappropriate to preside over the conference, was elected to that position.

On Christmas Eve the conference elected the Sacred Union leader and one-time prime minister for Mr Mobutu, Joseph Ileo, as the archbishop's deputy. Then the Mobutu faction boycotted the conference, saying representation was imbalanced in favour of Zaire's best-known opposition figure, Etienne Tshisekedi, who is also in the Sacred Union.

Earlier this month, Prime Minister Nguza Karl-i-Bond suspended the conference, saying it was inciting violence.

Rebel soldiers tried to stage a coup to secure the resumption of the conference, but were quickly defeated by troops loyal to Mr Mobutu.

Mr Tshisekedi said in an interview recently that Zaire was too far down the road towards change for Mobutu to retain power by force of arms. He also said Zaireans needed up to two years to learn about democracy and fix the country's roads before going to the polls.

One man who should not be overlooked in future power struggles is the prime minister.

Mr Nuguza has had a roller-coaster career in Zairean politics. He has been foreign minister, had a previous term as prime minister, was sentenced to death and tortured — all under the presidency of Mr Mobutu — but continues to survive.

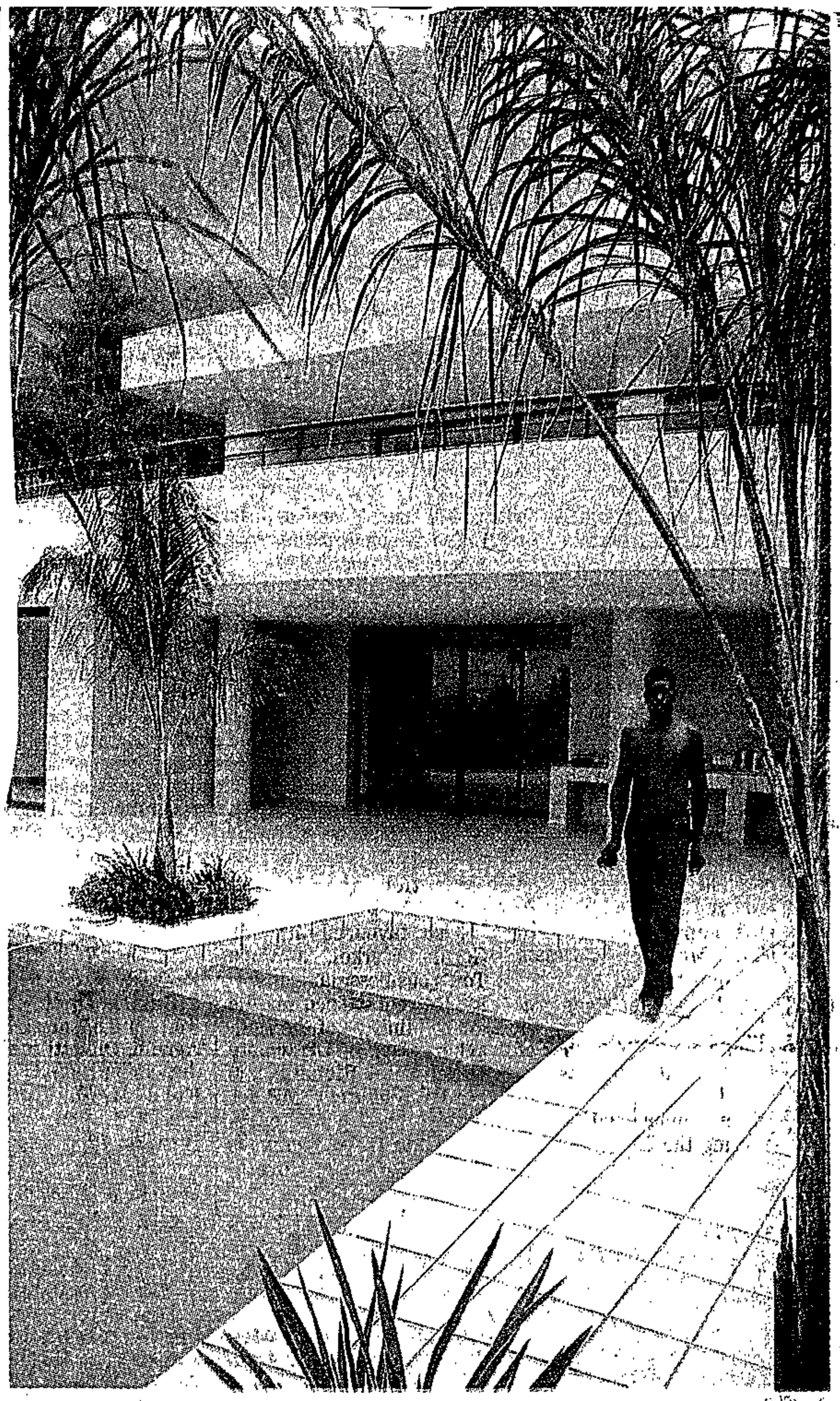
Unlike the Sacred Union's Mr Tshisekedi, who refused to swear allegiance to Mr Mobutu when he offered him the post in October, Mr Nguza accepted it, while at the same time claiming to oppose the President's policies.

Belgium, France, Germany and the United States gave him a cold shoulder during his recent trip abroad to raise aid money, which added credibility to the Sacred Union's claim that his government is not sufficiently representative of the Zairean people.

Nguza nevertheless continues to try and give himself credibility. A local paper reported that when he was prime minister, Mr Mobutu summoned him back from medical treatment in the Netherlands to discuss something that could not be mentioned over the telephone. Back in Kinshasa, Mr Nguza claimed, Mr Mobutu and his cronies accused him of having an affair with Mr Mobutu's wife.

One of those cronies was none other than Joseph Ileo, now leader of the Sacred Union.

No wonder outsiders are left wondering whether Zaire has the ability to sort out the mess and become the prosperous society it could be. — Star Africa Service. □



The home President Mobutu is said to be buying Picture: JUHAN KUUS

Has Mobutu bought Sandton mansion?

Sunday Times 2/2/92 (358)

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 113 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 Elliot 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.

the long-running Uruguay round 1940s.

Non-aligned countries finding solace in unity

LARNACA — Non-aligned foreign ministers said yesterday that their movement was vital 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 just one superpower, the US.

Algerian Foreign Minister Lakhdar Ibrahimi 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 programmes of the Third World, are now themselves competitors for much needed aid from those that provide it," said Cypriot Foreign Minister George Iacovou.

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.

Iacovou 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-Reuter.

he added. — Sapa-Reuter.

Zaire's opposition calls for big strike

B|day 4|2|92

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 Nguza 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. (358)

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-Ngai Elima, were questioned over the weekend. — Sapa-Reuter.

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. B|day 4|2|92

The wage commission of the powerful IG Metall labour union voted 121-2 in favour of a wage package that would increase salaries by 6,35% for the 130 000 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.

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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 (358)

Prime Minister Nguza Karl-I-Bond, chosen by President Mobutu Sese Seko 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 many mutinous soldiers had been killed in a foiled coup attempt in which the government said two had died. B1Days 6/2/92 (358)

Bodies of most of the mutineers who seized state radio for several hours on January 22 were quickly taken away, the Zairean Human Rights Association said.

It did not say how many soldiers were killed. The government said one mutineer and one loyalist died in the fighting.

The rebels broadcast demands that President Mobutu Sese Seko and his hand-picked prime minister, Nguza Karl-I-Bond, be removed and that the country's suspended national conference be reconvened. Karl-i-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-Reuter.

Aids adds to Angolan dilemma

Sowetan 6/2/92

358

Sowetan Africa
News Service

WINDHOEK - Seemingly insurmountable problems face the Angolan government trying to control the repatriation of more than one and a half million of its nationals in Zaire.

The increasing instability in Zaire has created new pressures, among them a possible large-scale importation of the HIV virus into Angola.

Mr Joao Miranda, Deputy Minister of International Relations for the Community, a post created specifically to address the problem of an estimated 3 million Angolans outside the country, acknowledges that the turmoil in Zaire has "aggravated" the repatriation of Angolans from Zaire, about 300 000 of them refugees living in camps.

"The (Angolan) government has discussed repatriation from Zaire and agreed that Angola did not have the conditions to receive such high numbers. This was because the country is not yet free of mines and because we do not have state administration in all areas.

(In terms of peace accords signed with former rebels Unita, the government should by now be in control of the entire country but there are a significant number of areas where Unita remains in control and the government has not been able to establish its authority.)

country where the usual mobility of people has not been possible.

There is equally no definitive data on Aids in Zaire but it seems to be fairly widely accepted that it is a major problem.

Apart from dealing with the Zaire headache, Miranda's task is to build confidence among Angolans abroad and to promote their return.

Many who left the country, particularly the white Angolans who fled at independence in 1975, have established lives elsewhere, especially in South Africa and Portugal.

Asked how many will want to return home Miranda says indications are that there is interest but those who most seriously want to return are refugees living in poor conditions.

"All peace-loving people should contribute to fight the problem of Aids in Southern Africa."

Apart from the 300 000 in Zaire there are about 60 000 in Zambia.

For those who have been out of Angola long enough to become citizens of other countries, Miranda says Angola accepts dual nationality as long as an individual has retained his or her Angolan nationality.

About 500 000 Angolans are in Portugal and "plenty" in South Africa. There are also about 40 000 in Namibia and a number in Sweden and the United States. In South Africa former Angolans are particularly well organised, he says.

With a smile he concedes that the Angolans in South Africa are predominantly the white conservative Angolans deeply linked to the former Portuguese colonial administration in Angola and who fled the country at independence for fear of black and ideologically leftwing rule.

Asked whether they are not anti-MPLA, the party of the Angolan government that has been in power since 1975, he shrugs: "We consider this normal but what interests us more is that they should consider themselves Angolan and contribute to the rebuilding of Angola. All we demand is that people should be patriotic.

What Angola wants most of all is to attract people with skills and many of those are the ones in developed countries who left to escape MPLA rule.

"We want to encourage them to come back and create their own conditions with their skills. We will make land and loans available. My job is to make contact with these Angolans especially and to convince them to have confidence in Angola."

He says Angolans abroad are still very divided along the lines that fought the war: Unita versus MPLA and, going further back, FNLA.

Miranda rules out any form of reprisals: "My message to them is that we are in the process of reconciliation. The past is the past."

Repatriation

"We agreed that the repatriation should start in March, taking into account measures to fight Aids. But the situation has been worsened by problems in Zaire and we have no concrete solution yet. It has become a humanitarian problem and now we have Zairean refugees coming to Angola too."

He says posts will be established in two provinces "to try and test people; a form of detecting Aids carriers and trying to establish ways of preventing the spread".

"But there is a problem because the population is coming in numbers even now and during the rainy season. We have to fight Aids inside Angola and we can't refuse our nationals. The situation is very preoccupying."

He acknowledges that the government does not have enough money to establish an effective testing infrastructure and is trying to mobilise the international community.

"All peace-loving people should contribute to fight the problem of Aids in Southern Africa," he says. It is a thinly disguised way of saying "we have to help each other".

Sixteen years of civil war in Angola which ended in May last year has meant that there is little reliable data on the spread of the HIV virus in that country. However, the war itself might have contributed to containing the problem in a

Mobutu pledges to reopen conference on democracy

B'Day 10/2/92 358

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 Monsengwo Pasinya. The radio did not say when the meeting would resume.

Mobutu and his prime minister, Nguza Karl-i-Bond, suspended the conference on Januray 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 Lubangi Eshiba.

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

STAR 17/2/92 (358)

13 die in demo led by priests

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 spilt 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 dusk 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 Mpundu 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 Nguza Karl-i-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 looting, 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 estimates 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 with his 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-Reuter.

Zaire troops open fire on protesters

STAR 17/2/92 (358)

13 die in demo led by priests

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.

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Priests blamed for massacre

KINSHASA - Zaire says protest organisers provoked a crackdown by troops who fired on thousands of marchers, killing 13 people.

Information Minister Mr Kitenge Yezu said radical Roman Catholic priests who organised Sunday's march had been warned not to hold the protest in the capital against President Mobutu Sese Seko.

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 Nguza Karl-I-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. - *Sapa-Reuter.*

'At least 30' killed in church demo

STAR 18/2/92

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. (358)

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 Buana Kabue said a day of national mourning had been called for tomorrow. — Sapa-AP.

SA markets must be free, says Chiluba

SIMON BARBER (40)

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. (358)

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". Bibay

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. 19/2/92

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

B Day 27/2/92

KINSHASA — US Assistant Secretary of State Herman 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 Gbadolite 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. (358)

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 250 people.

After arriving in Congo on Tuesday, Cohen called for "a rapid solution in Zaire before the situation becomes catastrophic". — Sapa-Reuter.

Cohen to meet Mobutu

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Star 27/2/92

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

B10ay 28/2/92 358

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 Herman 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 Gbadolite, 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 Nguza Karl-i-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 16, 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 Kitenge Yezu said he was due to meet only Mobutu. But Archbishop Monsengwo Pasinya, the national conference chairman, told Reuter he hoped to meet Cohen if time allowed.

Monsengwo recently sent Mobutu and Nguza 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 Nguza is now totally discredited in opposition circles. — Sapa-Reuter.

Zaire's exodus of treasures

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w/Mail 28/2 - 5/3/92

Recent political upheavals in Zaire has claimed another victim — the nation's cultural heritage.

JESSICA DUBOW *reports on the flood of treasures now available in South Africa despite legal restrictions*

IN the chaotic wake of the collapse of civil order in Zaire, wholesale looting has become endemic. And the inventory of pillaged property, it seems, extends well beyond the bounds of canned foods and Taiwanese Raybans. Along with the droves of fleeing Belgian expatriates is another kind of exodus: ritual masks, musical instruments, fabrics and fetishes — Zaire's national treasures which are now resurfacing in Johannesburg's flea markets and curio shops.

In among the rows upon rows of woven cloth, painted masks and wooden masks sculptures at the Market nestled one particularly impressive piece — a Kuba mask, claimed by the dealer to date back to the 19th century — on offer for a mere R180.

Rumours are rife. How and why is this happening? Have these objects been crafted for the mainstream market or do they have real historical value? Have they been collected from rural villages or does the the fact that some pieces seem to be unique imply that museum collections have been siphoned off?

There are no unequivocal answers; only persistent suspicions of people who have expressed curiosity about the origins and apparent authenticity of their bargain purchases. There are also the informed conjectures of local African art authorities and their experience of the ways in which the continent's art works have historically slipped through borders in blatant disregard of any legal restrictions.

On one hand, as Dr Anitra Nettleton, of the University of the Witwatersrand's history of art department and a specialist on the subject, says, there's nothing new about the dispersal of Africa's art heritage. On the other, the scale of the exports out of Zaire and the boomtown-trade that it has stimulated, is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore.

A stroll down to any flea market on a Saturday will offer up a proliferation of stalls loaded with artefacts, some old, some new. The dealers aren't giving away much, except to say that a lot of the stuff is being collected from villages where impoverished peasants are having to dig deep into their communal stores of ritual craft to survive the ravages of the ongoing war.

As one trader explained with a resigned shrug: "People in Zaire are becoming desperate. They will sell anything."

There is also nothing new in the observation that the history of post-colonial countries is one of bureaucratic corruption and relentless social crises. When *The Weekly Mail* reported on the recent upheavals in Zaire, it told a story of urban anarchy characterised by widespread looting and petty thievery as the people's best improvised defence against creeping poverty.

Traditional objects have no sublime 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 "payment-for-favours" ethos, it would be suprising if this were not the case. Strengthening this supposition is Nettleton'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 operation, what is indisputably clear is a criminal disregard for the preservation of a national heritage and a willingness to be the low-cost suppliers of the foreign curio trade.

As all communications between Zaire and the world outside have broken down, it is virtually impossible to substantiate suspicions that museums and private collections are being plundered.

However, Nettleton says she has seen artefacts locally that bear permanent ink markings — the tell-tale signs of a museum cataloguing system.

The Weekly Mail has also been shown ritual masks that clearly weren't produced to formula for commercial purposes. Two of them bore suspiciously yellowed stickers incribed with a typed numbered code. While the possibility exists that these pieces were looted from Kinshasa museums, it seems more likely that they were once part of the private collections of Belgian expatriates who hurriedly fled the country in the wake of the September upheavals.

But, almost certainly, these objects are well over half a century old, and as such are of real historical value. The thought that Zaire's plundered heritage is in danger of being scattered about suburban mantlepieces is a tragic one. It is a twist in the colonial tale that those countries which have refused to adopt any laws restricting the importation of artefacts are those who have an historical claim to stake: Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands. South Africa too has not yet seen the need to help the rest of Africa keep its treasures to itself.

Whereas once this continent's art was scavenged in the name of Western conisseurship, now it seems, it is being scavenged in the name of profiteering. For some this is a matter of survival; for others it's just good business.

AIDS research projects are put at risk

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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 Manzila Tarande said the project's clinic had no more test kits for AIDS and only about 5 000 condoms to distribute to the growing number of women who had turned to prostitution to feed their families. Beday 10/3/92

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 Centres 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

8 Days 10/3/92 (358)

KINSHASA — Assailed from all sides by demands for political reform, Zaire's strongarm 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 Zaireans, 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 Zaire's helm.

Suspended

The latest explosion of anti-government protest came after Mobutu's prime minister, Nguza Karl-i-Bond, suspended a national pro-democracy conference on January 19 saying it was causing tribal splits in the diverse nation of 40-million people.

Many Zaireans see the forum as their 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 Zaire public life.

A last-minute accord between Mobutu and conference chairman Archbishop Monsengwo Pasinya for the forum's "imminent" reopening took most of the steam out of a second mass march planned for March 1.

Nguza 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, Nguza 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 Zaire's opposition figures have similar credibility problems.

Mobutu's strongest challenger is widely seen to be Etienne 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 250 people, devastated several cities and brought Zaire's shambling economy even further to its knees. The problem stems largely from low pay and the government's inability to guarantee salaries. Many political analysts say Mobutu keeps overall control by rich payouts 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.

Teargas disrupts democracy march

KINSHASA. — Security forces hurled teargas 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 organisers 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 teargas too."

Witnesses said police also robbed worshippers of jewellery, cash and other possessions.

Communications Minister Mr Kitenge Yezu 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-Reuter

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ST 2/3/92

Zairian old guard told to resign

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Sowet 24/3/92

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 Muvingi, 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 organise 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

Sowetan 27/3/92

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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 firebrand, 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 had rarely challenged Africa's dictatorships.

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 Souza 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 16000 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 criticised 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 Etsou 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 organising 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 Busia district that if Muge set foot in the district he would "see fire and might not leave alive".

Muge (44) defied the threat, visited Busia, and was killed in the crash on his way home. - *Sapa-AP*

Embattled 'simple citizen' Mobutu juggles with time

STAR 27/3/92 (358)

ROBERT WELLER reports that Mobutu Sese Seko has escaped the fate of many dictators, but . . .

USING a mixture of force and subterfuge, President Mobutu Sese Seko has escaped the fate of many other dictators.

After a year that saw looting by mutinous soldiers and the near destruction of Zaire's economy, he says: "I must remain above the melee." He adds that he can only make recommendations to the government "as a simple citizen".

An influential minister who quit a government led by a former Mobutu critic said in Kinshasa on Monday that despite such comments, Mr Mobutu's old guard was blocking progress towards democracy.

"They all must go," said Enoch Nyamwisi Muvingi, who resigned as minister of youth, culture and tourism.

Opposition party members said his resignation could signal the beginning of the end of Prime Minister Nguza Karl-i-Bond's four-month-old administration.

Mr Nguza's government has been criticised since he closed a national conference on democracy on January 19. The conference began several months late and was packed with Mobutu supporters. It was suspended when the opposition gained control.

Opposition leaders demanded on Monday that Mr Mobutu reopen the conference within 10 days, and pro-democracy demonstrators also demanded this. On February 16 Mr Mobutu's security forces opened fire on a march, killing at least 32 people.

On the eve of a new march two weeks later, Mr Mobutu told Monsengwo Pasinya, the Roman Catholic archbishop, that the conference would reopen immediately, and a protest march scheduled for the next day fizzled.

Then Mr Mobutu said Mr Monsengwo must talk first with Mr Nguza — who was said to be too ill to begin negotiations.

Mr Mobutu has co-opted many of his opponents, giving them big salaries, luxury cars and villas. Mr Nguza was lured from the opposition late last year to become prime minister.

The belief in Zaire is that Mr Mobutu is playing for time. — Sapa-AP. □



Mobutu . . . and all his old guard must go, say critics.

The Director
South African Labour Development R.

Freedom a dream for Zaire

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SDW 1/4/92

KINSHASA - Democracy remains a dream to Zairians, who were allied with the West in the Cold War, while their kinsmen 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 still they cross the river.

Each day, Zairians hide on sand bars, waiting for night to slip across by boat. Any 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 France, which colonised Congo, instilled a sense of democracy and made some effort to create an educated class, while Belgium 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.

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"System D," for the French word meaning resourcefulness, is how Zairians explain how to survive what opponents called Mobutu's kleptocracy.

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Opposition leader

In January, rebel soldiers who had belonged to Sassou-Nguesso's personal guard seized the state 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.

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Mobutu was accused of bringing in Angolan 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. - *Sapa-AP.*

Things go better with Prudence

South 11/4 – 16/4/92

(358)

By Sara Townsend

FEWER THAN half a million condoms were distributed in 1987 among Zaire's 30 million inhabitants — mainly for free and by government clinics. But in 1990, condom sales soared to eight million, a figure expected to have doubled by December 1991.

It's all the result of "social marketing", a technique that applies commercial sales and marketing skills to public health problems.

Four "Ps" are central to its success: the right product, at the right price, sold in the right place, with the right promotion. These factors solve several problems for developing countries which cannot afford to buy and freely distribute enough condoms for everyone.

"Social marketing recovers some of the costs and it shifts health care from the public sector, which is generally an inefficient segment of their economics," said Dr Peter Lamptey, a Ghanaian physician and director of the US agency Aidstech, which provides financial and technical support to the Prudence campaign.

Careful consumer research in Zaire came up with the name Prudence, a "particularly useful brand name because the message can be interpreted to mean behavioural change beyond condom use", said Mr Carlos Fereros, who headed the Population Services International programme in Zaire. Commercial outlets and local traders increased condom sales fourfold in the first year that Prudence was on the market.

"You can buy Coca-Cola, beer and cigarettes just about anywhere," said Ferreros, pointing to three marketing success stories. "No matter how bad the roads are, no matter how rural the village, there is always someone getting the goods in."

Social marketing also gives consumers access to condoms when they really need them. Prudence is targeted at specific groups thought to be at risk, particularly commercial sex workers and their clients, and its distribution network includes bars, hotels and social clubs.

"There used to be no place to get a condom at midnight," said Fereros, "and people often feel uncomfortable getting condoms from clinics. At a grocery or a bar no one asks them to register."

Market surveys showed that a large population of commercial sex workers and their clients rode the Zaire River barges, so Prudence salesmen took to the docks and boats. Former car-parts salesman Mr Vangu Tsumbu approaches potential customers armed with promotional items such as eye-catching gravity-feed condom dispensers and a wooden phallus to demonstrate proper condom use.

He asks them: "Do you know there is a new disease for which there is no cure?"

Condoms are supplied free by government agencies or donor organisations. This allows wholesalers and merchants to sell them at a lower price than other brands but still make a profit. Retailers generally sell a packet of three condoms for the equivalent of about 30 cents, or a dozen for R1,26 — about half the price of a large bottle of beer.

"Charging modest prices for condoms does not deter use and may even increase demand," said Mr Laurie Liskin, co-author of a comprehensive condom study. "Charging for condoms means that clients are more likely to perceive Prudence as a high-quality product."

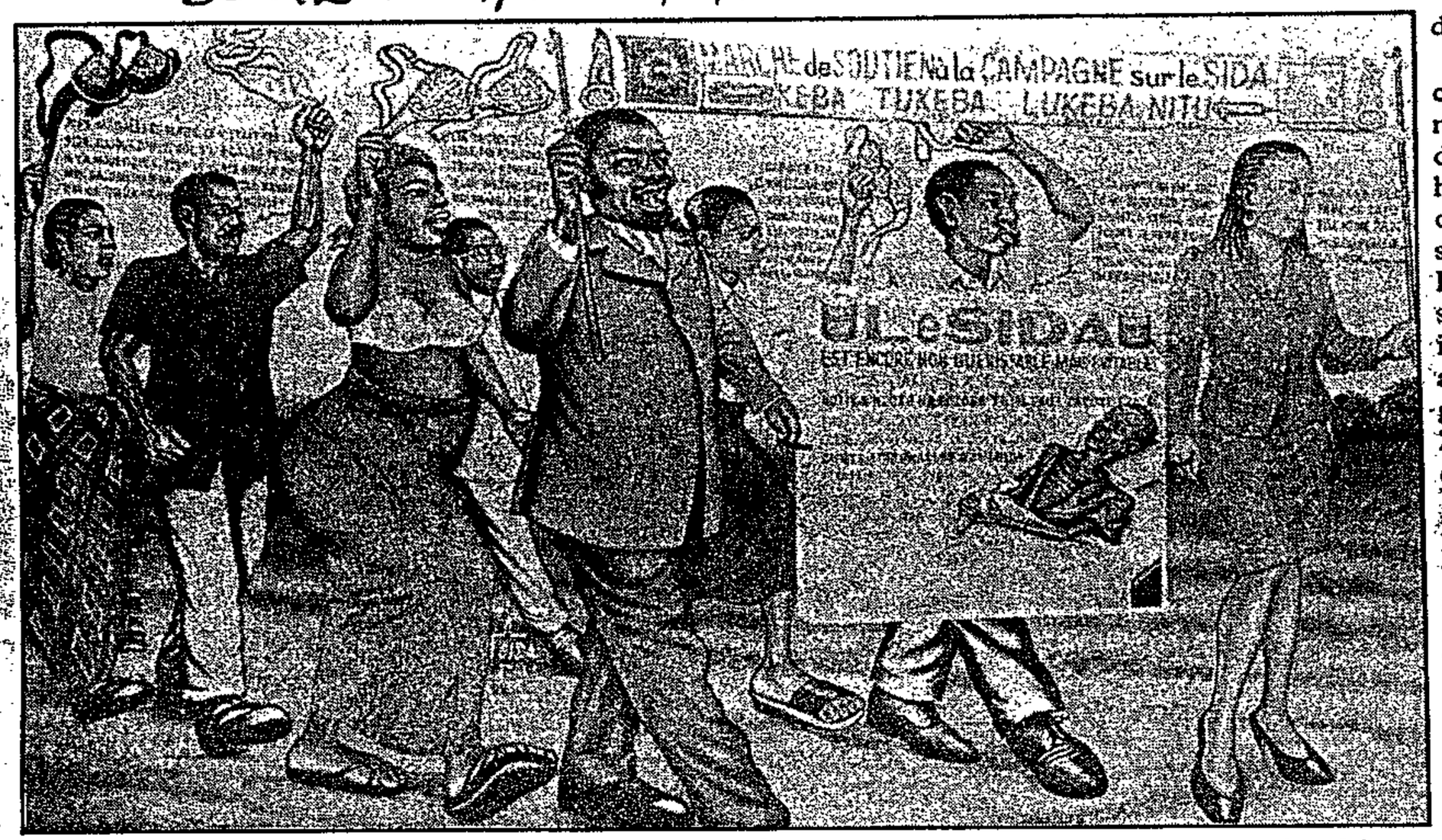
Because government policy bans condom advertising in the mass media, the Prudence campaign devised special promotions which have been highly effective. Bar staff often wear Prudence T-shirts and some bars have Prudence murals. Promotions at fairs and Prudence-sponsored concerts offer prevention information and free condoms, and anyone with a pack of Prudence gets reduced admission. Some of Zaire's top stars have recorded Prudence-sponsored songs for radio.

The number of condoms sold is perhaps the greatest measure of the social marketing success in Zaire, along with the fact that Prudence is now the generic term for condoms. This success has inspired similar programmes in Cameroon, Burundi and eight other African countries as well as in Brazil, Haiti and India. Some programmes designed to combat Aids are now successfully marketing condoms simply for "protection", implying both pregnancy and disease prevention.

But effective social marketing of condoms demands an adequate and predictable supply, and too much success can create shortages, warned Dr Duff Gillespie, director of the US International Development Office of Population.

"The volume of commodities needed is awesome. The ability of donor organisations and governments to maintain it is approaching something of a crisis," he said.

While social marketing may not be a complete solution, the success of initial efforts in Africa offers one of the few clear signs of progress against Aids. — **World Aids**



CONDOM CULTURE: Popular folk artist Cheri Samba portrays Zaire's march to health

Freedom a dream for Zaire

358
Sowetan
1/4/92

KINSHASA - Democracy remains a dream to Zairians, who were allied with the West in the Cold War, while their kinsmen 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 still they cross the river.

Each day, Zairians hide on sand bars, waiting for night to slip across by boat. Any 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 France, which colonised Congo, instilled a sense of democracy and made some effort to create an educated class, while Belgium ruled brutally on the other bank. Both colonies became independent in 1960.

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What do you do when President Mobutu's hens won't lay?

THE PREMIER SOLUTION

ST Times t... 19/4/92 (358)

THE PREMIER GROUP'S ability to do business in Zambia owed much to the nerve of Albert Nelissen, Belgian chairman of its international division.

Nelissen first went to Zambia in the early 80s, when the Zambian government officially disapproved of contact with South Africa. Whites from South Africa were not allowed in. But Nelissen knew a black South African who knew some powerful Zambians, and he set off without a visa.

When he arrived in Lusaka, Zambian officials were there to meet him. The next day he met President Kenneth Kaunda. The meeting went off famously: Nelissen had a way of charming presidents. Kaunda invited him back again; on his second visit he was accompanied by Tony Bloom, the Premier Group's then chairman.

From then on Nelissen was welcome in Zambia. He would fly to Lusaka regularly in the Premier jet, often bringing with him a crate of champagne. He would hire a suite in the Intercontinental Hotel, and stack his champagne in the refrigerator. As visitors started to arrive, the bottles would start emerging.

Like Lonrho, (the British multi-national active in Africa) Premier went to great lengths to win the loyalty of senior politicians.

In the late 80s Nelissen got a call from Zaire: President Mobutu Sese Seko wanted to see him urgently. Nelissen got into the Premier jet and flew halfway up Africa.

The president explained the problem. His new palace in Gbadolite, the village of his birth, was nearly complete. It had marble facades, 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 his garden should be in flower at Christmas, which was just a month or so away.

Nelissen returned to Johannesburg. He bought R2-million worth of flowers. He hired several aircraft. A ready-made garden was dispatched into the middle of Africa, complete with gardeners, to replace the Zairean bush with flower-beds. Everything went to the president's satisfaction; but then he was taken by another fancy. He wanted a chicken farm.

Nelissen had little choice. After all, Premier knew con[illegible] about poultry-ing. 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 everything 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 traumatised 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: one to be tucked under each chicken. "A European company," said Premier chairman Peter Wrighton, "would never have done that."

As my trip with Premier proceeded, the character of Albert Nelissen became its main fascination. The legends that surrounded him suggested an uncanny gift for inspiring trust and confidence.

Even before he led Premier into Africa, Nelissen had had a special way with customers. People who remembered his days as manager of Premier's marketing in Natal claimed that he outwitted rival salesmen in valley after valley.

The subsequent African adventures were clearly in character. But the African exploits had the extra fascination of moral ambiguity.

Nelissen was hobnobbing energetically with the likes of President Mobutu, whose personal fortune was reputedly as big as Zaire's $8-billion (R22-billion) national debt. And Nelissen was selling food to Africa to make money: the bigger his profit margin, the less his impoverished customers would eat.

I first met Nelissen in Lubumbashi. 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 employees 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 [illegible] through the jet door and steady himself on its steps. Nelissen shook hands with his reception committee, grinning and grunting at each one.

Then he handed his passport to a Zairean, a man retained by Premier for his expert knowledge of airport officials and how much each must be paid. Nelissen boarded the jeep. The convoy drove into Lubumbashi, leaving the passport expert to transact his delicate work.

The party reassembled over supper.

Nelissen sat at the head of the table. He spoke only occasionally, with a thick Belgian accent and a watery lisp.

I sat next to him, and tried to get him to talk about his African exploits. He was easily drawn into defending the morality of his position in Africa, which he did mainly by attacking all the other white intruders who had done the continent down.

He railed against rapacious colonists, against ineffectual Western aid donors and especially against "briefcase salesman", a breed of slippery raiders who swarmed across the continent, defrauding the poor Africans of their meagre wealth.

Nelissen denounced the Greek and Lebanese merchants, who wanted only to get rich quickly and then take their money home. He denounced multinational companies who paid their staff in foreign currency, so that the wealth generated by their businesses never went near their African hosts.

IT was easy to see how Nelissen's denunciations won him friends in African governments; but was Premier really any different? He grunted. White Africans, he replied, were committed to the continent; they alone treated its people with any decency at all.

"Us establish in Africa. Paying tax, employing locals, training locals. Us give them a complete package." That was why Premier was so respected in the continent. Now that apartheid was going, Nelissen's good name in Africa was earning him more invitations than he had time to take up.

The presidents of Mauritania and Ghana, he assured me, urgently wanted to see him. So did the vice-president of Kenya. Nelissen's reputation was impeccable. "Us never dropped anyone. Us never — how do you say it in good English? — us never screw anybody."

□ *Extracted from Sebastian Mallaby's book, After Apartheid (Faber and Faber, R82.99)*

Mobutu ready to give up powers

(358) CT 24/4/92

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-I-Bond. — Sapa-Reuter

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 Zairoise de Commerce Exterieur, 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, Zaireans 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-Reuter.

Law governing work on Sundays

STAR 28/4/92

355

If you work on a Sunday or public holiday, the law says you must get extra pay. **Learn and Teach** outlines what your rights are, and how you can get payments that are owing to you.

Thabo is a petrol attendant in East London. He works six days a week. His day off is on Monday. But his employer refuses to pay him extra for working on Sunday.

All workers except farmworkers and domestic workers — are covered by the law, which says they must be paid extra for working on Sundays and public holidays. The law includes the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA) and Industrial Court agreements.

What the law says

● Sunday work

According to the BCEA, no work is allowed in a factory or a shop on a Sunday, unless the employer has written permission from an inspector of the Department of Manpower.

Permission is not needed for emergency work on a Sunday, for example, if a factory is flooded, or there is a fire, or power failure.

Mines and factories that operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, have workers on continuous shift. These work places must apply to the Department for an exemption so that people can work on Sundays and holidays.

If Sunday work is allowed, the employer must pay:

● An ordinary day's wage, if the worker has worked less than four hours.

● Double the ordinary hourly rate for every hour worked, if the worker works more than four hours; or

● 1½ times the ordinary hourly rate for every hour worked, provided the employer gives the worker one day's paid leave within seven days of the Sunday worked.

These provisions do not apply to shops such as cafes that are allowed to trade on Sundays, provided that the shop worker gets a day off the following week.

● **Holidays**

The paid public holidays are: New Year's Day; Good Friday; Ascension Day (fifth Thursday after Easter); Workers' Day; Republic Day (May 31); Day of the Vow (December 16) and Christmas Day.

Workers in shops and offices also have these holidays: Founders' Day (April 6); Easter Monday; Kruger Day (October 10); Day of Goodwill (December 26)

Working on public holidays

According to the BCEA, if you work on a public holiday, you must be paid one day's pay plus:

● A further day's pay, that is double wages; or your ordinary rate for the time worked, whichever is the greater amount; or

● 1⅓ times your ordinary rate for the time you work, plus a day off on full pay within seven days of the holiday on which you worked.

If the public holiday does not fall on a working day, and you do not work on that day, you are not entitled to be paid for the public holiday. If you do work, however, you must be paid as set out above.

Shift workers! If most of your shift falls on the public holiday, you must be paid the public holiday rate. If most of your shift falls aworking day, the ordinary pay rate applies.

If your boss is not following the law, these are the things you can do:

1. You can go to your shop steward who can help you. If you and your fellow workers are not organised, go to a union for help.
2. You can go to the Department of Manpower. They may take legal action against your boss and your boss will have to pay you for the time you worked.
3. If the Department of Manpower refuses to take action, you can go through the courts and sue your boss for the amount of money you are owed. But before you go through this court, you must get a certificate from the Attorney-General saying that the Department of Manpower is not also going to take legal action against your boss. It can be very difficult and take a long time to get this certificate.
4. If your factory is covered by an Industrial Council agreement, the Industrial Council inspectors must be told. They will then investigate your case and prosecute your employer.

For legal advice you can contact the Legal Aid clinics. The telephone numbers are:

● Johannesburg (011) 716-5644
● Pretoria (012) 43-4503
● Bloemfontein (051) 47-9915



At work . . . some garages prefer to employ women as petrol attendants

Refugees flee to the Mountains of Moon

Star 29/4/92 (358)

BUNDIBUGYO (Uganda) — Driven out of Zaire by fighting, more than 30 000 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 Simana Gadembe 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.

30 000 Zaireans flee into Uganda

Sowetan 30/4/92

358

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The rebel Youth Liberation Army is said to have sprung from the better-known Congolese National Movement (MNC) which is linked with the name of Patrice Lumumba, the first prime minister of the Congo (now Zaire) in 1960.

The leadership is not known outside the ranks of the guerilla group.

The rebels have attracted a large following among young people who want to overthrow the regime of President Mobutu Sese Seko, according to reports.

Rebel tactics are said to include hit-and-run attacks on police and army units to capture arms and ammunition for guerilla warfare.

They recently blew up a strategic bridge on the road from the town of Beni to the Ugandan border, apparently to disrupt the movement of the Zairean army.

The refugees say the rebels they met were disciplined.

"They told us they had come to rescue us from Mobutu's repressive government, and from the utter poverty which Zaireans now face," said one.

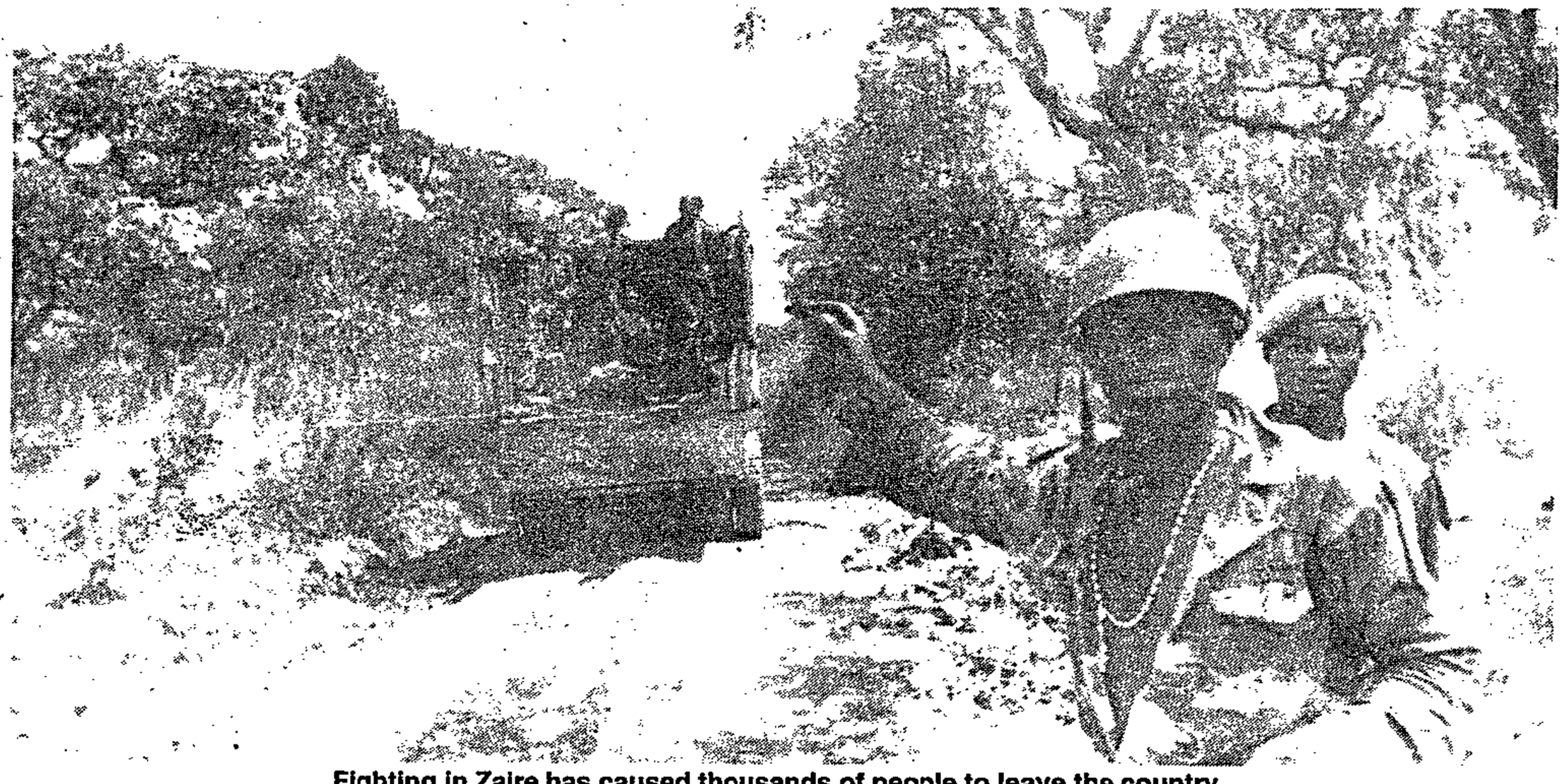
United Nations and Ugandan government officials are working hard to cope with the influx of homeless Zaireans.

But they are hampered by the remoteness of the area. Only a dirt road clinging to the mountainside links Bundibugyo with the rest of Uganda. Drought has created further problems. Food supplies are already inadequate for the local population with no surplus to feed the refugees.

"We are hungry. My people are undernourished, sick and have no possessions," Gadembe told a *Reuter* reporter who visited the area recently.

The UN has brought in food and medical supplies, and efforts are being made to move some of the refugees further away from the Uganda-Zaire border to locations where help can be more easily provided.

Bundibugyo district administrator Mr Joeb Mutanga said up to 20 refugees were still crossing into Uganda each day. - *Sapa-Reuter*



Fighting in Zaire has caused thousands of people to leave the country.

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AFRICA BRIEFS

w\mail 30/4 - 7/5/92

Konare's election assured

■MALI'S main opposition leader, Alpha Oumar Konare, 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 votes cast. His rival, Tieoule Mamadou Konate, won 30,07 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.

w\mail 30/4 - 7/5/92

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.

w\mail 30/4 - 7/5/92

Mobutu praises conference

■ZAIRE's President Mobutu Sese Seko says he is confident that the much-halted 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 Monsengwo Pasinya, who has been one of his most vocal critics.

w\mail 30/4 - 7/5/92

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 Lib-eration of the State of Cabinda (FLEC) raided Cabinda Airport, killed nine government soldiers and destroyed 10 buses belonging to the Cabinda Gulf Oil Company, which operates Cabinda's oil fields.

w\mail 30/4 - 7/5/92

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.

w\mail 30/4 - 7/5/92

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 Mugabe'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.

3393

Radical covets democracy for his people

Zaire visionary looks to the future

Sowetan 7/5/92

(358)

AFRICA is at the turning point of her history with the winds of democracy shaking her from all sides. Mr Etienne Tshisekedi, leader of the radical opposition, the Democratic Union for Social Progress in Zaire and presidential candidate, has given journalist ARTHUR KALOMBO his vision of the future of his country. It is a diplomacy which should not be a source of worry to foreign investors in Zaire.

Question: What has, in your view, been the foreign policy of Zaire during the Second Republic, and how do you see the new Zairian diplomacy in Africa and the world?

Answer: The diplomacy of the Second Republic was characterised by the fact that, knowing they did not have the support of the masses to maintain them in position, the leaders did everything to get support from outside. The policy applied by those in authority was of a kind that sold the interests of the people to strangers.

We plan to apply a policy of development, based essentially on the development of our country, while not neglecting the interests of Western partners who have insisted on real democracy in Zaire.

Question: Many Zairians have died under strange circumstances in some African countries, and Zaire has never done anything to guarantee the lives of her citizens there. Will it be the same in the future, or do you think the rules that govern these so-called relations of good neighbourliness or of African fraternity be reviewed?

Answer: What has happened is quite normal under a regime which is actually based on the blood of Zairians, who it eliminated by the thousands through permanent repressive policies. The society of tomorrow will be a state of law which will respect the human rights of its people which might be infringed upon in other countries.

Priority

Question: International commercial relations are going to increase. How do you judge the foreign investment in Zaire? Will you give priority to the industrial sector or to those in small business?

Answer: Our economic policy will be based on small business, which will need foreign financing as well as internal financing through the intervention of international financial institutions. Concerning investments, we may need big capital investments by private investors. The country will have to make an effort to prohibit illegitimate or black market activities by foreigners, which generally harm the economic interests of the country.

Question: The OAU, like many other organisations in Africa, has met the expectations of its members. What will the new approach of Zaire be towards this OAU?

Answer: The OAU has not achieved itsobjective basically because ost of the African states have submitted to autocatic regimes. Once Zaire has become totally democratic, she will do everything in her power to ensre that these meber states become familiar with democratic systems.

Question: The scandalous absence of norms in everything that has transpired during the Second Republic has caused an inversion of values in all sectors. How do you plan to rehabilitate the morals?

Values

Answer: By mobilising all forms of communication to educate the population as to the values of a civilised modern state.

Question: You have been accused of trying to assume supreme authority. What is your answer?



The world is hopeful that State President FW de Klerk will continue his reforms.

Answer: We have fought against a dictatorship to install democracy. We are convinced that the people of Zaire have become mature enough to practise multiparty democracy. Anyone who wants to govern must submit himself to a democratic vote.

Question: South Africa, with its considerable economic infrastructure, can play a determining role in the future development of Africa. What will your policy be towards SA, knowing that President Mobutu Sese Seko owns an enormous number of possessions there and has always benefited from SA's material and military support?

Answer: It is true that Mobutu collaborated with SA when she practised a racist policy and one of isolation. SA needed dictators like Mobuto who would sell all the interests of their own people to strangers.

Now the whole world is following, with hopeful eyes, the efforts that State President FW de Klerk and ANC president Mr Nelson Mandela are making to create a new SA.

A democratic Zaire of tomorrow will re-establish real diplomatic relations at ambassadorial level with SA; as well as intensive economic co-operation, because our countries have enormous economic potential which coupled could be a determining factor for the development of Africa.

Question: Zairians in SA are in a precarious position. Many are illegal immigrants in the country, not because they do not want to submit to SA law but because the SA Government seems indisposed towards granting them resident visas. What do you think of this?

Answer: We could in the future ask of SA what we have been asking of Western countries where thousands of our compatriots have found refuge — their comprehension.

Regrettable

The Zairians have been forced into exile — a situation created by a permanent insecurity they lived with because of possible conviction which forced them to find safety in other countries. It is regrettable that most of the doctors, engineers, teachers and businessmen have left the country to face diverse problems in certain foreign countries.

Now, if there was real democracy in Zaire, none of these citizens would have left this country, where there is so much to be done, contrary to what false propaganda would have us believe.

That is why we would hope to see SA officials consider the possibility of granting Zairians in their territory status in accordance with international law, until we reap the fruit of our efforts to totally democratise Zaire.

Question: In the meantime, the Zairians have formed a Zaire-SA association (ASBL Amicable Zaire - Afrique du Sud) to help each other in this country. A word to them?

Answer: Whether in SA or elsewhere, what I can say to them is to behave in a manner which will preserve the dignity of the Zairians, and to leave an image of people from a country which prepares to create future SA relations of frank collaboration based on friendship and the equality of interest.

We, the members of the Union Democratique pour le progress social (Democratic Union for Social Progress) deliver to De Klerk a message of congratulations for the resounding success that he has achieved in the referendum of 17 March and we support this great African who is committed to change and to the democratisation of South Africa.

De Klerk has started a new political era not only in South Africa, but also in the whole of Africa.

Zairean money-changers get short shrift

358

STAR 13/5/92

KINSHASA — Zaire's punch-drunk currency rallied slightly against the US dollar yesterday as money-changers heeded 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

ST Times (Gauteng) 24/5/92

A ZAIRE-SOUTH Africa Business Association has been formed to promote trade and business links. (140)

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. (358)

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. (358)

Backers of the Zaire/SA Business Association (Zsaba) include Premier Milling, National Sorghum Beer and Banque Commerciale Zairoise. BIDaily 26/5/92

Zsaba will be chaired by National Sorghum Beer's CE Mahale Mayanele.

Founder Jermoe 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 Zsaba that aimed to organise conferences that would attract businessman 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

Sowetan 8/6/92

By JOSHUA RABOROKO (358)

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 Zairean 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.

The slavish image is slowly changing, reports **Cindy Shiner** from Kinshasa

Press gets off its knees in Africa

STAR 19/6/92

358

TWO years ago, Zairean newspapers were barely allowed to mention President Mobutu Sese Seko's name. Today, they dare to print banner headlines like "Mobutu in Hell".

Mr Mobutu, who has ruled this central African country for 27 years, freed the press (but not radio or TV) as part of a pledge in 1990 to install multi-party democracy. Zaire now has more than 15 daily or weekly newspapers.

Zaireans are eager for news from independent sources. Residents of Kinshasa photocopy newspapers for friends who cannot afford to buy their own. A dozen or more people often can be seen huddling around newspapers laid out on the sidewalk and held down with stones.

An aggressive, pro-democracy press also is appearing elsewhere on the continent.

"It is because of the journalists that everything has turned out so badly," said Mathieu Kerekou of Benin, the first leader ousted in elections after demands for democracy began in Africa three years ago.

Freddy Duku, an editor of the newspaper Elima, said: "It is because of us that there is a national conference now (on multi-party democracy) in Zaire."

Elima's offices were bombed twice when unpaid soldiers went on a looting spree throughout the capital in October 1991.

Soldiers harass newspaper vendors from time to time and take their papers away. Sometimes, journalists are arrested.

"When they arrest you, the first thing you must know is they are going to beat you," said Katambwa Masiya of Umoja, one of Zaire's oldest opposition voices. He said he had been arrested at least five times.

"We, as journalists, we have the duty to instruct people about what is democracy," he added.

Reporters and editors have been detained in Ivory Coast, Benin, Kenya, Sierra Leone and Ghana in recent months on charges ranging from sedition to insulting the head of state.

But newspapers rejoicing in new freedoms sometimes offend more than their governments.

Ngefa Atondoko, president of Zaire's Association for the Defence of Human Rights said: "They're too free and it is becoming dangerous, because at any time a journalist can put your name in the newspaper and denigrate you."

Mr Atondoko said his association would propose a law permitting people who have been defamed to sue.

"There is much greater freedom of the press now in Africa, but a lack of professionalism," said Abdoulaye Ndlaga Sylla, director of the West African Committee for the Defence of Press Freedom in Dakar, Senegal.

"Many of these papers are just party organs. Often, when they have no information, they just make things up." — Sapa-AP. □

Mobutu's men go on looting spree in central Kinhasa

358

Sowetan 29/6/92



PRESIDENT MOBUTO SESE SEKO

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

(358)

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 1,500 people could lose their jobs.

Petro-Zaire last month seized the stocks and took over petrol stations.

Petro-Zaire said it wanted to keep the price of fuel down and that it would make up for losses.

Birmingham Post 29/6/92

Africa Watch reports on continuing human rights violations in Zaire

Mobutu set on keeping power

STAR 9/7/92.

(358)

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, Zairean 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 Mosengwo, and the conference he leads, 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 prevarications, 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 Zairean 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 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 47-page report by the American Human Rights organisation, Africa Watch.*

AFRICA

AFRICA BRIEFS

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. In the past year tensions have built up between Mali's various ethnic groups, especially between black Africans and the Arab populations. Radio Liberte, based in the capital Bamako, said blacks in the Saharan city of Gao launched a broad attack against Arabs, Moors and Tuaregs.

Banda defends detention record

■MALAWI Life President Hastings Kamuzu Banda publicly defended his government's record of detentions of political opponents. The 92-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 Malawian 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."

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 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.

Mobutu challenged

■THE chairman of Zaire's National Pro-Democracy Conference asserted it 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 Zaire 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 Zaire 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.

Lumumba kicked out of Zaire

DAR ES SALAAM — Emillio 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-AFP. (358) (386)

27/7/78

New proposals

KINSHASA - Compromise proposals to lead Zaire to multiparty rule have been presented to the country's pro-democracy conference. - *Sapa-Reuter.*

Sowetan 3/8/92 (358)

Zaire may become Republic of Congo

(358)

BRUSSELS — Zaire's national conference voted yesterday to change the country's name to the Republic of Congo, Zairean 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.

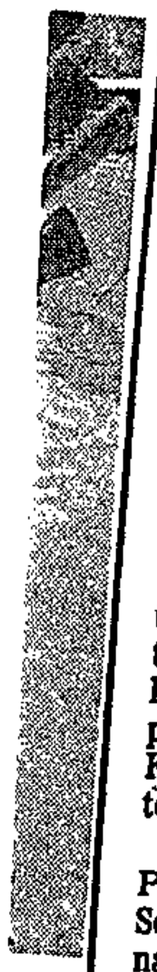
The move to change the country's name could cause some confusion, given that the name Congo is used by Zaire's northwestern neighbour. — Sapa-Reuter.

Business Day 5 Aug 92

Zaire reverts to Republic of Congo

Winmail 118 - 13/8/92 (358)

●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 Mobuto 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

KINSHASHA — 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 redoubtable 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. — Sapa-Reuter.

NEWS IN BRIEF

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 $1,29m 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.

REPORTS: Sapa-Reuter.

New premier pledges rule of law for Zaire

STAR 17/8/92 (358) 17/8/92

KINSHASA — Zaire's new prime minister, opposition stalwart Etienne Tshisekedi, promised 12 000 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 the crowd.

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 organise 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 organise 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 organise early elections. — Sapa-AP-Reuter.

rozen discovery . . . tourists at the weekend find monkey remains and the wre
the French Alps on January 24 1966. The plane was carrying 117 people and

STAR 18/8/92

358

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 Monsengwo Pasinya.

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 multi-party elections.

The conference's choice of Mr Tshisekedi to replace Nguza Karl-I-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 1980 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.

Pick 'n



STAR 18/8/92

358

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Ethnic strife threatens Zaire (358)

■ZAIRE is in danger of becoming Africa's Yugoslavia, torn apart by ethnic strife, former prime minister Nguza Karl-I-Bond has warned. Nguza 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 Nguza, 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.

W\mail 28/8 - 3/9/92.

Africa in brief

Sowetan 31/8/92 (358)

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?

STAR 3/9/92 (358)

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 1980 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 Democratic et le Progre 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 1985, 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 the modalities for free elections to be held in no more than eight months' time.

Mr Mobutu, in accepting the appointment, promised him his "frank 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 consitution, 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. □

Mobutu in election call

KINSHASA - President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire said elections should be held within six months to end more than two years of political instability.

It was not clear what kind of elections Mobutu was proposing, but he said a referendum on the constitution should be held soon.

EXCLUSIVE

SA dogs of war rush to aid Mobutu

By JOCELYN MAKER (358)

ZAIRE'S embattled President Mobutu Sese Seko is recruiting South African mercenaries to protect him against an uprising in his country. ST Times 20/9/92 /

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 J Breytenbach — fuelling 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 R12 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

(358)

KINSHASA — The government of former prime minister Nguza Karl iBond 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 $2m, according to the report. B10A1 3/9/92.

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.

SA mercenaries (358)

S|Times 20/9/92

From Page 1

Kinshasa for the operation — known as Operation Zaire Two — and another mercenary identified as Adjutant Greyling is already there.

The unit's headquarters are in the Ave De La Paix off the Ave Kasuvubu in Kinshasa. It is understood an initial payroll of R5-million has been approved.

The operation was apparently set up in May this year when Major Chadwick visited Zaire and met General Malambo. He also spoke on the phone to President Mobutu, who said that if the political negotiations now under way failed the country would be in big trouble.

The mercenaries have been promised vehicles with gun mountings, automatic weapons, mortars, phosphorus grenades, rocket launchers, machine-guns and ammunition. They also have a tentative assurance of helicopter support if needed.

But it is clear from correspondence between Zaire and the Johannesburg office that the mercenary group will present itself as an ordinary security company.

Although its first task will be intelligence-gathering and patrols, it will be available to assist the government in putting down any insurrection.

The Sunday Times source said: "The office is in constant contact with Zaire and the last force are waiting on standby to be called up.

"They will meet at an arranged place the night before they leave on a Dakota, which will be flown to South Africa by one of the mining companies in Zaire."

Mr Bob Watson, code-named 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".

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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 1961.

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.

The first batch of mercenaries, many of them former 32 Battalion 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 action. 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 liaising with the Zairean 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

To Page 2



WEDDING BELLS ... presenter David H

'Nutty' Davic to tie the k

By SHARON CHETTY

TELEVISION personality David Hall-Green and fiancée Marsja 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 Marsja 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."

in Fairwood, J

"I had resig growing into a I even started torian croch Marsja.

"We met David was get from his first divorcée of 20

"Our love f has grown slo ily over the pa Both are adam be no childre

"I'm 50-so

Mercenaries linked to Libyan assignment

STAR 21/9/92

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 Compaigne Internationale obtained the Libyan recruitment lists and set up the Zaire operation.

Colonel Jan Breytenbach, formerly commander of the disbanded SADF 32 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.

WORLD AND AFRICA NEWS World danger

Furore over name change

Sowefan 21/9/92

■ **Zaire to be known as Congo?:** (358)

ABIDJAN - Zaire's national conference has again voted to change the name of the country back to Congo, a decision calculated to enrage 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-Reuter*.

Black market dollar dips

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 380 000 zaires on the black market compared with 850 000 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. — Reuter.

Cabinda oil hit by strike

(358)

Star 30/9/92

By James Tomlins
Star Foreign Service

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 Jose Eduardo 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, Flec and Fac, have mobilised about 2 000 guerillas 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 Madeca 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 Flec-Fac leaders Henriques Tiago N'Zita 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.

B10 Aug 6/10/97

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 Etienne Tshisekedi.

"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-Reuter.

Zaire South 31/10 - 4/11/97

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. (358)

The president dispatched the soldiers after Tshisekedi charged the bank's governor with responsibility for the

BRIEFS

(358) South 31/10-4/11/92

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.

news in brief

'Zaire, SA aiding Unita' 358

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. Sowetan 12/11/92.

"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

358

KAMPALA - Nearly 500 Zaireans have crossed into western Uganda to escape government soldiers in the eastern district of Beni, a senior United Nations official said yesterday.

Ahmed Farah, Kampala representative of the UN High Commission for

Sowetan 26/11/92.

Sowetan 26/11/92

358

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

(358)

KINSHASA — A confidential report prepared for Zaire's government costs diamond smuggling with official complicity at more than $300m 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. Blon 27/11/92

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

US warns world community to act before it is too late, reports **Colin Legum**

Zaire 'soon a second Somalia'

STAR 8/12/92.

(358)

ONCE it was Lebanon, now Somalia is the metaphor for chaos, carnage and civil strife. When Herman Cohen, the US Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, warns President Mobutu that Zaire is heading towards becoming a second Somalia it is time for the international community to act before it is too late.

Speaking on the Voice of America, Cohen accused Mobutu of reneging on the specific promises he personally gave him last August that he would transfer all the functions of government, including the Finance Ministry and the Central Bank, to the interim government headed by Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi.

His failure to do as he promised has created a total impasse between Mobutu and the Sovereign National Conference on the transition, which chose Tshisekedi to head an interim government. Its two priority functions are to prepare for free elections and to rebalance the economy.

"If the president does not relinquish control of the Ministry of Finance and the Central Bank, it is impossible for the interim government to rebalance the economy," Cohen declared.



President Mobutu . . . unable to pay his army units.

One immediate, dangerous result has been the failure to pay all the army units, and to pay some with virtually worthless currency. They cannot feed their families, so, said Cohen, they have been driven to pillage. There have already been several serious incidents of looting in Mbuyi Mayi, Bukavu and elsewhere. More looting can be expected.

Since Mobutu has been left in charge of security, he is responsible for preventing and stamping out looting; this he has failed to do. Nor can anything effective be done to redress the genuine grievances of the soldiery unless they are paid promptly and properly. But the interim government cannot pay them without having control of finances — and this is being blocked by Mobutu.

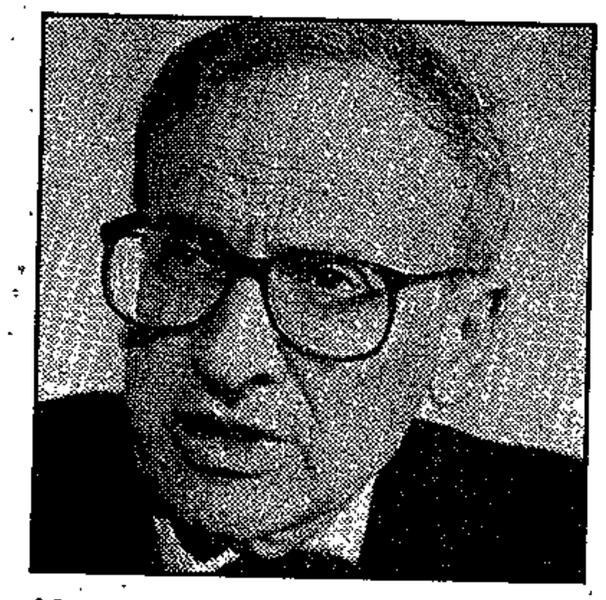
Another major looming danger is the rekindling of ethnic conflict by the former Prime Minister, the discredited Nguza Karl i Bond, who has been making inflammatory speeches in his home province, Shaba, formerly known as Katanga. It was the bid by Katanga to secede that created the critical crisis in Zaire immediately after it achieved its independence.

Cohen did not mince his words in condemning Nguza: "He wants to do the same as in Yugoslavia: ethnic cleansing. He wants to expel all the Kasai Lubas from Shaba. So, it is a situation of complete chaos there."

Some of the worst excesses occurred during the attempt by Katanga to secede between the Kasai Lubas and other Katangese. There is now an imminent danger of this recurring.

Cohen put the responsibility for the failure to curb the threatening ethnic violence on Mobutu whose representative in Katanga, the governor, is co-operating with Nguza. "If the president does nothing, I will have the impression," declared Cohen, "that he supports everything Nguza is doing."

He went on to say: "If President Mobutu does not do something very quickly ... I fear the worst ... We are very worried here in Washington ... Unless the president fulfills his promise to hand over the control of all economic resources to the interim government and acts to curb the activities of Nguza and the governor of Shaba, Zaire will fall into chaos and history is going to say that he is responsible."



Herman Cohen . . . Mobutu reneging on all his promises.

Asked by his interviewer on the Voice of America what could be done to force Mobutu to respect his word, Cohen replied: "For the moment, not a lot. But Zaire cannot expect international co-operation to redress its economy. I am speaking not only for the United States but for other sponsors as well."

Meanwhile, the Sovereign National Conference (CNS), under the chairmanship of Monsignor Laurent Mongsengwo Pasinya, has completed its work to convert Zaire into a viable democracy.

It has agreed to revert to calling Zaire by its former name, the Congo, and has resolved to create a federal system of government with a two-chamber parliamentary system. Criteria were established for the appointment and election of top government posts. And it has decided to liquidate the property of Mobutu's ruling party, the People's Movement of the Revolution (MPR).

The immediate question, though, is whether the new Federal Republic of the Congo is going to emerge as a fledgling multiparty parliamentary democracy, or whether it is to go down in violent chaos as a second Somalia. The one encouraging feature in this darkening picture is the strong lead being given by the Americans who were formerly the strongest backers of Mobutu. □

... participants in economic activities between the two attendance sessions.

Sowetan 11/12/92

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*

358

'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 the 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 Oorganisation of African Unity. — Sapa-AFP.

which is Soukin south of Mogadishu.

World in brief

Famine after floods

Sowefan 21/12/92

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 Kenya army was being asked to organise an airlift.

Food for Baidoa

Sowefan 21/12/92

MOGADISHU - United Nations trucks carrying 300 tonnes of food left under armed US escort for the Somali town of Baidoa.

Two helicopter gunships hovered above the convoy of 20 white trucks, which carried enough wheat to feed 100 000 hungry mouths for a week. It will be the first big convoy of food to reach Baidoa, the "City of Death" at the epicentre of Somalia's famine, since July. The last convoy, on November 11, was hijacked on the outskirts of the southern town.

RPP rules Djibouti

DJIBOUTI - The ruling party of President Hassan Gouled Aptidon 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

358

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.

Sowefan 21/12/92

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

Sowefan 21/12/92

■ Shuttle diplomacy to prevent war:

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.*

(358)

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 Kinshasa said soldiers from the Chinese-trained 41st Brigade started systematically stripping the town, 1 200km northeast of the capital, on Sunday night.

Sunday 22/12/97

Mutinous soldiers loot officers' homes in Zaire

358
ARG 23/12/92

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 1 280 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 340 000 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 melée.

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 familes.

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.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS Fighting reported in eastern Zaire ● Jet broke apart and exploded

Zaireans fleeing into Uganda - inhabitants

Sowetan 23/12/92

■ Congolese Liberation Movement reportedly attacked military targets and set ambushes:

358

KAMPALA - Nearly 5 000 Zaireans fled to western Uganda to escape fighting between rebels and government troops in eastern Zaire, residents at the remote Ugandan border town of Kasese said yesterday.

Ahmed Farah, Kampala representative of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, said he had heard of the influx but could not confirm the figures.

"We have heard of Zaireans crossing into western Uganda but until we dispatch our team to verify the situation, I am unable to give the correct figures or say exactly what is happening," Farah said.

Ugandans in Kasese said up to 5 000 people crossed at the weekend and feared the numbers would swell soon.

The refugees were quoted as saying Zairean government troops had fought pitched gun battles with a little known rebel group in several villages of eastern Zaire along the Uganda border.

The refugees said rebels of the Congolese Liberation Party attacked several military camps in eastern Zaire, laid ambushes and set huts ablaze during the fighting.

Zairean dissidents in Kampala and close to the PLC said the fighting was part of a push to topple President Mobutu Sese Seko.

Mobutu sidestepped attempts to unseat him by groups demanding more democracy. The PLC, a left-wing offshoot of the Congolese National Movement founded by the late nationalist Patrice Lumumba, has been fighting a low-level guerilla war against Mobutu since 1985.

Lumumba was prime minister of the Congo (later Zaire) after independence from Belgium in 1960. He was assassinated in the same year.

Security sources said the PLC's activities have been confined to northern and eastern Zaire.

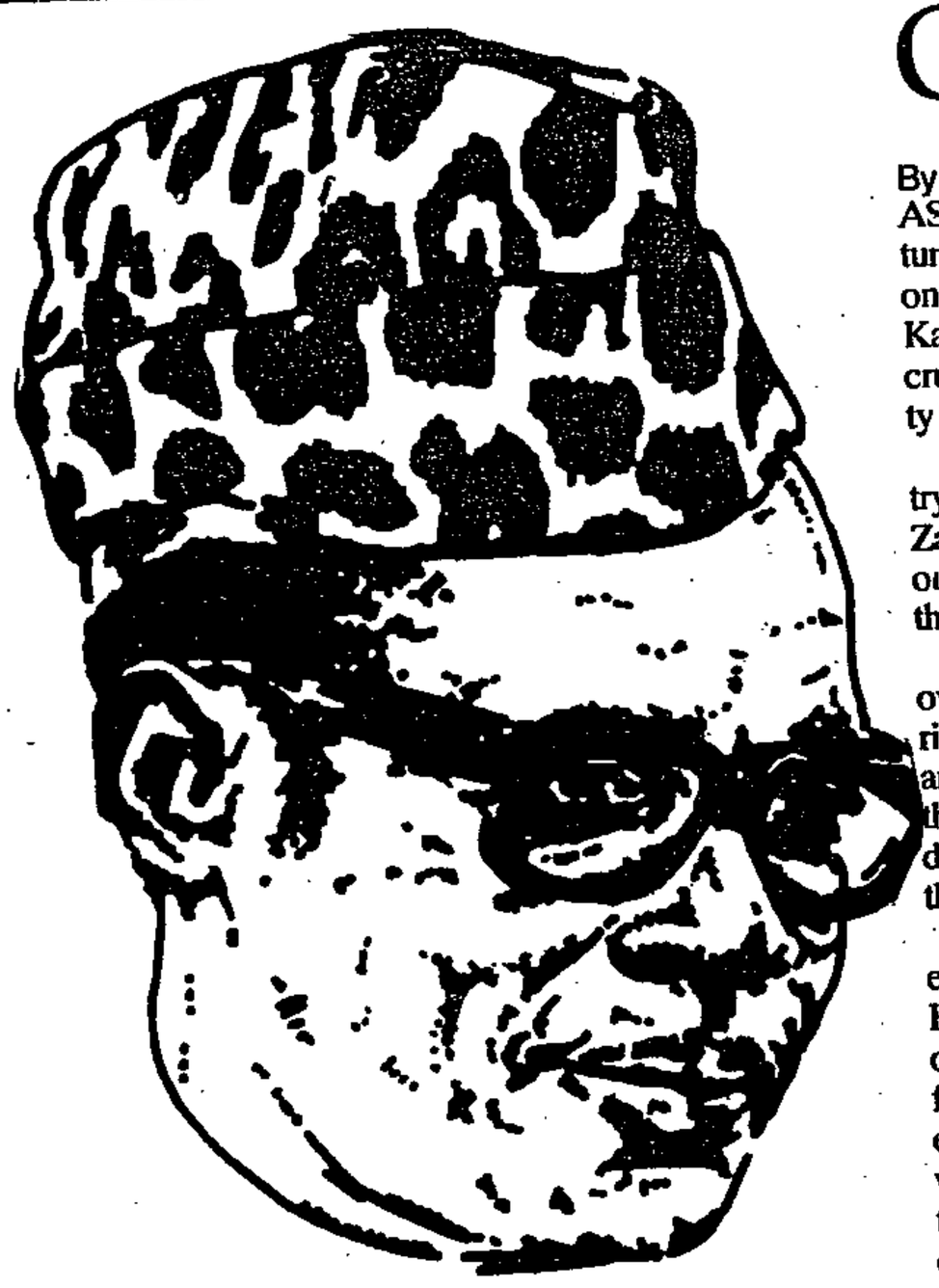
Uganda is already home to around 5 000 Zairean refugees who fled the eastern district of Beni in May after government troops fought an unknown rebel group also claiming to follow the teachings of Lumumba. - *Sapa-Reuter.*

ZAIRE — GENERAL

1993

Orphans of Zaire's 'cleansing' pogrom

W/Mail 8/1-14/1/93. (358)



Dangerous game ... Mobutu Sese Seko

By CHRIS MCGREAL: Likasi

AS the weekly train pulls past the stacks of furniture and thousands of people jostling for position on the platform at Likasi railway station, Kabwe Kand-Kand faces a stark choice: should he join the crush to escape, or should he risk his family's safety by remaining here another week?

Kabwe is one of about 40 000 Kasaian refugees trying to flee the "ethnic cleansing" programme in Zaire's southern Shaba province. Those not burnt out of their homes have brought along everything they own.

As the train nears the station, refugees scramble over the furniture to get a grip on one of the carriages. The train has room for only 2 000 and most are left to wait. Three people were asphyxiated in the crush for last week's train. Typically, a dozen die on the five-day journey north to Kasai, a place they are told is home but which few have seen.

The man immediately responsible for this misery is Shaba's governor, Kyungu wa-Kumwanza. He would have outsiders believe that the expulsion of Kasaians is born of Shaba's deep-rooted desire for secession, which led to United States and United Nations military intervention in the 1960s in what was then known as Katanga. Though various tribal groups are caught up in the confrontation, all concerned talk only in terms of Kasaians and Katangese.

Kyungu paints a picture of Kasaians that would be familiar to Asians driven from Uganda or Jews oppressed in Europe. The industrious and business-minded Kasaians are portrayed as exploitative and money-grubbing. The governor considers them lucky to be allowed to leave alive.

"The Kasaians must go and then the Katangese can have the nice jobs and nice houses," he says. "The Kasaians have looked after themselves, they have done nothing for us. So they must go. If they don't, we will make them pay."

But the persecution amounts to little more than a cynical political ploy to bolster President Mobutu Sese Seko's waning authority. In the increasingly divisive world of Zairean politics, Mobutu's opponents were able to appoint their man, Etienne Tshisekedi, as prime minister in August. Tshisekedi is from Kasai; the man he replaced, Nguza Karl-i-Bond, is from Shaba. Kyungu, a Mobutu appointee, is a close ally of Karl-i-Bond.

Mobutu hopes his divide-and-rule tactics will allow him again to claim that only he can hold Zaire together. It is a dangerous game, and the toll of human misery and economic instability is proving high.

Weeks of verbal denunciations by Kyungu turned to physical attacks in September in the three cities where people of Kasai origin account for more than one-third of the population: Likasi, Lubumbashi and Kolwezi. Dozens died and tens of thousands have since been driven out of their homes by organised gangs.

The Kasaians were originally brought to Shaba by colonial Belgian mine owners who considered them better workers than the Katangese. The Kasaians soon rose in stature and importance within the industry and branched out to other businesses. By independence, Kasaians were a crucial element of Shaba's economy.

Kyungu likes to equate Kasaians with colonisers. "Let's stop the Kasai colonisation of Katanga," he railed in one of his radio speeches, before demanding that Kasaians be dismissed from their jobs at the state-owned copper mining house, Gecamine, which provides the financial life blood of Shaba and Zaire.

Gecamine is already in serious trouble, its finances bled dry by Mobutu and unable to repay foreign loans. Production is less than half its potential. Expelling the skilled Kasaians is a further blow.

Octogenarian Mukuba Valentin, whose home was burnt down, sits alone in front of a hessian shack near the Likasi station. "The first who is responsible is Mobutu," he says bitterly. "He doesn't like his people. He says he is father of the nation. If he was a good father, he would visit his children. His attitude shows he doesn't care about the nation." — The Guardian

Orphans of Zaire's 'cleansing' pogrom

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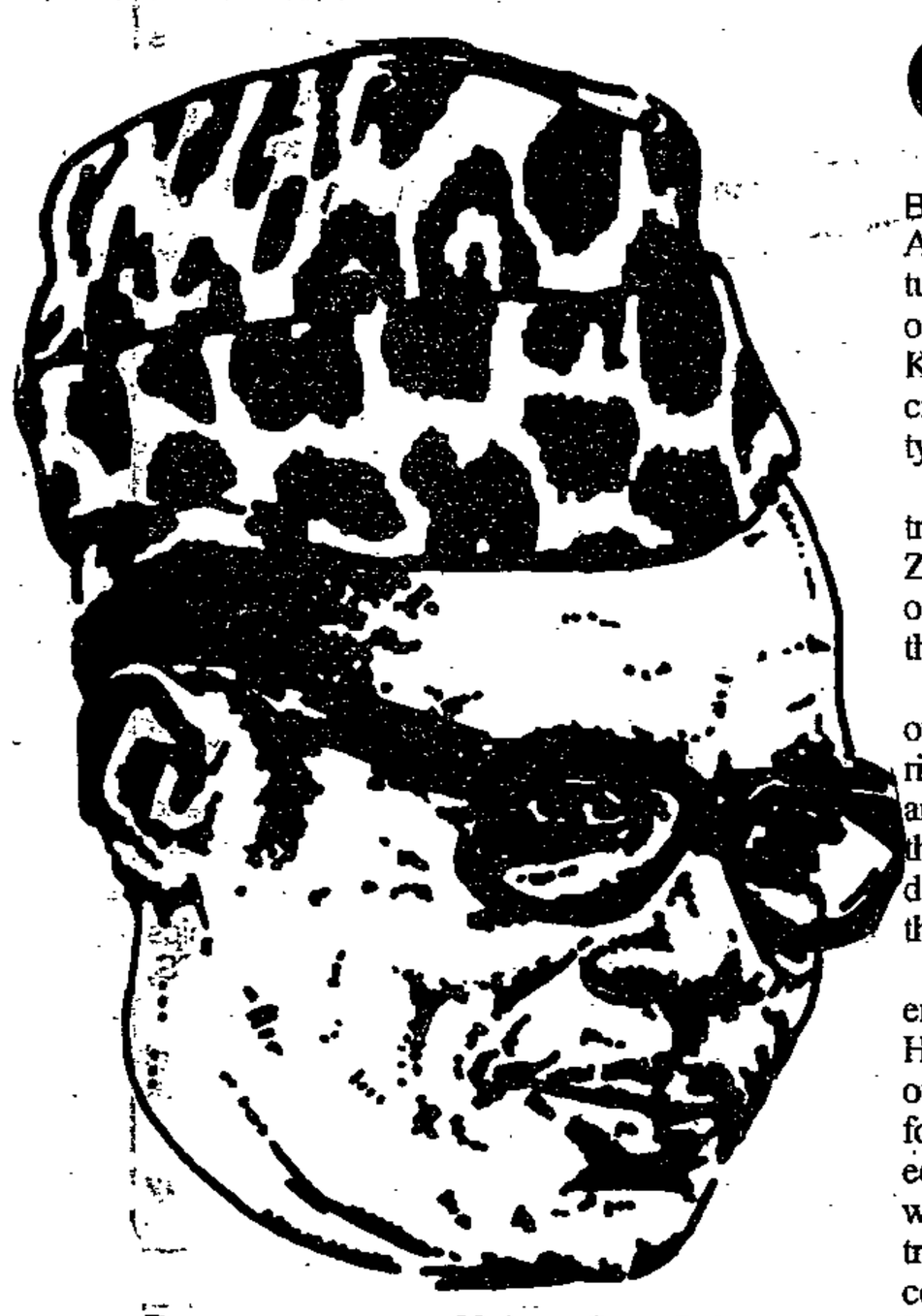

Dangerous game ... Mobutu Sese Seko

By CHRIS MCGREAL: **Likasi**

AS the weekly train pulls past the stacks of furniture and thousands of people jostling for position on the platform at Likasi railway station, Kabwe Kand-Kand faces a stark choice: should he join the crush to escape, or should he risk his family's safety by remaining here another week?

Kabwe is one of about 40 000 Kasaian refugees trying to flee the "ethnic cleansing" programme in Zaire's southern Shaba province. Those not burnt out of their homes have brought along everything they own.

As the train nears the station, refugees scramble over the furniture to get a grip on one of the carriages. The train has room for only 2 000 and most are left to wait. Three people were asphyxiated in the crush for last week's train. Typically, a dozen die on the five-day journey north to Kasai, a place they are told is home but which few have seen.

The man immediately responsible for this misery is Shaba's governor, Kyungu wa-Kumwanza. He would have outsiders believe that the expulsion of Kasaians is born of Shaba's deep-rooted desire for secession, which led to United States and United Nations military intervention in the 1960s in what was then known as Katanga. Though various tribal groups are caught up in the confrontation, all concerned talk only in terms of Kasaians and Katangese.

Kyungu paints a picture of Kasaians that would be familiar to Asians driven from Uganda or Jews oppressed in Europe. The industrious and business-minded Kasaians are portrayed as exploitative and money-grubbing. The governor considers them lucky to be allowed to leave alive.

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Zaireans put Jo'burg back on world map

SOUTH 16/1 - 20/11 . 93 .

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**:

DEEP 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 Phillipe 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.

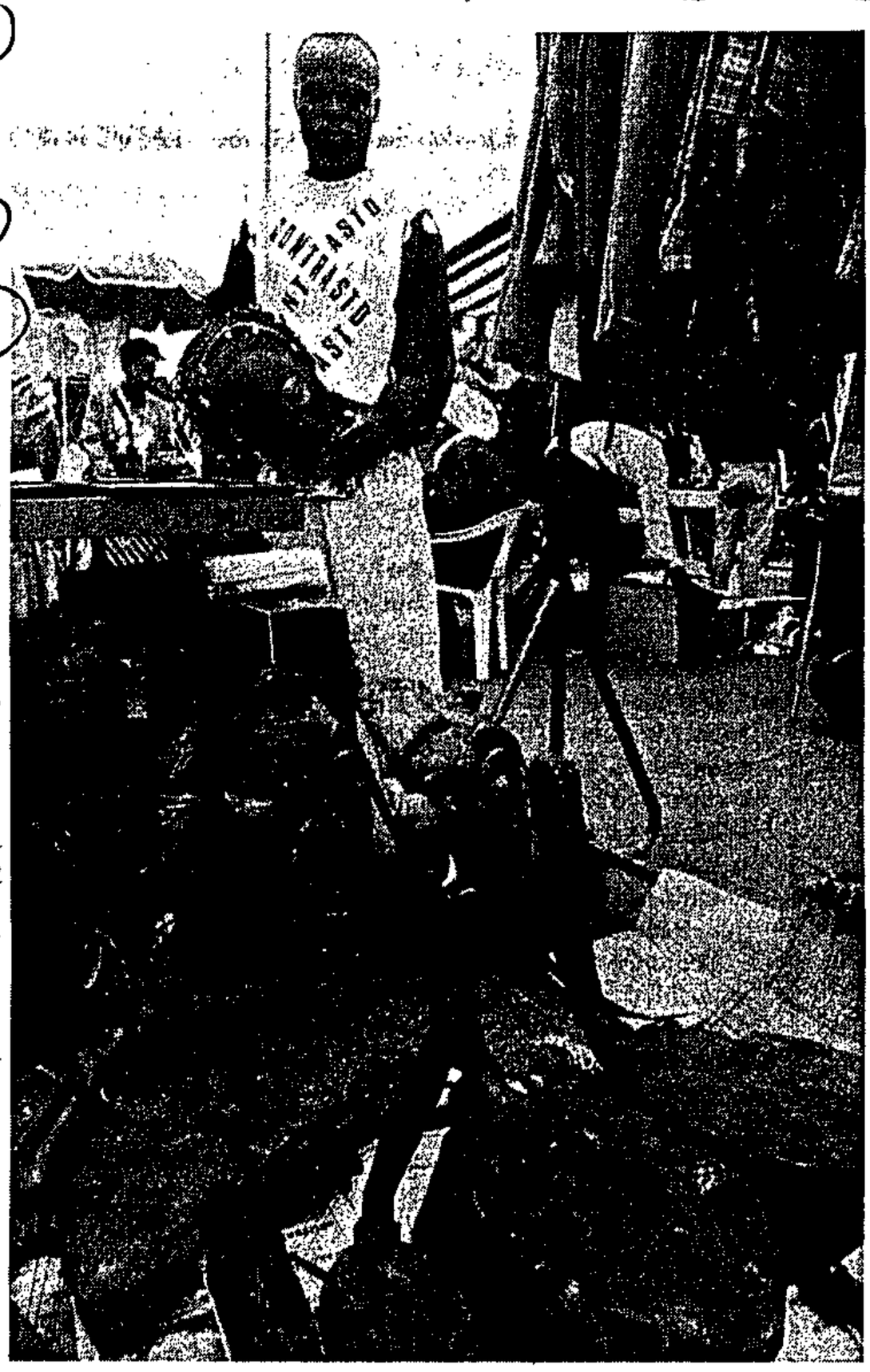
They say they have made contact with black and white South Africans, and have not encountered any racism. Nevertheless, the Zairean community remains a close one, linguistically isolated from the rest of Johannesburg life. Newcomers fresh off the plane from Kinshasa can find a home and support from other 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 fleamarket 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.

Phillipe 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.

Phillipe, 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.



MADE IN ZAIRE: Phillipe Shamamba with the masks he imports

Fleeing Congo terror

(358) ARGT 30/1/93

■ 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 street 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 sese Seko 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 5-million 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 looting 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 looting 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

(350)
CT30/1/93

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 Utexco 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 Maele, was also killed. — Sapa-AFP

France, Belgium step in

STAR 30/11/93.

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 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 Sese Seko and troops backing a pro-democracy movement.

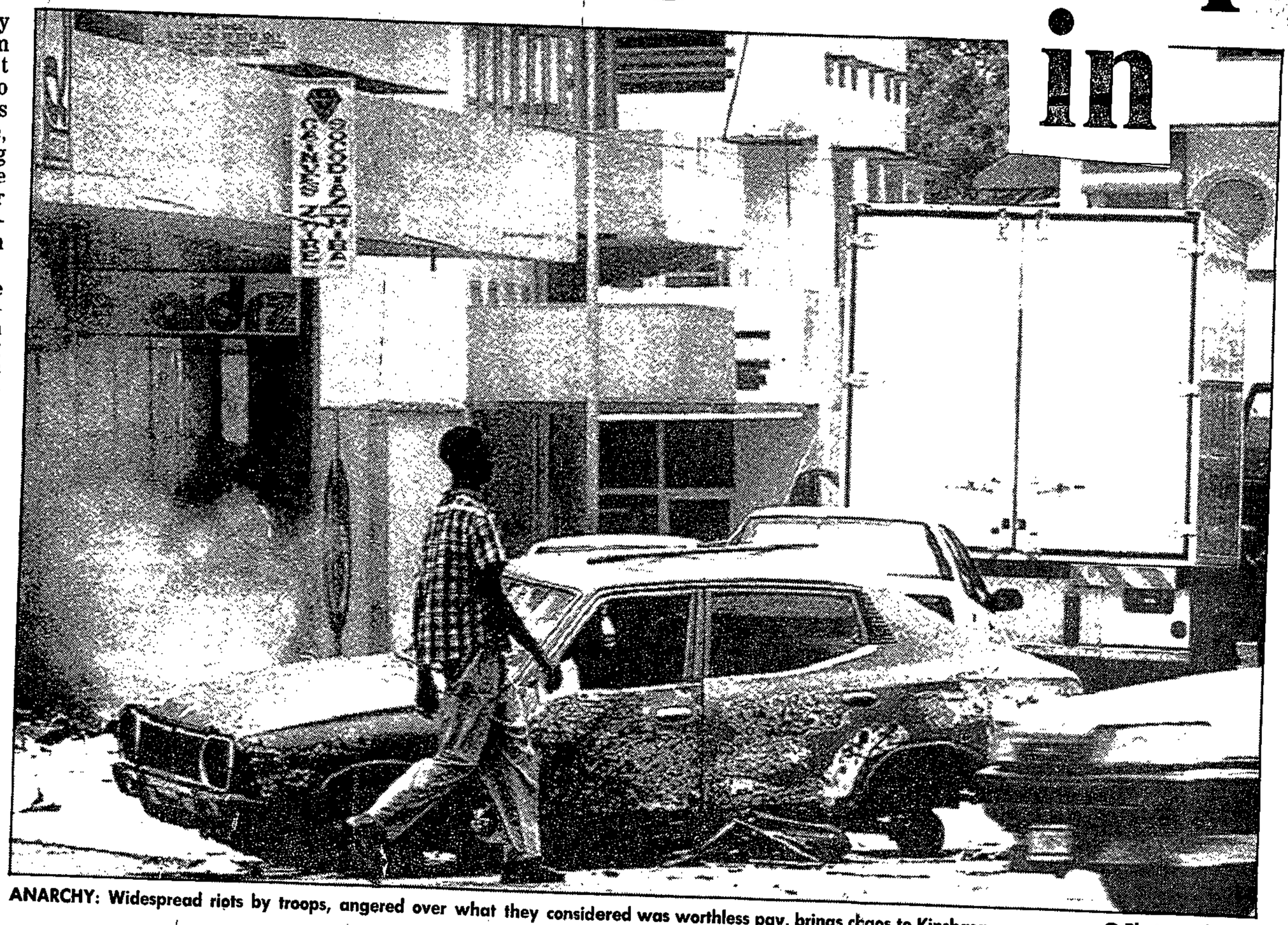
"It seems we are heading for new confrontation within the army," said Foreign Minister Willy Claes of Belgium, the former colonizer of Zaire.

Soldiers revolted on Thursday when they were paid in 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 there 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.



ANARCHY: Widespread riots by troops, angered over what they considered was worthless pay, brings chaos to Kinshasa. ● Photograph: AFP

Second day of rioting by mutinous Zairean soldiers.

STAR 30/11/93

358

ROBERT WELLER

Three of the dead at Galiema 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" directed at the embassy, French Defense Minister Pierre Joxe said.

Another Frenchman was shot by troops ransacking the textile factory where he worked, and 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 1 500 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 hunkered 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.

Claes 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.

NEWS IN BRIEF

(358)

Belgians evacuated from Zaire

BRAZZAVILLE — Up to 300 foreigners who escaped from riots which began on Thursday in the Zairean capital Kinshasa were on their way to Europe yesterday in a Belgian evacuation. 9/DM 11/2/93

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

STAR 1/2/93. (358)

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.

Star 24/2/93 (358)

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 Belgian, 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 R6.

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-Reuter.

Meetings banned in Kinshasa

GT 2/2/93 (358)

KINSHASA. — The governor of Zaire's tense capital banned all political meetings and public gatherings yesterday after riots in which at least 65 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 DSP 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-Reuter, Telegraph



INTERNATIONAL

.. AFRICA AT WAR... AFRICA AT WAR.

Zaire calm shattered by gunfire

358

ARG 3/2/93

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 Mukendi, 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.

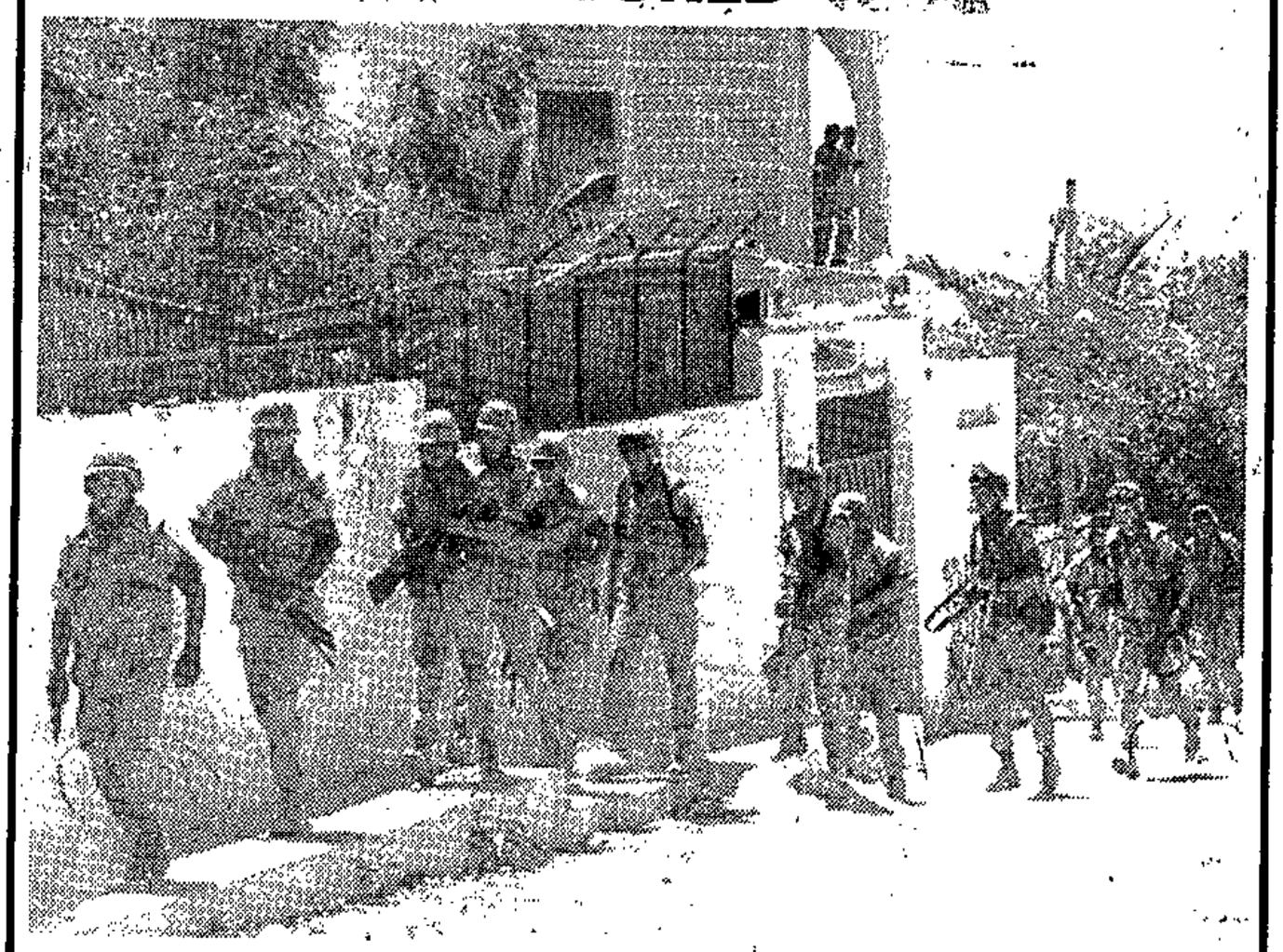
The Paris daily Libération reported from Kinshasa today that the son of Mr Frederic Maliba, chairman of the Union Sacree, the main opposition group, was killed and two other sons seriously wounded when their home was hit by a bazooka rocket fired by the DSP.

President Mobutu is at his palace at Gadolite, 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.



US marines run up a street in Mogadishu, Somalia, yesterday to search a home where bandits were believed to be hiding. Four Somalis were arrested. Picture: AP

Zaire's interim govt in appeal for help

B/Day 3/2/93. (358)

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 yesterday, it was still off limits to foreigners without passes and was sealed off by the military.

Minibuses and taxis — running again in many working class districts — were barred from the city centre and Zairean nationals had to show identity cards to get through the many roadblocks.

Public transportation was not working, and though hundreds of workers showed up yesterday morning, many had had to walk 10km to 20km to their jobs. — Sapa-AFP.

Star 3/2/93 (358)

New battles shatter Zaire

KINSHASA — Heavy shooting broke out afresh in Zaire's capital last night, just as life appeared to be returning to normal after riots which cost at least 80 lives.

A sustained crackle of rifle fire erupted from several parts of the sprawling city of Kinshasa on the Congo River.

It was punctuated by the deeper sound of machine-guns. Glowing red tracer bullets could be seen streaking across the night sky like fireworks, apparently shot deliberately into the air.

The thud of a few mortars also echoed across the city.

Much of the firing appeared to come from the direction of Kokolo military camp, just south-west of the city centre. It houses soldiers who ran amok in the capital on Thursday and Friday, looting homes, shops and warehouses after being paid in banknotes made worthless by an opposition boycott.

Other shots appeared to come from Loano army camp, farther west, and the city centre to the east. Some were fired close to the luxury Intercontinental Hotel which serves as a safe haven in Zaire's periodic bursts of violence. At least one bullet swished through trees in the hotel grounds.

Crushed

It was not clear whether the shooting indicated an upsurge in looting, or renewed gun battles between rival groups of soldiers.

Elite troops loyal to President Mobutu Sese Seko crushed last week's riots mercilessly, leaving bodies littering the streets, and diplomats say they have carried out reprisal killings since.

Jean-Joseph Mukendi, a close aide of Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi, said yesterday at least 1 000 people were killed, most of them soldiers. Civilians killed in looting or crossfire included the French ambassador to the central African country.

Diplomats said they counted at least 80 bodies, but the total would never be known as many corpses had been dumped elsewhere.

There has been sporadic shooting every night since the violence began, but last night's outburst was the worst since Saturday night.

Life had been starting to return to normal yesterday, with vehicles and pedestrians returning to the previously deserted streets.

An informal curfew rules the city through the hours of darkness. — Sapa-Reuter.

'I saw blood on guard's clothes'

By Anna Louw
East Rand Bureau

A petrol attendant told a Delmas Circuit Court yesterday he saw blood on the shirt and trousers of a former Fidelity Guards staff member on trial for the murder of a colleague.

Isaac Mea was giving evidence before Mr Justice F C L Roos about Johan van Eyk (37), son of Lieutenant-General Mulder van Eyk who retired last year as a deputy commissioner of police.

Van Eyk and two others, Willem Oosthuizen (26) and Hendrik Gerber (43), are on trial for the murder of Samuel Kganakga on May 21 1991. They have all pleaded not guilty.

The State alleges the murder occurred while the three were members of an investigating team questioning Kganakga in connection with the theft of R60 000 from Fidelity Guards.

Mea said that on the night of May 21 he saw a white Nissan bakkie driven by Van Eyk, a former police sergeant, stop at a petrol pump.

Mea said he saw blood on the front of Van Eyk's shirt and trousers as well as on the vehicle's keys. Mea said he saw someone, covered with a piece of foam rubber, lying on the back of the bakkie. He testified it was clear to him that the person was dead.

The case continues.

Star 3/2/93

Editor in court over bugging

Weekly Mail co-editor Anton Harber appeared briefly in the Johannesburg Regional Court yesterday in connection with the newspaper's surveillance of former Civil Co-operation Bureau co-ordinator Staal Burger.

A warrant of arrest was issued for co-accused Jan Kleynhans, a private investigator from Krugersdorp, who failed to appear in court. The matter was postponed to February 9.

Harber and Kleynhans are charged with crimen injuria and malicious damage to property.

In September, Burger was granted an interim interdict in the Rand Supreme Court against the Weekly Mail after he had found four private investigators next door to his office recording his conversations. They had drilled through the skirting board and inserted a microphone.

The interdict prevented the newspaper from publishing any information gained by bugging the office. — Staff Reporter.

Zairean mutineers hold out in barracks

B10Aug 4/2/93 358

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 a 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-8 that had been due to fly tons of the controversial new banknotes from Ostend to Zaire, diplomatic sources said. — Sapa-AFP.

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Zambia wants investment

340

LUSAKA — Finance Minister Emmanuel Kasonde is expected to announce an austerity budget tomorrow, cutting government spending to the bone in a bid to curtail inflation

The inflation rate, currently 200% a year, is thought to be peaking.

Zambia is trying to lure foreign investors to revitalise 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. B/D Aug

He has liberalised foreign exchange controls, ended food subsidies and launched a programme of selling off state-owned companies. 4/2/93

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-Reuter.

Death toll mounts in Zaire

KINSHASA (Zaire). — The death toll is mounting in fierce fighting between President Mobutu Sese Seko's elite 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.

Star 4/2/93

Zaire clashes ease, but crisis continues

(358)

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 80 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 the 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 28-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-Reuter.

Pressure mounting on Mobutu

358
ARG 5/2/93

KINSHASA. — President Mobutu Sese Seko's main rival has come out of hiding to urge foreign military intervention as Western pressure mounts for the president to surrender his 27-year monopoly on power.

Senior officials from the United States, France and Belgium met yesterday in Brussels to consider ways to further isolate Mr Mobuto economically and politically.

On Wednesday, the three nations demanded Mr Mobutu transfer power to Mr Etienne Tshisekedi, his arch-rival and head of a transitional government Mr Mobuto was forced to accept under pressure from Western aid donors.

The president called the officials by satellite phone from his remote ancestral home in Gbadolite, 1 150 km north-east of Kinshasa, to reject the latest Western demands, saying they amounted to "condemning the firefighter instead of the arsonist".

Pressure has been building against him since last week, when rioting by regular army troops over pay led to an outbreak of fighting with the presidential guard. The unrest developed into a confrontation between forces loyal to Mr Mobutu and pro-Tshisekedi troops.

The prime minister's government said at least 1 000 people had been killed, mainly regular army troops killed by presidential guards. The fighting broke out after the issue of 5-million Zaire notes declared illegal by Mr Tshisekedi and rejected by merchants.

Mr Tshisekedi has been in hiding since the fighting began and came out for the first time yesterday to issue his plea for foreign military intervention.

"One of our friends, Belgium, already has troops just across the river," Mr Tshisekedi told a news conference. "That is why I have launched an appeal to the international community ... to introduce them (soldiers) into the country to assure our security."

He said the president's guards had targeted the homes of opposition leaders last weekend, including his own. — Sapa

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Mobutu's men repel attack by rebel soldiers

Sowetan 5/2/93. 358

■ Fighting at the airport claims the lives of 45 people:

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 Matete 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 caved in under 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

BHDMS 5/2/93. (358)

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 Klaes 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 Gbadolite 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 unrest began 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 mutineers, 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.

Star 5/2/93

'West must send troops to Zaire' (358)

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 Gbadolite to reject the latest Western demands.

Pressure has been building against Mobutu since last week, when rioting by troops over pay led to an outbreak of fighting with Mobutu's presidential guard. The unrest developed into a confrontation between forces loyal to Mobutu and pro-Tshisekedi troops. — Sapa-AP.

EDITORIAL Guardian (w)
In w/Mail 5/2-11/2/93 (358)

Zaire – the rot spreads

LESS THAN two years after the terrible riots of September and October 1991 that devasted 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 28 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 Kolwezi 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 "paralysing 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 last 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 shreds 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 30)

Mobutu rival stands firm

KINSHASA: Zairean 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 Zairean people deepen. We must continue the pressure to bring Mobutu into the democratic process."

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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". S/Times 7/2/93

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

Sowetan 8/2/93.

■ Opposition blamed for fanning riots:

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.

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Pressure Mobutu

Tshisekedi told *Associated Press*: "My government and I are still here and call on the Zairean 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 — a key element in the continuing transition to multiparty democracy — said Mobutu's decrees, signed on Friday, were as "pointless" as others he issued in a failed attempt to bring Tshisekedi into line in December.

Tshimpumpu wa Tshimpumpu, the spokesman of the High Council of the Republic, said the high council met on Saturday and saw no reason for sacking the prime minister. However, sources close to the high council said earlier that Tshisekedi had been reprimanded for failing to heed a high council order to form a new team more acceptable to Mobutu.

On Friday Mobutu called on the high council to propose a new prime minister to form a new government of "national salvation".

Mobutu and Tshisekedi have been at loggerheads over the composition of the government since the beginning of December when Mobutu vainly issued a decree sacking the transitional government and ordering a "broadly representative national union 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 $2) and of harming "external state security by calling on foreign troops for assistance".

A week ago, soldiers paid with 5 000 000-zaire notes rioted in Kinshasa after merchants refused to accept the notes. Between 300 and 1 000 people are estimated to have died in the spree of looting and violence.

The 5 000 000-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 rocketing inflation.

After the rioting 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 spokesman said. — Sapa-AFP.

Star 8/2/93

Party ending for 'mighty' Mobutu

(358)

There is increasing international pressure on the president of Zaire to retire. ROBERT BLOCK reports on the self-proclaimed "Messiah".

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 Ngbendu Waza 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 Messie, 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 Equateur.

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. After the murder of Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba, in which Mobutu's involvement has always been open to question, he handed power back to a civilian government.

In 1965, he seized power again and announced: "This time I shall not give it up." All 14 officers with whom he staged the 1965 coup have been killed, jailed or driven into exile, a pattern of dealing with rivals he has repeated throughout his rule.

In 1978, Albert Ndele, a long-serving governor of Zaire's Central Bank who fell foul of Mobutu, tried to paint a fair picture of the man who had become his enemy: "It would be dishonest to say that the president has done nothing but evil. In the beginning he made a notable contribution by creating a real sense of national unity.

"But after a time, power went to his head, like alcohol, and he thought of himself as some kind of supreme being. He began to confuse the riches of the country with his own."

The West has often watched in amazement at the economic and political mismanagement that reduced Zaire to wretched, grinding poverty. While his people clamour for bread, President Mobutu washes 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, a 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, steaming 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, those 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. □

Star 9/2/93

SA diplomats' wives evacuated from Zaire

By Gerald L'Ange
Star Africa Service

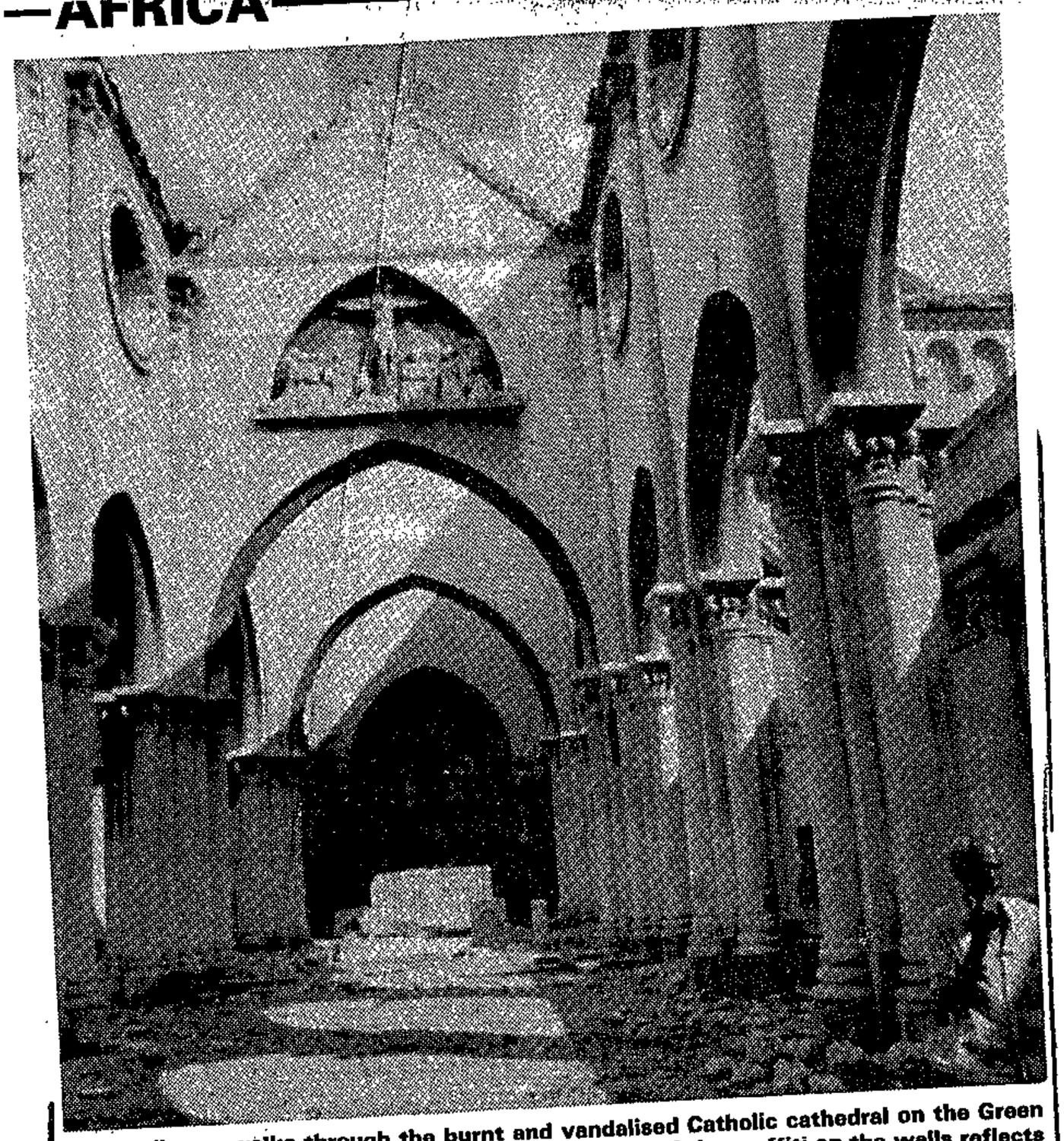
South Africa's most embattled diplomatic mission, the liaison office in riot-plagued Kinshasa, is braced for more trouble as tensions remain high in the Zairean capital.

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 wives were escorted this week across the Zaire 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.



A Somali man walks through the burnt and vandalised Catholic cathedral on the Green Line that divides north from south Mogadishu. Much of the graffiti on the walls reflects resentment of Christian religion and culture. Picture: AP

Troops keep parliament out of palace

KINSHASA — Troops sealed off the People's Palace in Kinshasa for two hours yesterday before allowing in the transitional parliament to decide whether it should obey President Mobutu Sese Seko's order to find a new prime minister.

Strongman Mobutu "sacked" his arch-enemy Etienne Tshisekedi as premier at the weekend.

The reason for the blockade by scores of soldiers was unclear.

Mobuto had accused Tshisekedi of failing to broaden his cabinet and fomenting army riots two weeks ago in which several hundred people were killed.

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 dismiss him. He has widespread popular support and backing 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.

The meeting was expected to run throughout yesterday and possibly longer.

□ Congo impounded a Zairean boat yesterday after two Congolese ferry workers were arrested in Kinshasa for refusing to accept new Zairean banknotes. — Sapa-Reuter.

Star 10/2/93

Mobutu's order rejected

(358)

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

Guardian (Win w/mail 12/2 – 18/2/93 358

PRESIDENT Mobutu Sese 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 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

By Chris McGreal in Kinshasa

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 Tshisekeedi'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.

Cobalt and lightning

(358)
Guardian IW in W/Mail
12/2-18/2193

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 de-stabilisation of his neighbours. The third provided a useful refuge for ill-gotten funds and safe houses.

The Zairean 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 Zairean 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.

AFRICA

Two chiefs, but Mobutu's still boss

WMail 12/2 - 18/2/93. (358)

Mobutu Sese Seko is Zaire's president, Etienne Tshisekedi is the prime minister – but after 28 years of iron rule and despite all attempts to topple him Mobutu is still clinging to power.

By **CHRIS McGREAL** *in Kinshasa*

POSSESSION of a near-worthless banknote provides a clearer test of political loyalty in Zaire than any party card. Waving a 5-million zaires note can get you killed, so can refusing to accept one.

The issue is not the banknote itself, but who runs a country with two leaders, two governments, two constitutions and almost no economy.

Zaire's central bank issued the 5-million zaires note in December on President Mobutu Sese Seko's orders to keep up with 7 000 percent annual inflation. Already it is worth little more than one pound sterling. Mobutu's leading opponent and bitter enemy, prime minister Etienne Tshisekedi, immediately declared the note inflationary and illegal, and instituted a general boycott.

The dispute over the notes brought to a head months of growing tension between Mobutu and a prime minister trying to force him from power. Mobutu's attempt to pay his destitute army with the disputed currency 10 days ago sparked another of Zaire's periodic bouts of military-led murder and looting.

Again, several hundred people died and, again, the opposition was ushering in Mobutu's demise. As usual, it was premature. There have been waves of riots and looting by unpaid soldiers across Zaire since the first round of pillaging in Kinshasa in September 1991.

Just before Christmas, troops tore apart several other major cities, such as Kisangani in central Zaire. None of the violence has seriously threatened Mobutu's control.

The widespread public refusal to accept the 5-million zaires notes is a measure of the strength of anti-Mobutu feeling. But the crisis also emphasises the opposition's seeming inability to find an effective mechanism for seriously undercutting Mobutu's power.

Never was a leader more accurately named. Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku Mgbendo Wazabanga's full name means "the all powerful warrior who, because of his endurance and inflexible will to win, will go from conquest to conquest leaving fire in his wake".



President – Mobutu Sese Seko



Prime Minister – Etienne Tshisekedi

For most of his 28 years at the top there has been little doubting Mobutu's status as the all powerful warrior. His largely unchallenged rule was built on a classic mix of repression and co-option. The truly troublesome were usually eliminated. The West rewarded Mobutu with aid and military support in times of trouble in return for his active anti-communism, especially against neighbouring Angola's Marxist government. The fire in Mobutu's wake has scorched his country dry. His regime was astonishingly corrupt and wasteful from the start.

The profits of Zaire's considerable mineral wealth more often than not found their way into the Mobutu bank account. The extravagance included flying a hairdresser from New York's Madison Avenue every fortnight to cut Mobutu's curls. An Africanisation policy scooped up foreign businesses.

For the first decade of Mobutu's rule, Zaire's economy still came out ahead, but in 1975 the copper price collapsed, taking with it the main source of income. Within two years, Zaire held the world's highest per capita debt.

Mobutu was forced to re-embrace foreign interests and permit the International Monetary Fund a say in economic policy. The slide continued.

But only in the past two years has the extent of his endurance and inflexible will to win become so apparent. The wrangling began as soon as Mobutu bowed to pressure for greater democracy in April 1991. After nearly three decades of economic mismanagement and theft, the treasury was empty and the outside world was withdrawing its support.

Cold war politics were being lowered to the grave. Neighbouring Angola found peace, albeit a temporary one. Allies in Washington were suddenly embarrassed by the Mobutu connection. The United States president, George Bush, wrote to the Zairean leader three times asking him to step down. He was being dumped.

Riots finally forced Mobutu to agree to a national political conference to pave the way for free elections. He immediately set about systematically undermining reform. Exploiting the chaos and internal bickering of a national conference on democracy, Mobutu was able to slip his own stooge into the prime minister's post not long after riots rocked Zaire in September 1991, and set the economy on its latest downward spiral.

Nguza Karl-i-Bond once had a modicum of credibility as a Mobutu opponent, but he has always bent with the wind and soon proved little more than a puppet. Last August, the national conference had had enough. It fired Karl-i-Bond and imposed Tshisekedi as prime minister over the president's objections.

Tshisekedi attempted to assert his authority. The national conference gave way to an interim parliament, the High Council of the Republic, and, in December, an interim constitution that reduces the presidency to a figurehead. Mobutu responded by sending his elite presidential guard to surround the prime minister's office and stop the interim parliament meeting. He sacked Tshisekedi's cabinet and refused to sign the interim constitution into law.

The supreme court says it supersedes the old constitution anyway, Mobutu says not. Two leaders claim to run Zaire on the basis of different laws, but it is still Mobutu who sets the pace.

Mobutu is undoubtedly a smart operator, but the problems that have been piling up could have been more effectively exploited by shrewder opponents.

Instead, Tshisekedi has embroiled himself in petty battles such as the one to reinstate the country's colonial name, Congo. Even more foolishly, the opposition-dominated interim parliament, the HCR, signalled its intention to lock up Mobutu, which can only strengthen his determination to hold on to power.

Last month the HCR judged Mobutu guilty of high treason for "blocking the functioning of the institutions of the country at all levels, notably the investiture of the prime minister elected by the sovereign national conference".

The Sacred Union coalition of opposition parties organised a "dead city" general strike and civil disobedience campaign aimed at closing down Kinshasa to demand Mobutu's impeachment by the supreme court. It collapsed after three days. The Zairean leader sneered back at the opposition: "Since I am not answerable to them and I have nothing to do with them, I simply ignore them," he said.

The opposition has chipped away at Mobutu's absolute control, forcing him to pay lip service to democracy. But, after two years, he still retains control of the main levers of government. The most powerful elements of the army, finances and the media are all under his dictate.

Just before the latest riots, the US, Belgium and France — once Zaire's largest aid donors — offered to reinstate funds if Mobutu lets Tshisekedi run the economy. Shortly after the killing spree, the three powers demanded Mobutu give up power entirely.

His reply was true to the history of the man with "inflexible will to win". On Friday he dismissed Tshisekedi, thumbed his nose at opposition assertions he no longer has the constitutional right to do so and announced the prime minister would be put on trial. If he means it, there is no reason to believe he cannot do it.

To rub salt in the wound, Mobutu says he intends to issue a 10-million-zaires note in the near future. — The Guardian News Service

University of the Witwatersrand
INAUGURAL LECTURE
Professor A M Meyers,
Professor of Nephrology
in the Department of Medicine,
will deliver his Inaugural Lecture
in the Dorothy Susskind Auditorium,
John Moffat Building,
on Thursday, 18 February 1993 at 17:30.
The title of his address will be:
"THE TREATMENT OF END-STAGE RENAL FAILURE AT THE JOHANNESBURG HOSPITAL: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES"
MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE MOST WELCOME
4993A

RHODES

into an already saturated market.

Star 16/12/93

New Zaire premier in offing

(358)

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

ARG 16/2/93 (358)

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-Reuter.

Defiant Mobutu says he served Zaire well

BDay 16/2/93 - (358)

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 1968.

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$5bn 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-Reuter.

Star 16/2/93

Zaire showdown put off

(358)

KINSHASA — Zaire's interim parliament, locked in a power struggle with President Mobutu Sese Seko, postponed a crucial meeting yesterday and political sources said its leaders were trying to avert a showdown with Mobutu.

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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-Reuter.

Inquiry into Zaire riot (358)

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.

Source ... 17/2/93

Peacekeepers to hold Angola crisis summit

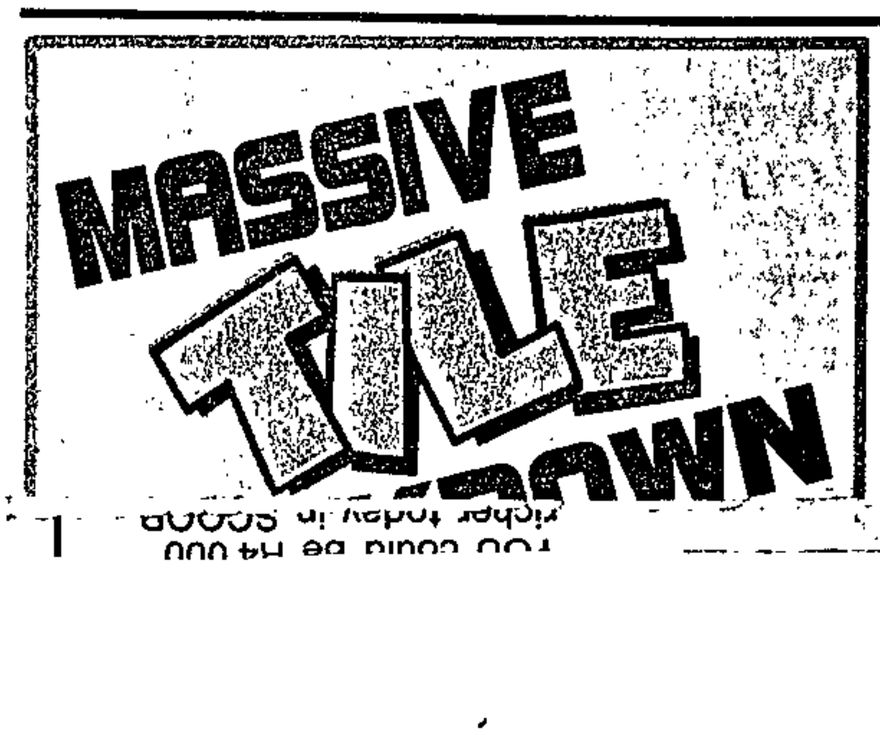
ARGUS 19/1/93

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

358

ARGUS 19/2/93

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.

Zaire Caught In Mobutu's Bloody Grip

Guardian/W in W/mail 19/2-25/2/93. By William T. Close (358)

THE TWO armies in Zaire plunder and kill differently. The soldiers of the "regular" army have little or no ammunition. They loot in Kinshasa's sprawling slums and are as hungry and alienated from President Mobutu Sese Seko as the people they beat with rifle butts. They carry away their booty on their heads. In contrast, Mobutu's well-armed Special Presidential Division uses tanks and trucks to haul away the contents of the wealthier homes belonging to foreigners or members of the opposition. Then, during the night, Mobutu's elite seal off the city and go on a killing orgy against the rest of the army and their families. Thus does Mobutu "restore order," leaving hundreds of dead and wounded in a city where there is no medical care and now no food.

In response to the killing of the French ambassador and the continued threat of murder and mayhem, French and Belgian troops were once more briefly dispatched to protect their citizens in Kinshasa. Prime Minister Tshisekedi has called for the intervention of foreign troops. The High Council of the Republic, the democratic transitional parliament headed by Archbishop Monsengwo, has been forbidden by Mobutu to meet. Mobutu, ally of the United States during the Cold War and friend of George Bush, has once more successfully hammered to a standstill the process of democratization in his starving and bleeding country.

How does Mobutu stay in power?

(1) He uses his Special Presidential Division to enforce his will against the rest of the army and the population, and he controls the National Bank, thus effectively hamstringing Prime Minister Tshisekedi's democratically chosen government.

(2) He exploits the persistent split and antagonisms existing in the opposition political parties hostile to his dictatorship.

(3) He takes advantage of the fact that the U.S. government is still reluctant to take forthright action to assist the democratic forces in ousting him.

No one, not Tshisekedi or any other opposition leader, will be able to function as head of a transition government so long as Mobutu controls the SPD and the bank.

The army's discontent and violence are a well-planned maneuver by Mobutu to frighten away the Europeans so that, whatever brutal methods he uses after their exodus, he can act at will behind closed doors or closed frontiers to eliminate with systematic ruthlessness all those who oppose him. It is wholly in character for Mobutu to blame Tshisekedi for the army's killing and looting over the past few days. He will then have an excuse to fire him and take over the country with his elite troops to "restore order." Today, assemblies of more than five people are forbidden, effectively muzzling the High Council of the Republic, and press censorship guarantees that no articles against Mobutu will be printed.

George Bush steadfastly refused to play an open and forthright role in opposing Mobutu's tyranny. He may have had his personal reasons for this, or he may have followed Gen. Brent Scowcroft's advice that Mobutu was needed in Zaire to "control the army." This "control" has now been seen to condone killing and pillaging by the "regular" army, and to encourage systematic looting under cover of darkness by his Special Presidential Division. President Clinton has stated that his administration will not coddle dictators. Surely the new administration can declare in the strongest terms that Washington's pussy-footing around Mobutu is at an end. Freezing the financial assets — wherever they may be — of Mobutu and his enforcers, and imposing a fuel embargo on his country, are measures that need to be taken.

William T. Close is a doctor who spent 16 years in Zaire and was personal physician to Mobutu Sese Seko and the Congolese army's chief doctor.

Mobutu fights tooth decay

S/Times 21/2/93,

PARIS: Embattled Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko, 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".

A French Foreign Ministry spokesman said Mobutu had arrived for "a short private stay for medical treatment" on the Mediterranean coast.

Meanwhile, in Washington, a State Department spokesman said US, French and Belgian officials were discussing ways to bring democracy to riot-torn Zaire and remove Mobutu from power.

Western powers are looking at ways to freeze Mobutu's assets, including large deposits in Switzerland as well as properties in France, the officials said. — *Foreign Desk*

Mobutu escorted to Monaco dentist

STAR 22/2/93.

By James Tomlins 358

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 7 km 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 R100 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?"



Somali women queue to receive their daily ration of grain at a feeding centre on Mogadishu's Green Line yesterday. Picture: AP

10 killed as troops clash with Kinshasa residents

B 10Am 24/2/93. (358)

KINSHASA — Ten people were killed when paratroopers on a punitive raid clashed with residents of the outlying Kinshasa district of Massina, the national Radio Zaire reported yesterday.

Paratroopers were thought to have swept into Massina on Monday after two of them were killed, the radio said.

But witnesses claimed members of President Mobutu Sese Seko's Special Presidential Division launched a revenge raid after residents hacked a guardsman to death. They said residents were enraged by the death of a local man who they believed had been killed by soldiers.

The radio gave no further details, but condemned what it called "acts of terrorism and banditry" by "real and false soldiers".

No official confirmation of the deaths was immediately available and Kinshasa was calm yesterday, with people going about their normal business.

Armed, uniformed men have frequently carried out robberies, murders and ransom operations in working class districts of Kinshasa since a bloody uprising by troops in September 1991.

Paratroopers took part in a mutiny in January when they were paid in banknotes traders refused to accept because Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi said they were not legal tender.

The mutiny left 300 people dead, mostly troops shot by presidential units. Diplomats said many bodies had been dumped in the Congo River after presidential units had conducted punitive raids on regular army camps.

Tshisekedi, appointed by the pro-democracy opposition, is a main rival to Mobutu who has exercised autocratic rule over Zaire since November 1965. The huge central African country is in deep political and economic crisis.

Mobutu, who ordered the issue of the banknotes, is under increasing pressure domestically and from Zaire's three main creditor nations, Belgium, France and the US, to hand over power.

He was in France yesterday on what the French government called a short private visit, including a visit to his doctor in Monaco. — Sapa-AFP.

Mobutu and his entourage not hastening home to Zaire

STAR 24/2/93.

358

President Mobutu has left his palace in Zaire, probably for good, but his opulent lifestyle, including a personal staff of 1 000, is unlikely to change at all.

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 Roque-brune-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".



President Mobutu . . . 15 bodyguards at all times.

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

B 10 Dec 29/12/93

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?" (358)

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 Eluki Monga. The former chief, Mahele Liyeko, 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-Reuter.

Troops block Zairean parliament

KINSHASA. — Hundreds of heavily-armed troops blockaded a meeting of Zaire's transitional parliament and as night fell they refused to allow 400 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. (358)

The so-called "cursed note" is widely boycotted. — Sapa-Reuter.

ARG 15/2/93

suburb where Keating was born 49 years ago.

STar 25/2/93

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 guardsman to death. (358)

Wife freed as ransom paid

Armed soldiers block Zaire's parliament

(58) CT 25/2/93

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The soldiers, who were armed, 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, nor was it immediately clear to which unit of the army the protesters belonged.

Zaire's three main Western donors — the United States, France and Belgium — are debating how to force strongarm president Mr Mobutu Sese Seko to concede multi-party reforms stalled for the last three years.

The three nations have expressed support for the opposition-dominated HCR.

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 said members of Mr Mobutu's feared Special Presidential Division killed 21 people on Monday on a rampage of revenge after residents in Kinshasa's Kingasani suburb killed a guardsman. — Sapa-Reuter

US action on Mobutu urged

By SIMON BARBER

WASHINGTON. — The Clinton administration is under mounting pressure from Congress to impose sweeping sanctions on Zaire and mount an international effort to freeze President Mobutu Sese Seko's overseas assets.

House Foreign Affairs Committee member Mr Lee Hamilton yesterday urged Secretary of State Mr Warren Christopher to step up efforts to force Mr Mobutu to step down and go into exile.

In addition to freezing the billions of dollars Mr Mobutu is believed to have secreted in foreign bank account, Mr Hamilton recommended that Zaire be suspended from the IMF and that its exports, particularly cobalt and copper, be embargoed.

Zaire MPs spend second night under army siege

358
ARG 26/2/93

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 MrMobutu 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-Reuter.

Bop planes 'ferrying arms to Unita forces'

Russian planes based at Mmabatho airport may be transporting Armscor weapons to Angola via Zaire.

By **GAVIN EVANS, DAVID ZARING and EDDIE KOCH**

RUSSIAN Antonov transport planes, based at Bophuthatswana's Mmabatho airport, are being chartered by Armscor to ferry arms to Zaire and other African countries, according to a senior official in South Africa's Directorate 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 Kinshasa, Zaire.

Another senior source in the aviation industry, who asked to remain anonymous, said: "There are a lot of operations out of Mmabatho 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 armaments."

Armscor spokesman Henry Abdoll yesterday acknowledged that the state-owned armaments company was involved in the sale of arms and other equipment to African countries, but denied that the Bop-based Antonovs had been used for this purpose.



Ready for use ... A Russian Antonov 12 stands at Mmabatho airport **Photo: KEVIN CARTER**

The South African Communist Party this week said it had been informed by foreign diplomats that Safair, South Africa's main cargo aviation company, was chartering the Antonovs to deliver arms to Unita.

This appears to be incorrect. Safair yesterday issued a statement saying it had never leased any Antonov aircraft and that it would "under no circumstances whatsoever violate any foreign country's airspace".

But the disclosures by the South African civil aviation official, who spoke off the record, may provide some backing for the SACP's claims that "regular nightly flights from Mmabatho 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 Mmabatho belong to a company called Africa Aeroflot. A spokesman for the firm confirmed that the Antonov seen at Mmabatho this week had been flying to Zaire. He denied it had been chartered by Armscor and said it was flying "on purely commercial missions" and had returned to Mmabatho "because it developed technical problems".

The spokesman added that he had heard of another Antonov, not owned by his company, which was doing "non-commercial work from Lanseria, maybe for Armscor".

Bophuthatswana's Civil Aviation Director, Dermott MacLaughlin, claimed the homeland had given permission for the Antonovs to be used for, among other things, cargo haulage and "mercy missions" to Sudan, Ethiopia and Mozambique, under United Nations auspices.

Ten Africa Aeroflot-owned cargo aircraft have at various times flown to and from Mmabatho since May 1992, using Russian crews and equipment. MacLaughlin said such equipment is cheap but "not energy-efficient."

He did not explain how the notoriously petrol-hungry Antonovs could fly as far as north Sudan, nor why the UN had chosen an unrecognised homeland as its base for mercy missions so far afield.

Comment from the UN's World Food Programme responsible for flying relief aid to famine-stricken parts of Africa was not available at the time of going to press.

Africa Aeroflot was given permission to use Mmabatho airport by Rowan Cronje, Minister for Defence, State Affairs and Civil Administration in the Bophuthatswana government.

MacLaughlin 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 Aeroflot spokesman, a Russian called Mark 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 "unaware of any unauthorised flights to Angola".

According to the South African civil aviation official, the Antonovs are given landing rights and parking by the Bophuthatswana government, "and are being chartered directly by Armscor and by other African countries to fly Armscor-produced arms out of the country and to other African countries.

"This is useful to Armscor because it means their arms are being transported by Russian aircraft, which are far 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.

Mmabatho 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 Armscor weapons into Yugoslavia and that the plane had landed at Mmabatho to pick up the cargo.

Bop's Zaire arms shuttle

w/Mail 26/2-4/3/93.

1094 (358)

And the Russian plane that flies the freight



KEVIN CARTER

RUSSIAN transport planes based at Bophuthatswana's Mmabatho airport are chartered by Armscor to ferry arms to Zaire.

There are fears that these arms may find their way across the Zaire border to Unita forces fighting government troops in Angola.

Armscor spokesman Henry Abdoll yesterday acknowledged that the state-owned armaments company was involved in the sale of arms to African countries, but denied that the Bop-based planes had been used for this purpose.

The Russian planes, all Antonovs, belong to a company called Africa Aeroflot. A spokesman for the firm confirmed that the Antonov spotted at Mmabatho this week had been flying to Zaire, but said it was flying "on purely commercial missions".

© See PAGE 2

Zairean troops lift siege

358

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 1 000 legislators and staff in a row over banknotes. — Sapa-Reuter

Star 27/2/93.

Star 4/3/98

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. (358)

(358)

Kaunda's son arrested in emergency crackdown

ARGS 5/3/93

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.

BRIEFS

المصباح 5/3-11/3/93

Zaireans die in ferry tragedy (358)

■BRAZZAVILLE — At least 146 Zaireans drowned while being expelled from neighbouring 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-Reuter.

Unita's diamonds of war

w/mail 5/3-11/3/93.

Zairean traders are buying diamonds from Unita —and many of the gems may be finding their way to De Beers, reports **CHRIS McGREAL**

ANGOLA'S Unita rebels are helping fund their guerrilla war by selling hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of illegally mined diamonds to international buyers.

Intermediaries have made payments to Unita officials for diamonds smuggled across Zaire's southern border, many of which have ended up in the hands of the De Beers cartel.

In the last week of January, Unita officials were paid $400 000 (about R1,2-million) in cash by dealers in the Zairean town of Tshikapa, about 100 kilometres from the frontier with the Angolan state of Lunda Norte, the heart of the country's diamond mining, according to sources close to the deal. Lebanese dealers working as licensed traders in Tshikapa say that about one-third of the diamonds they handle are from northern Angola, almost all of which is in Unita hands.

"The cross-border trade has been on for a long time, but we used to deal with individuals. Many were Zaireans we knew who acted as traffickers from the diggers. Now they come with Angolans who don't speak French. The Angolans come in uniforms and there's always Zairean soldiers, officers, with them. The Zaireans do the negotiating but the Angolans take the money. We know who we are dealing with, it's Unita," said a dealer in Tshikapa.

"I would say that about one-third of all the diamonds we handle come from across the border and they all end up in the hands of De Beers. It knows where they come from, that's De Beers' job."

In a written statement, De Beers said its Tshikapa buying office was closed in January because of unrest in Zaire and that it has no knowledge of any $400 000 parcel of diamonds.

"The buying offices are open to all comers and unless an offerer of diamonds openly showed his affiliation we wouldn't be aware of it. We have no arrangement with Unita to buy diamonds illegally exported from Angola," said De Beers spokesman Tom Tweedy.

Aside from its mining contracts, De Beers has long bought up illegally mined diamonds in the name of market stability. Dealers in Tshikapa say that although De Beers maintains that the first it knows of the transaction is when it views the diamonds it is about to purchase, the cartel usually has knowledge of a major deal from early on because it wants to ensure high quality gems did not stray into competitors hands.

Others in the industry say De Beers cannot be in any doubt about the source of diamonds which experts can determine. Kevin Kartun, a Johanesburg mining analyst, said: "In some cases they can tell from which mines diamonds came from. Anything it doesn't buy through regular channels De Beers calls an open market transaction and it wants those Angolan diamonds. One of De Beers' key roles is regulating the market. You can't have a lot of rough gems washing around the market. They have to go in and mop it up."

The Lebanese dealers were unable to say if the cash went to individual Unita members or the organisation as a whole. Although $400 000 is a small proportion of the estimated $500-million De Beers spent last year to buy up legally and illegally mined diamonds from Angola, the cash would go a long way toward supporting Unita which has watched its funds diminish since the peace process began in 1991. Unita needs cash for weapons, food, fuel and mercenaries.

French venture

w/mail 5/3-11/3/93.

AN unusual combination of two African National Congress members, two South African Police officers, a kwaZulu Police officer and a policeman from Lebowa are visiting Paris to study crowd-control methods.

It is the first time the ANC has taken part in a venture like this with the SAP. The group left last week and will return to South Africa on March 15.

The delegation was invited by the French government as a follow-up to a report on crowd-control at mass demonstrations released by a committee of the Goldstone Commission. Apart from crowd-control the delegation will also study French police training methods.

The ANC members are John Jeffery and Sidney Mafumadi. The SAP officers are Major General AF de la Rosa and Major NM Nieman. Major NE Mbatha represents the KZP and Major LS Molomo the Lebowa Police.

Zambian opposition held over 'coup plot'

258 ct 6/3/93

LUSAKA. — Zambian police arrested at least 10 opposition officials — including Mr Kenneth Kaunda's third son, UNIP security chief Major Wezi 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 activities in Zambia.

UNIP president Mr Kebby Musokotwane told a news conference police had detained six national leaders and at least four junior officials from the party. — Sapa-Reuter

Mobutu seeks home in Cape

358
ST Times 7/3/93

By DIANA STREAK

EMBATTLED Zairean president Mobutu Sese Seko spent several days in Cape Town recently looking for a luxury property to add to the string of mansions he owns across the world.

Mobutu left his strife-torn country last month when fighting broke out over food shortages, worthless new currency and the president's resistance to multi-party reforms.

He is said to have a personal fortune of R30-billion, 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, including Mobutu, spent several days in Cape Town, but left without buying any property. "No deal has been signed yet, and negotiations are continuing," the Sunday Times was told.

SEAR 9/3/93

Decisive week for Zaire

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. (358)

Zairean delegate to UN attacks Mobutu

(358)

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. ST Times 14/3/93

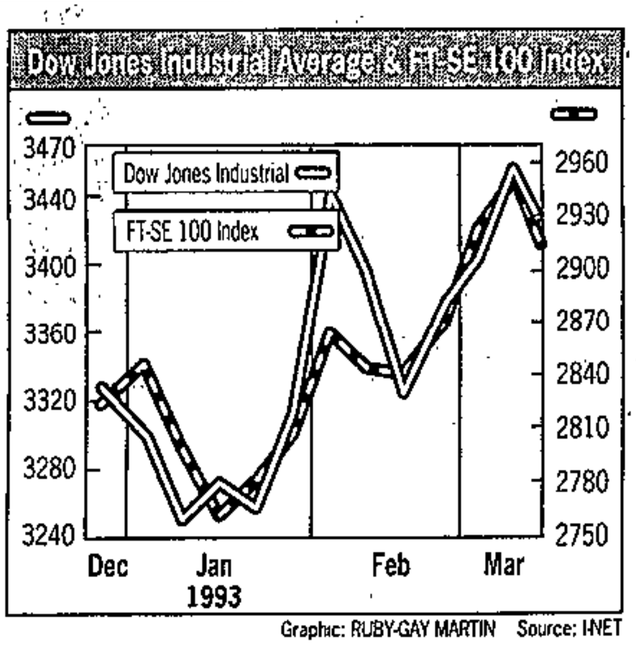
"The human rights violations are just a symptom of dictatorial forces which refuse to accept majority law and the legitimate aspirations of the people," Mr Jean-Joseph Mukendi told the 53-nation commission.

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 Kinshasha, on Friday in fresh moves to ease the country's chronic political crisis.

No details of the talks were available. — *AP*



FRIDAY'S DJ IA CLOSE: 3427.82

FRIDAY'S FT-SE 100 CLOSE: 2915.9

FRIDAY'S NEW YORK GOLD CLOSE: $328.00

YESTERDAY'S HONG KONG GOLD CLOSE: $327.85

Star 18/3/93

Mobutu cold-shouldered



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.

(358)

Zaire has two premiers

358

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. STAR 19/3/93

France poised for huge conservative victory

BI DAM 19/3/93

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 (UPF) alliance will win about 40% 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 260 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 Valery Giscard d'Estaing stand neck and neck in the polls. Socialist President Francois 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 telecommunications, 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 Valery Giscard d'Estaing, 67, has made clear he would not shun the job. Another possible UDF candidate is Francois Leotard, 50, 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 UPF 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 Beregovoy'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-Reuter.

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 Zairean 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 Tshisekedi sufficiently and for "flirting" with pro-Mobutu forces.

Sources said Birindwa might succeed in bringing opposition heavyweights into his government as Tshisekedi had disappointed his supporters.

He would have to convince the leaders of Holy Alliance that his government 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 Zaireans in the street as Mobutu's latest stooge, analysts said, as his record of opposition to the president was impressive. 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-AFP.

"Unorthodox but always sober"

Cursed banknote

KINSHASA — A Zairean soldier killed a woman market trader with a handgrenade 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-Reuter

Brutal struggle for Angola's oil town

Guardian W In B Mail 26-3-1/4/93.

By Chris McGreal in Soyo

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 Brito Texeira, 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.

Joao 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. (358)

"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 Quinfuquena 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

358
CT 1 14 93

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 Birindwa as prime minister on March 29 after saying he had sacked opposition premier Mr Etienne Tshisekedi, who was appointed by the HCR. — Sapa-Reuter

ola, rus

cloudy later.

Today at 9am.....15 deg C
Expected max.....23 deg C
Yesterday 2pm...22,6 deg C

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,



President Mobutu

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 teargas 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.

STAR 21/4/93. (358)

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 $2,54bn profit a year earlier, when it benefited from a one-time gain of $1,9bn from an accounting change. Revenues slipped to $13,1bn, off 7% from $14bn in the 1992 quarter. While total hardware sales were off 19,4%, demand for IBM's personal computers remained strong.

Zaire rules out privatisation

BRUSSELS — Zairean Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi's government said yesterday it was against any sale of Zaire's state assets, including the key mining company Gecamines. Press Minister Mende Omalanga 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 spokesman said yesterday. Doctors said Alexander Tizyakov 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'

TOKYO — A Japanese environmentalist group campaigning against golf course construction is calling for April 29 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.

REPORTS: Sapa-Reuter.

Clinton pleasing ever fewer people, polls show

Own Correspondent

WASHINGTON — What do George Bush, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, John Kennedy and Jimmy Carter have in common?

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 high "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 rectitude.

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" package of £10bn 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 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

358

ARG 30/4/93

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 30 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 acomplished," 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

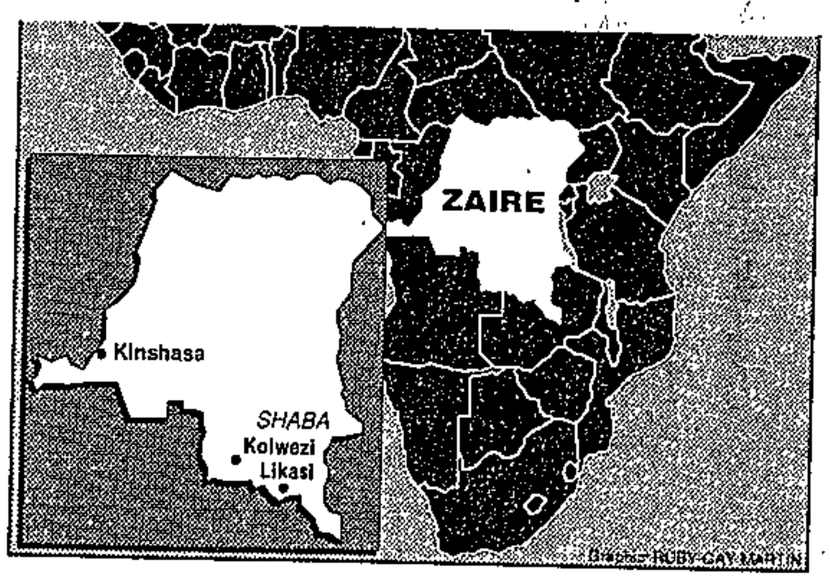
ST Times 2/5/93

(358)

A tribe is fleeing ~~African ethnic~~ cleansing. **Scott Peterson** reports from Kolwezi on the unfolding tragedy in Zaire's richest province

KATANGA, the province whose failed attempt at independence took United Nations troops 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 Kasai 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 Kasai have arrived at the station each day since the latest attacks began three weeks ago. Armed Katangans told the mostly Kasai workers at 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 sacking 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 Nguz 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 secession 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 — © *The Telegraph, Lon-*



Hassan Abdel Jawad from the Deheisha refugee camp on the West Bank is welcomed in Jericho after seven years' exile. Israel is allowing 30 deportees home as a 'goodwill gesture'. The return of 15 so far has helped to convince Palestinian negotiators that peace talks are, after 18 months, starting to produce results

The Star's Africa Service reports on a country that has lost its way

Corrupt Zaire 'out of control'

Star 8/16/93

(358)

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 takes 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 1 400 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 Birindwe, appointed by Mobutu after he "sacked" Tshisekedi.

Despite pressure from the opposition and Western powers, Mobutu refuses to resign and allow 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 they 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 melee 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 Peters went he was importuned 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." □

Clinton bars Mobutu's officials from America

(358)

ARGS 24/6/93

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 anti-democratic 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

(358)

Guardian W in W May 25/6-1/7/93.

Victoria Brittain

HALF a million Kasaians have been forced from their homes amid anarchic conditions in Shaba province in south-east Zaire, according to aid agencies, which forecast 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.

The massive exodus has come in several waves as ethnic tension has been generated by a discredited government which has been rapidly losing control in recent months.

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.

● Belgium's foreign minister, Willy Claes, said in parliament he believed Zaire was receiving arms via South Africa with the help of Russian pilots and aircraft, the Belga news agency reported.

Zaire's refugee problem mounts

358

Wmail 25/6-1/7/93.

By VICTORIA BRITTAIN

HALF a million Kasaians have been forced from their homes amid anarchic conditions in Shaba province in south-east 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 Kasaians 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 crammed 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 Kasaians, 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.

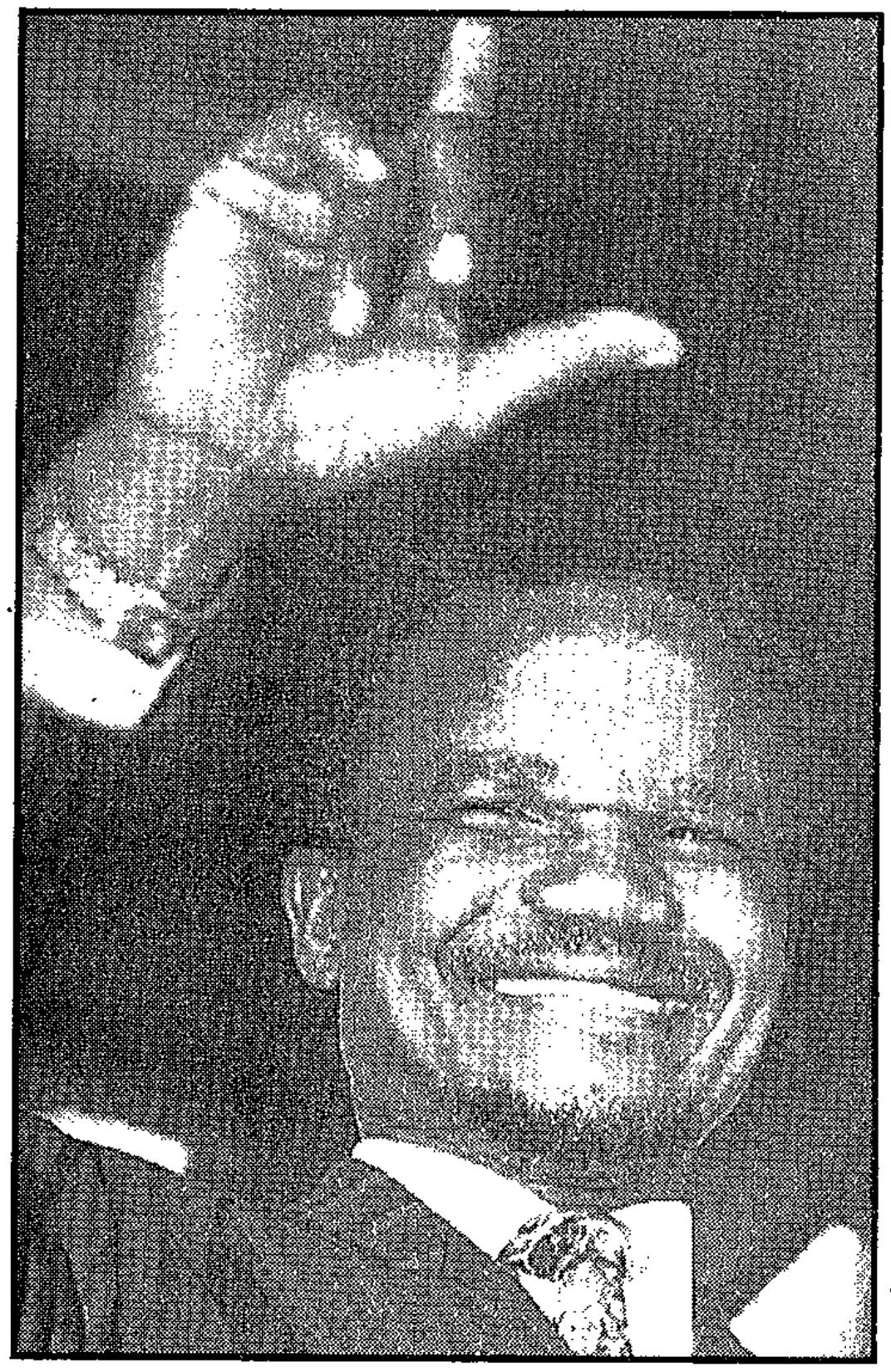
"Anything that might come from that source, if ever, is going to be too late," Oxfam sources said.

Fearing that the crisis is close to becoming completely out of hand, Oxfam has taken the lead in a vacuum of organisation. It has urged the Belgian government to release to the UN stocks of hoes and other tools held in the embassy in Kinshasa so the Kasaians can grow food, and appealed to the Overseas Development Administration and the European Community for food and funds for transport. — The Guardian News Service

FW heads for the Frontline

ARG 22/7/ (358) 93

□ Elaborate welcome awaits first SA head of state to visit Zambia



President Frederick Chiluba of Zambia ... pragmatic stance towards Pretoria.

GERALD L'ANGE, Editor of The Argus Africa News Service, reports

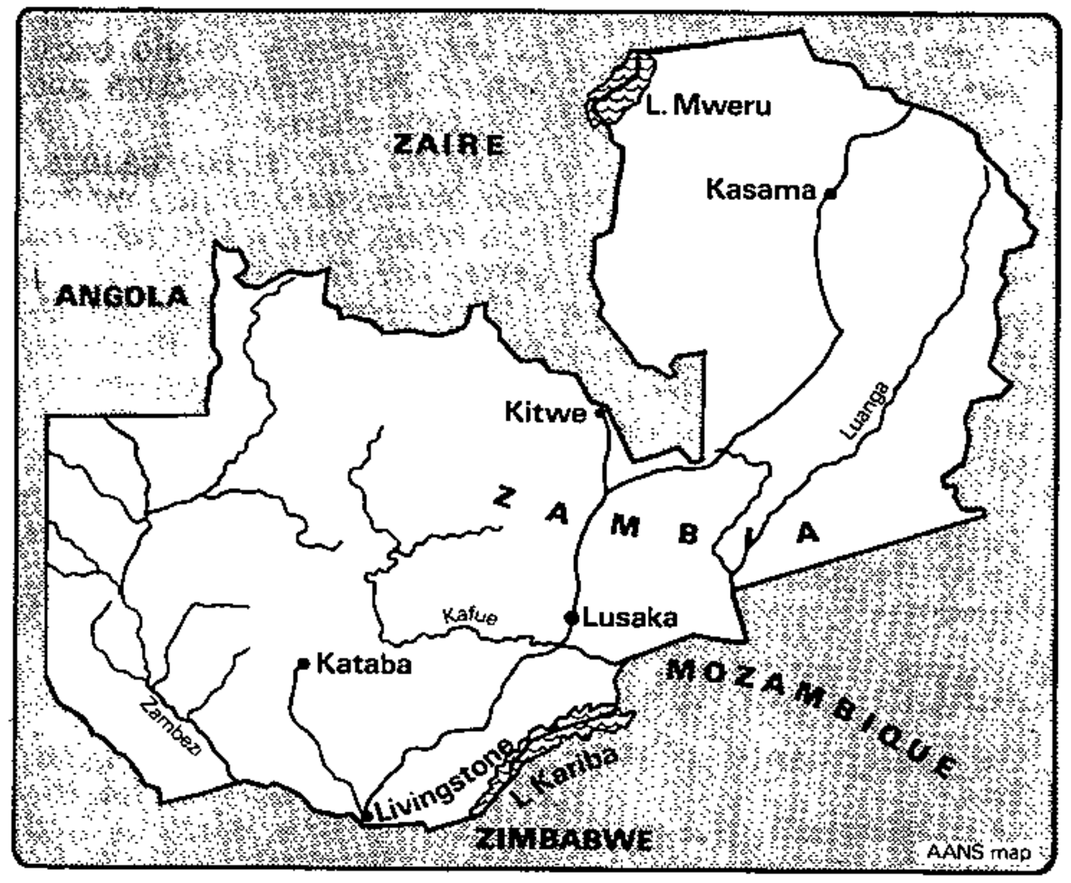
PRESIDENT De Klerk's visit to Lusaka on July 31 has special significance in that it will be the first by a South African head of state to the Zambian capital. But there is more to it than that.

When he met President Clinton in Washington earlier this month Mr De Klerk is understood to have told him that one of Pretoria's highest priorities was the boosting of economic development in all of Southern Africa. That point will be emphasised by Mr De Klerk's opening of a trade fair in Lusaka which will be dominated by South African exhibitors.

At the same time he will be underscoring the related point that while South Africa is the region's economic engine it is hampered in promoting regional development if its own economy is weakened by sanctions and the discouragement of foreign investment.

Ostensibly, the opening of the fair is the main purpose of the visit and it is therefore being viewed officially in Lusaka as a working visit. But the government of President Frederick Chiluba is attaching more importance to it than that and is treating it almost as a state visit.

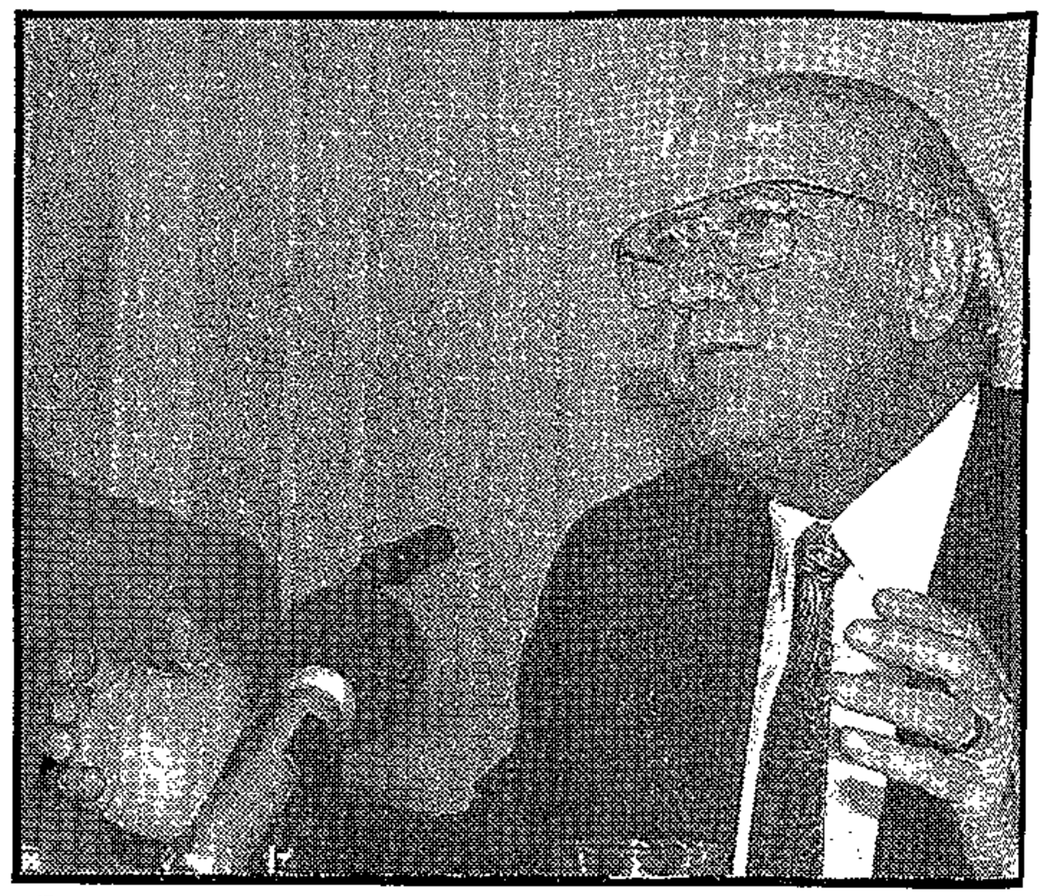
It is understood that Mr De Klerk will be given a more elaborate welcome than he would receive on a working visit. In addition, he will have talks with Mr Chiluba and will be the guest of honour at a function hosted by the Zambian president in the evening.



The initiative for the De Klerk visit came from Zambia, according to sources in Lusaka, initially from the chairman of the Agricultural and Commercial Show Society, George Bender, a prominent Zambian farmer who once lived in South Africa. His proposal that Mr De Klerk be invited to open the show was readily taken up by Foreign Minister Vernon Mwaanga and endorsed by Mr Chiluba.

This reflects the essentially pragmatic stance taken by the Chiluba government towards Pretoria, in contrast to the politically correct posture of the previous government of Kenneth Kaunda.

Whereas Dr Kaunda, the patriarch of the Frontline States, was careful to keep his dealings with South Africa strictly within the confines of Frontline policy, which meant at arm's length, Mr Chiluba's government is more interested in making the most of any opportunities that South Africa may offer for promoting Zambian economic development.



President De Klerk ... bid to boost economic development in Southern Africa.

After ending the one-party rule of Dr Kaunda's Unip, Mr Chiluba's MMD party lost no time in establishing diplomatic relations with Pretoria, officially at representative level but in practical effect at full ambassadorial level.

Mr Mwaanga, whose links with his South African counterpart, Pik Botha, go back to their days as United Nations ambassadors in the early seventies, has made several visits to South Africa.

Some analysts take the view that Mr Chiluba as the "new boy" among the Frontline leaders feels less compelled than did Dr Kaunda to abide by the Frontline policy of keeping Pretoria at arm's length until the ANC signals that apartheid has finally been eradicated. Like several other African leaders, Mr Chiluba feels that reform is sufficiently far advanced in South Africa for his government to deal openly with Pretoria now.

Rather than wait for the new dispensation to be installed in South Africa Mr

'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 Bukarn, 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. (358) ARG 29/7/93

"When they arrived at Masisi 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.

Argus 22/7/93

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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 Dr 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

(358)

Two governments, two parliaments and a worthless currency, but the same head of state. **Frédéric Fritscher** reports from Kinshasa.

WM 6-12/8/93

Le Monde

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 million 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 haven't 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 least violation 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 neighbourhoods 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 Z10 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 Zaireancurrency, the zaire was worth $2. By 1990 the dollar was worth Z530. Last month a single dollar was trading for Z4 million in the unofficial market.

The devaluation mirrors 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 3,333 per cent by 1992. "It could come close to 10,000 per cent this year," predicts Edouard Mambu, vice-chairman of the opposition Union des Démocrates 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. Gécamines, 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 ore 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 to 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 Midde 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, 63, who has been president since 1965.

More machiavellian than ever, General Mobutu is firmly hanging on to power and has succeeded in halting a democratisation 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 (CNS), is officially recognised by the High Council of the Republic (HCR) and the provisional parliament set up by the CNS.

The HCR 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 his ground.

"The country hasn't been governed for years," he said. "We're calling for civil disobedience to compel 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 exasperating 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 Ghadolite 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)



President Mobutu . . . firmly hanging on to power

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based charities said.

Savimbi call to end fighting dismissed

LUANDA. — The Angolan government said today it could not give any "credibility" to Unita leader Jonas Savimbi's reported call for an unconditional ceasefire.

ARG 12/8/93

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 Unita 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 Unita should order its troops to stop fighting and agree to sign the Abidjan protocol, a draft peace pact between the two sides drawn up last May.

Meanwhile the government said it had repelled Unita 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 Unita fired 1 500 artillery shells into the city of 250 000 people. — Sapa-Reuter.

MATRIC MATHS

TUTORIALS

Concentrated Revision Classes

Revision Maths tutorials for **Matriculants** will be held on **Saturday mornings at UCT** (Zoology Building, LT2) starting on **Saturday August 14** (09h15 Standard Grade/11h15 Higher Grade) and on **Sunday afternoons** at **Camps Bay High School** starting on **Sunday August 15** (14h00 Standard Grade/16h00 Higher Grade). The tutorials will be on key areas of the syllabus and are designed to ease the way of the hard-working matric student. There will be separate sessions for **Higher Grade** and **Standard Grade** students.

A full programme containing **Dates, Times** and **Topics to be covered** is available on request by telephoning **54 5311** (ask for Mr Melzer) or **438 7171** (a/h) or by writing to

OUT OF AFRICA

1 500 Zaireans flee renewed fighting

358

ARG 12/8/93

KAMPALA. — At least 1 500 Zairean refugees have fled into Uganda after renewed clashes between Zairean government troops and rebels in eastern Zaire, said the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) representative, Ahmed Farah.

The fighting between government troops and Peasants and Workers Movement (MOP) rebels had claimed at least 120 lives on the government side, he said.

Rebel spokesman Muhammed Nassur 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.

Star 16/8/93

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.

(358)

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. B1 Day

The proposals — designed to expand the amount of information the bank makes public about its loans — range from the establishment of a $1m 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. 26/8/93

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. (35b)

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. — Sapa-Reuter.

OLD WORLD Tyrolean Alps.

'Campaign of murder in Zaire'

358

ARCT 16/9/98

☐ Anarchy, says Amnesty

ABIDJAN (Ivory Coast). — Amnesty International has accused the dictator 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 organisation 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 Zairean 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 recognise 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 52 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. — Sapa-AP.

Mobutu forces 'on killing spree'

B/Day 17/9/93

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 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 supports' 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 '60s, 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 (358)

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 22 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

Cl Press 19/9/93

By ZANELE VUTELA

ALARM bells are ringing in Zaire.

In a special bulletin released this week, civil rights group Amnesty International warned that the African-style leadership-for-life syndrome was taking a vicious toll on Zaire.

Amnesty said Zaire was experiencing total economic and political collapse.

Political reforms announced in April 1990 – including the legalisation of opposition parties and human rights groups and more freedom for the independent press – had not come to pass.

It said President Mobutu Sese Seko's security forces, which have been under his personal charge since he assumed power in 1965, had become even more vicious and "enjoy almost total impunity for their actions, suggesting they commit abuses with the acquiescence of the President".

(358)

Abuses

Mobutu, said Amnesty, had "built up the size and firepower of his forces, often with help of foreign governments, and has set up various security services and specialised military and para-military units. These are all responsible for human rights abuses".

Amnesty said that on February 22 this year, about 52 unarmed men, women and children were reportedly shot dead and many others were severely injured by members of Mobutu's elite Presidential Guard in Kimbaseke district. The attack was reportedly carried out to avenge the killing of a member of the security forces by a group of civilians.

Amnesty said the violence against democracy has been continuous for three years.

NEWS UN arms and oil embargo goes into effect

Zaire is 'violating arms ban'

Sowetan 30/9/93

SAO TOME — Angola this week accused Zaire of violating a newly imposed United Nations arms and fuel embargo against the Angolan rebel movement Unita.

Angolan state radio said a large quantity of arms for Unita had been unloaded at the Zairean port of Matadi.

Part of the consignment was being transported by plane to the Unita-held town of Maquela do Zombo in northern Angola, it said in a broadcast monitored in the island state of Sao Tome and Principe.

The rest was being sent in small boats to the rebel-held port of Ambriz on the Atlantic coast, 120km north of the capital Luanda, it added.

Diplomats say Zaire has consistently supported Unita in the 18-year-old Angolan civil war, which restarted last year after Unita reneged on a 1991 peace agreement with the government.

They say that although Unita no longer receives official support from the United States and South Africa, it continues to obtain supplies from Zaire, paying for goods with illegally mined diamonds.

The United Nations Security Council imposed a largely symbolic arms and oil embargo on Unita on September 15 after the rebel movement failed to stop fighting or agree to abide by the 1991 peace agreement.

The embargo took effect at the weekend after the expiration of a 10-day grace period for Unita to resume peace talks.

Unita took up arms again after rejecting its defeat by the ruling MPLA in UN-supervised elections last year.

Since then it has refused to commit itself fully to the 1991 peace agreement, but it tried to avert the threat of UN sanctions by declaring a unilateral ceasefire on September 20. (358)

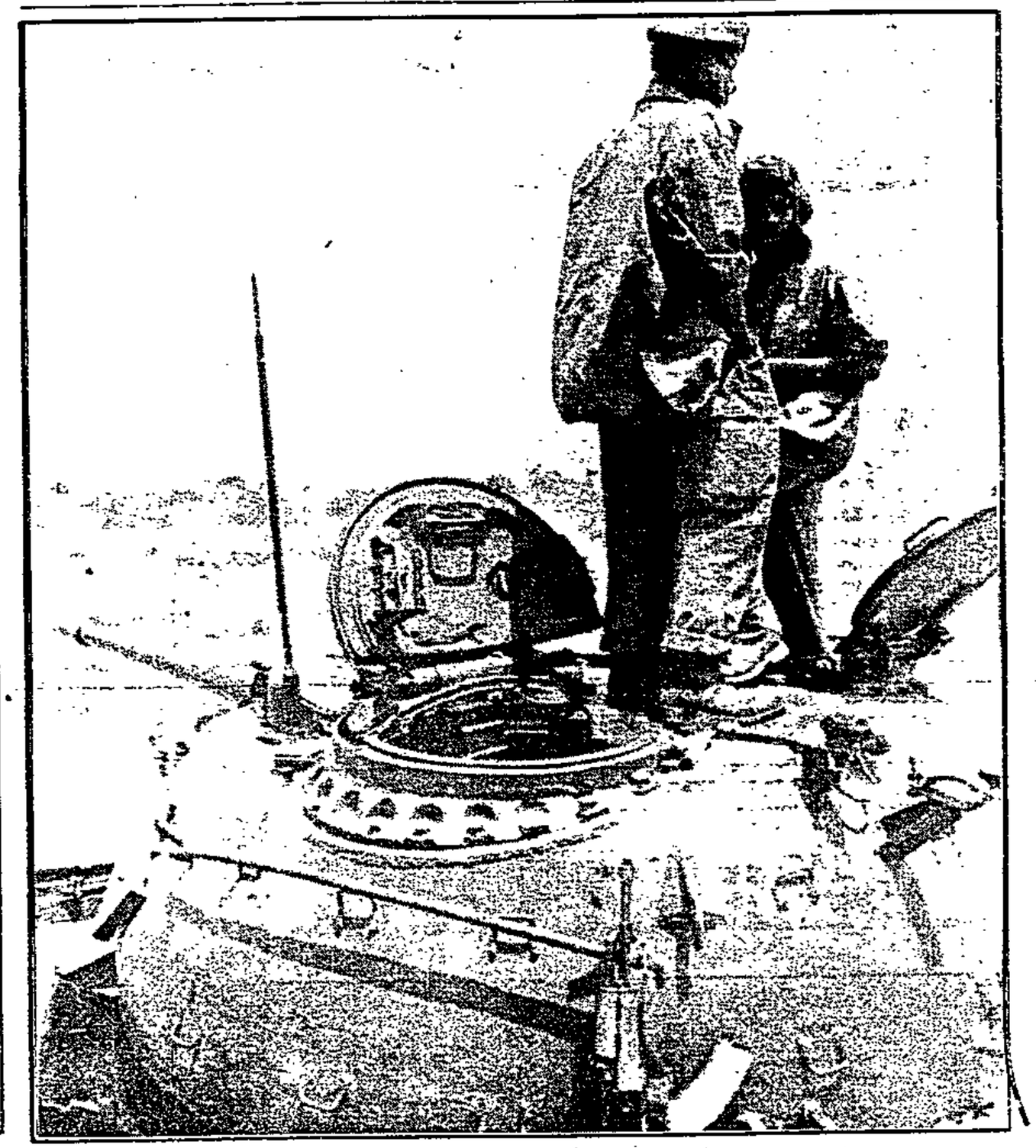
The government denounced this as a sham and said fighting continued. Diplomats in Portugal, which once ruled Angola, said the intensity of clashes appeared to have diminished.

Angolan state radio reported on Tuesday that 13 Unita fighters and four government soldiers had been killed in a clash near the besieged southern city of Menongue.

Unita forces continued hostile manoeuvres round Cuito, another besieged city in central Angola, it added.

Cuito, which has been isolated for nine months, has been the main focus of recent fighting, but the government has reported only sporadic clashes there since Unita declared its ceasefire. The rebel movement said on Monday the unilateral truce would remain in force for the time being but its leadership would issue a fresh statement on Friday. — *Sapa-Reuter.*

■ AIDING UNITA Angola claims large quantities of arms are being unloaded at Matadi and airfreighted to rebels:



Angolan soldiers on a tank in Mabubas .



A young refugee of Angolan civil war huddles against an earthen home in a refugee settlement on the outskirts of Luanda on Tuesday. Pic: AP

Zaire buries the victims of hatred and expediency

WM 1-7/10/93 358

Chris McGreal in North Kivu

THE burial party moved reluctantly across the hillside alive from fresh rains, towards the almost circular area of black.

The men worked for hours in the ruins of the village, the damp charcoal of burnt human flesh rubbing on to their rags.

When they moved on again, they were almost as blackened as the ashes. But, beyond the circle's threshold, lay more work — bodies that had escaped the flames, bleached white by weeks under Zaire's fierce sun.

Until August the remote pathways west of the Nyamulagira volcano on the Rwandan frontier were a ferocious killing ground. For five months, across hundreds of square miles of North Kivu province, village after village was razed.

Victims were skewered by spears, hacked by machetes or shot. Several thousand people died, 250,000 were driven from their homes and land. In some places, only now are they burying the bodies.

It was straightforward "ethnic cleansing" fuelled by ancient prejudices and modern political motives.

In some areas human life has disappeared. In others, selected homes have been destroyed. But victims, church workers and others in the battle zone blame more than historic tensions, pointing to a pattern of similar persecution elsewhere in Zaire in recent months.

In the southern province of Shaba, hundreds of thousands of people have been driven out in ethnic confrontation fuelled by the strategy of President Mobutu Sese Seko to retain power.

But while many of the victims in Shaba are educated city-dwellers and the bloodletting was limited, in North Kivu there has been wholesale slaughter of a poor, rural population. Most of the dead belonged to the region's 2 million Banyarwanda, people with roots in neighbouring Rwanda.

At the turn of the century, when borders with Rwanda were redrawn, some Banyarwanda were roped in to what was then the Belgian Congo. Others were moved across the frontier as plantation labour in the 1920s.

There were new influxes after independence in 1960, as migrants sought land or fled persecution.

In the eyes of Zaireans, all Banyarwanda are outsiders. In parts of North Kivu they make up as much as 80 per cent of the population. Yet they are denied representation or local power. Over the past 30 years, citizenship has been awarded and snatched away.

Even in villages where they are in an overwhelming majority, the chief is nonetheless a "true" Zairean. Banyarwanda are forced to pay the chiefs additional tributes or taxes. They say they are unable to get a fair hearing in land and other legal disputes.

The start of the killing can be traced to murders at a market in Ntoto in March. This does not explain why it spread. From early on, the hand of the authorities was visible.

The Roman Catholic church has encouraged the Banyarwanda to press for their rights. Priests say that, as a result, they have been threatened by the authorities and fear for their lives.

Church workers suspect the hand of President Mobutu. The central government is exploiting local and ethnic tensions to undermine the opposition and brand it anarchic, and strengthen President Mobutu's argument for central control. Once again it permits the president to claim he is the only man who can hold Zaire together.

In July, President Mobutu arrived in the region to do just that. He travelled to the region's main city, Goma, and called in loyal troops from the red berets and his special presidential division to help bring the fighting under control.

He promised the Banyarwanda that anyone living in Zaire since independence will be regarded as a citizen and permitted to vote. He donated 800 billion zaires (£70,000) from what he said was his own funds to assist the refugees. Shortly afterwards, President Mobutu dismissed the provincial governor he had appointed, accusing him of misappropriating the money.

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. B/DAY

Government spokesman Ngongo Luwowo said new banknotes would be circulated to make the payments. 22/10/98

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 12 months. (358)

Unpaid soldiers have regularly run riot in Zaire to protest about the non-payment of salaries. — Sapa-Reuter.

Zaire leader marks takeover

(358) CT 25/11/93

KINSHASA. — Marshal Mobutu Sese Seko yesterday celebrated the 28th anniversary of his rise to power — but many Zaireans 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

The Director
South African Labour & Development
Research Unit (SALDRU)
School of Economics

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 won wide support, an opposition spokesman said. (358) ARG 20/1/94

Troops surrounded and sealed off Mr Tshisekedi's Kinshasa home early yesterday, according to former Tshisekedi government communications minister Lambert Mende.

Kinshasha 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-Reuter.

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. B/Bay

The official said the French West African country's debt with the bank stood at $45m. 1/12/94

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. (358)

The official said a liaison office would remain in Kinshasa under the auspices of the UN Development Programme. — Sapa-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 R1,2bn against Zambia's R48m, because Pretoria subjected Zambian goods to high and stringent taxation. — Sapa

(358) CTP 12/2/94

ARG 2/2/94 (358)

Mobutu authorised thousands of Zaire killings, says Amnesty

LONDON — Amnesty International has accused Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko and his supporters of authorising thousands of killings and political murders.

"There are fears that unless the rule of law is re-established the state could collapse," the human rights group said in a report published here.

"Since President Mobutu announced political reforms in 1990 he and his supporters have allowed or condoned thousands of extra-judicial executions and other unlawful killings of political opponents."

Amnesty called on Western governments "to condemn human rights violations in Zaire and to put pressure on Mr Mobutu and others who order or condone these violations to bring them to an end.

"To date no one is known to have been brought to justice in connection with the violence in several parts of the country," said the report.

Zaire has been racked by violence and political turmoil since Mr Mobutu called multiparty elections in 1990.

Mr Mobutu, who has been in power for 29 years, opposed the decisions taken by a national conference on political reform — and both sides claimed absolute authority.

Etienne Tshisekedi, a premier imposed on Mr Mobutu by the conference, refused to step down as prime minister when the president dismissed him in October 1992 — and stood his ground again when Mr Mobutu named a new premier last March.

Recently the country has had two rival governments, one led by Mr Tshisekedi and backed by the opposition-led transitional legislature and the other by Faustin Birindwa, a Mobutu appointee.

The Mobuto regime has lost the support of its traditional backers — Belgium, France and the United States — and is showing increasing signs of falling apart.

Amnesty cited as an example of abuses the imprisonment of an adviser to Mr Tshisekedi, Felix Mbayi, who endured "four months' detention as a prisoner of conscience before being shot and wounded by men in civilian clothes thought to be members of the security forces".

"The fate of dozens of political detainees, including some 50 soldiers arrested in 1992, has remained unclear," the report said.

"The disregard for fundamental human rights by the authorities and the security forces is largely responsible for the current political crisis."

Amnesty also called on the United Nations and the Organisation of African Unity to consider appointing official representatives to monitor human rights abuses in Zaire. — Sapa-AFP.

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 23. (358)

A relief official with the World Food Programme said communications with areas of Zaire near the Uganda border had been cut off. ARG 3/2/94

The relief official said the refugees would be moved to join other Zairean refugees.

Where 100 families rule and 40 million battle

Star 22/3/94

THE way Zaire stumbles on has to be seen to be believed, reports Richard Dowden from Kinshasa 358

Every day between 700 and 800 people gather in the huge theatre of the bleak, civic, Chinese-built "People's Palace" in Kinshasa. All are in suits, the only women are the langourous secretaries. It could, at first sight, be a meeting of businessmen or perhaps, judging from the pre-eminence of designer suits, flashy ties, gold tie-pins and watches and the whiff of expensive deodorant, it could be a fashion show. This, however, is politics and in this parliament the future of Zaire is being forged. Or maybe it isn't.

About two hours after the official opening time the little gangs of chatting suits are pushed aside by a posse of armed guards dressed for battle who stride across the atrium into the hall. Hurrying along in their midst is a stocky, fit-looking man in a white soutane with a purple waistband and skullcap. This is Archbishop Laurent Monsengwo, the chairman of the conference and possibly the most important figure in Zaire today.

It looks like he is presiding over the forging of a new state, but it is difficult to know if this is real, because Zaire is different.

Civil servants collect their own salary as they go. Some would call it corruption, but since the state does not pay them they only work when someone else pays. Similarly, the state does not pay the army and police so they protect people who pay them. Of course if someone else pays them more they may attack rather than protect.

The biggest payer in Zaire is the President. He owns the country rather than rules it. Zaire is the ultimate Thatcherite dream — or nightmare. There is, indeed, no such thing as society here. Looked at from a European perspective there are the rich, a besuited clan of about 100 families, and there are 40 million poor people living in an Iron Age.

State hospitals and schools are closing down through lack of funds, but this does not affect the "Elite" whose children are educated in Europe. When the jungle swallows up roads, the rich fly. When Zaire's telephone system collapsed, the rich brought in a mobile satellite system.

When there is no food the poor starve, while the rich can buy cake made in Belgium hours before. When the water system breaks down in the city the poor get cholera, the rich can buy Perrier.

But this is a very European way of looking at Zaire. From within, Mobutu is the Patron. He first seized power more than 33 years ago and has been there ever since, living in baroque splendour.

The lives of other Zaireans are taken up with survival.

In 1991 and 1992 the unpaid army, encouraged by the president, turned on the commercial district of each town in Zaire and looted it. The citizens joined in and for four days Zaireans indulged in the most comprehensive orgy of theft and destruction witnessed in modern Africa.

But this was not a popular uprising against bad government. The sacking of Zaire did not happen when inflation reached 71 000 percent, as it did last year, or when there was no food in Kinshasa and no fuel in the rest of the country.

It happened when the army decided it was time to take and then the people felt it was their turn. It was more like an extension of government policy, as if the people had finally understood and adopted the philosophy of their own ruler towards the country — grab as much of it as you can. Now.

The only politician who seems not to have sold out to Mobutu is Etienne Tshisekedi, who was appointed prime minister by the National Conference in August last year. This was a serious blow to Mobutu, and many thought his rule was coming to an end. But Tshisekedi played his cards badly. He tried to sack the governor of the Bank of Zaire and make other appointments without consulting Mobutu or the Sacred Union, the coalition that supports him.

Mobutu sacked him and gave the job to Tshisekedi's deputy, Faustin Birindwa. Since then there have been two governments, neither of them effective, but Mobutu has been given a chance to reclaim the power he lost.

Falling apart

It is this merged, unmanageable mass that the Archbishop is trying to chair. So far its committees have produced two reports on everything, those from the National Assembly favour Mobutu, those from the High Council favour Tshisekedi.

Meanwhile the country is falling apart. Shaba, the southernmost province, has declared autonomy, Kasai, whose diamonds earn Zaire's only foreign exchange at present, refuses to use the new currency, and Kivu, the eastern province which produces much of the country's food, is finding better markets among neighbours.

It is hard to see how change will come. — The Independent News Service.

SOWETAN Friday April 22 1994

Abortions outnumber Russian babies

More towns fall to rebels in Rwanda

Sowetan 22/4/94

FLUSHED OUT Troops trapped in the late president's hometown

358

NAIROBI — The UN Assistance Mission in Rwanda confirmed yesterday that rebel forces had captured the northern town of Byumba, as fighting and ethnic killing continued in the central African nation.

The Rwanda Patriotic Front had announced the capture of Byumba, about 35 kilometres north of the capital Kigali, the Mutura area in the northeast and part of the eastern Buganza area in radio reports.

Pro-rebel Radio Muhabura also claimed that the rebels had made gains in Kigali and surrounded the northwestern town of Ruhengeri, where it said government troops could be "flushed out any time".

A Unamir 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 90 kilometres northwest of the capital, would be a psychologically important prize for the rebels because it is the hometown of the late president Juvenal Habyarimana.

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

Star 3/5/94

Four years ago, an extraordinary fashion change swept Zaire.

Overnight, women swopped African prints for trousers. Men, after decades of wearing a stiff "abacost" 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." (358)

The trigger for this 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 *abacost* — 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, Zaireans 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 previous 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's done 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 centrist 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

358

AFP 15/6/94

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 Mulumba 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. — Sapa-Reuter.

NEWS

Mobutu and Mandela to meet today

Zaire could be key in Angolan conflict

Star 7/7/94

■ SAPA and RODNEY VICTOR

IF MOBUTU can be coerced to put pressure on Jonas Savimbi, the guns in Angola's civil war may finally be silenced

Beleaguered Zairean President Mobutu Seso 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 Alouine 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. 358

Mobutu is expected to detail the Unita leader's case and 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 1 200 Zairean exiles protesting against today's meeting between Mandela and Mobutu, called to discuss the Angolan situation.

Group aims to make Zaire 'ungovernable'

ARG 8/7/94

KINSHASA. — Zaire's hard-line opposition has called for a nation-wide strike against the new government of Prime Minister Kengo wa Dondo.

"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

The Argus Correspondent

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

~~384~~ (358) AR&G 20/6/94

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 Commission 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

(358)

CT 22/8/94

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 blueberets 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 plc London

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ı: one-eighth
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ometer

ı yesterday: 1 032,4 mb
ı today: 1 026,6 mb

ıidity

ı yesterday:
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d

ı yesterday:
17 knots.

Partly cloudy, mild
04 to 16 deg C.

Pretoria
Cloudy and cold
07 to 19 deg C

Durban
Cloudy and cold
10 to 22 deg C

Bloemfontein
Partly cloudy, mild
07 to 21 deg C

Port Elizabeth
Partly cloudy, mild
13 to 20 deg C

40881

Windspeed and direction

Blouberg
56 1723

Muizenberg
788 8226

Kommetje
783 2412

Strand
024 854 7593

Sleeping sickness returns to Zaire at record levels

(358) ARG 9/9/94

KINSHASA. — Sleeping sickness, which kills if it is not treated, has reached record levels in Zaire, threatening to destroy entire communities.

Florent Ekwanzala, head of Zaire's Central Office for Trypanosomiasis, the group of parasite-borne diseases to which sleeping sickness belongs, said there were 11 144 new cases in the first six months of the year, nearly equal to the 11 384 new cases registered for the whole of last year.

"Last year's figure was already the highest since independence in 1960," Dr Ekwanzala 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 Ekwanzala 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 per cent of the population. The number of new cases each year could be as high as 30 000," 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.

B

Zairean coffee farmers too poor to fight disease

(358)

BD 13/12/94

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 tracheomycrose, a deadly fungus that has spread across the robusta belt in Haute Zaire 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 Organisation 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 $3bn 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 1986, coffee earned Zaire a record $281m and up to $188m in 1987, but since 1989 earnings have dwindled to no more than $95m 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 self-sufficient in food, now imports more than 130 000 tons of food a year.—Sapa-Reuter.

Bid to get Zaire's trains back on track

The Argus 9/01/95

358

Transnet is considering investing in bringing more than 500km of Zaire's chaotic redundant rail tracks back to life. DUNCAN GUY of The Argus Foreign Service reports.

Southern Zaire's rail tracks have not had a good reputation for safety against theft.

South African railway wagons have been stripped of axle box covers for cooking pots and rubber hoses, used between trucks, have been melted down so their wire coils can be stuffed into matresses.

But, two years after Transnet's "Operation Rescue" to recover 1 000 railway wagons, the General-manager for transport strategy Andre Heydenrych said the idea to get rolling stock moving from Kamina, a junction on a functioning line, to the Lake Tanganyika port of Kalemie could even take off this year.

"But it will have to involve the participation of the Belgian railway company, SNCB, in conjunction with one of the Zaire railway companies in Lubumbashi," he said.

"We are merely doing the minimum to get trains moving again and looking at minimum amounts of money.

"We shall structure the rates in such a way that a certain amount is set aside for maintenance."

The line is intended to open up traffic to local transport and trade up to the lake.

"We hope that the traffic will generate funds that can improve conditions on the line. But this will not be an opportunity for things to go back up to the old Belgian Congo level," Mr Heydenrych stressed.

South African Foreign Trade Organisation spokeswoman Angela Self said the European Union had recently spent "some money" on Kalemie and two other Lake Tanganyika ports — Bujumbura in Burundi and Kigoma in Tanzania.

"Reviving the railway line is a project that has been up and down in people's minds and eventually needs to happen, especially now with emergency food aid going to Rwanda and Burundi."

Without its railway line functioning, the present access for cargo on to the southern lake is through the Zambian port of Mpulungu, only 100km, including down a steep escarpment drop, from the Chinese-built Tazara line between Zambia and Dar-es-Salaam.

Heydenrych believes the development of Kalemie will put an end to any development at the Zambian port.

"Mpulungu has only had a chance because Kalemie is not working," he said.

But Safto's Self disagrees: "No matter what development takes place at Kalemie, you'll still have to deal with goodness knows what in Zaire."

Recalling "Operation Rescue", Mr Heydenrych said Transnet discovered its 1 000 stranded wagons could not even move.

"Parts had been swiped and melted down for copper, and there were no locomotives or fuel.

"We realised that if we wanted our wagons back we would have to invest. So we sent up spares, five locomotives and a train filled with fuel.

"When we arrived with our colours, their spirits rose so much. They used our locos to haul local traffic.

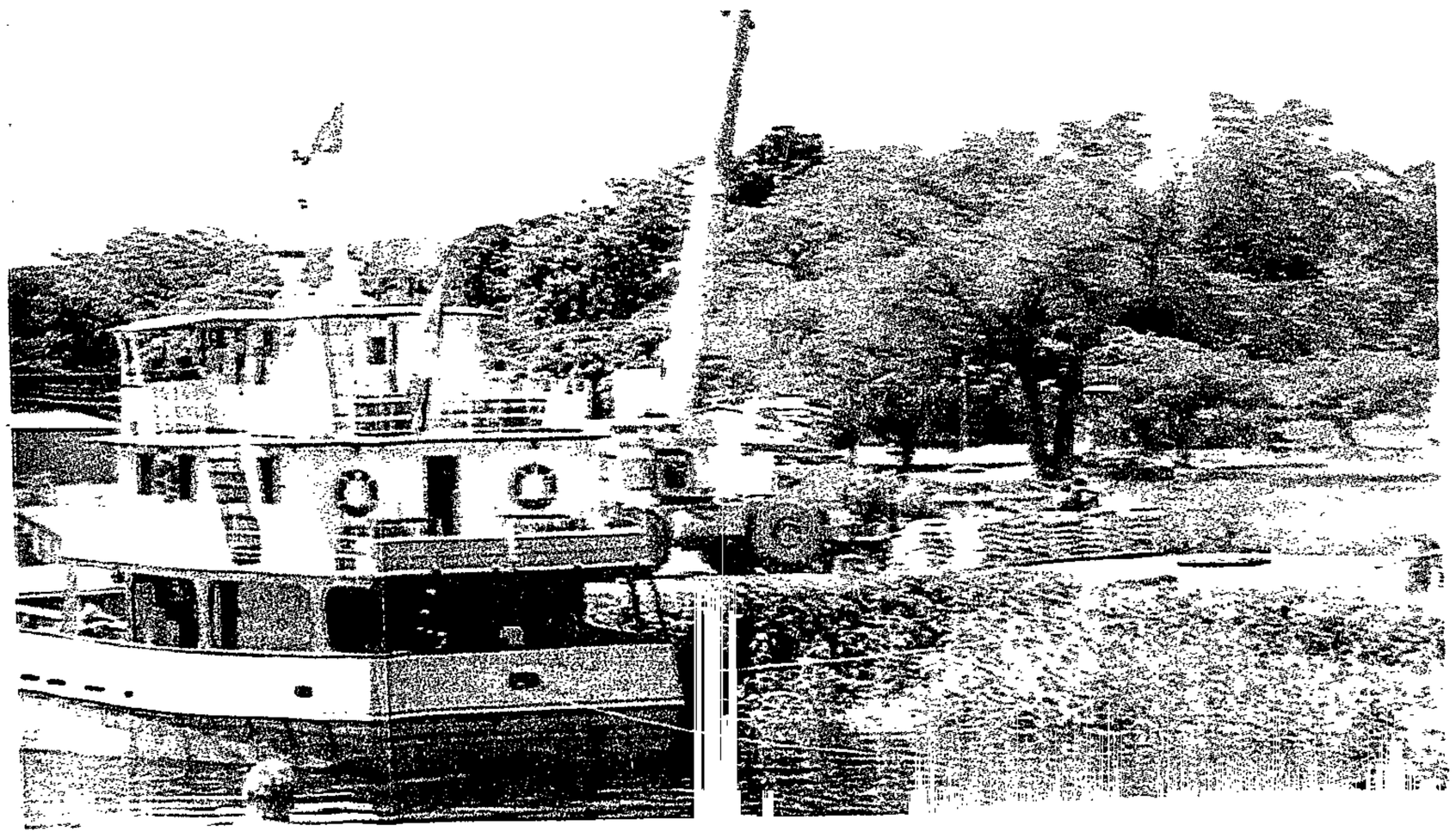
"Just getting something moving is better than nothing," he added.

But Mr Heydenrych insisted Transnet's approach is not charitable.

Since resumption of leasing locomotives, wagons and tarpaulins to Zaire, requiring upfront payments, Transnet has managed to recover outstanding debts of R2-million from Zaire.

At any one time, 7 000 South African wagons are north of the border, he said.





Pictures: DUNCAN GUY
The Argus Foreign Service

RAIL DESTINATION: Tanganyika, the world's second deepest and Africa's longest lake.

FLAGS FLYING: A Burundian vessel flies its national flag at the stern and the Zambian flag at the mast while docked at Mpulungu on the Zambian shore of Lake Tanganyika. Without its railway line functioning, Mpulungu is the only access for cargo onto the southern lake.

Transnet recovering debts by leasing rolling stock

(358) star 10/1/95

SA may rehabilitate Zairean lines

■ BY DUNCAN GUY
STAR FOREIGN SERVICE

Transnet is considering an investment to restore more than 500 km of Zaire's redundant rail tracks only two years after its "Operation Rescue" to recover 1 000 wagons in the chaotic country.

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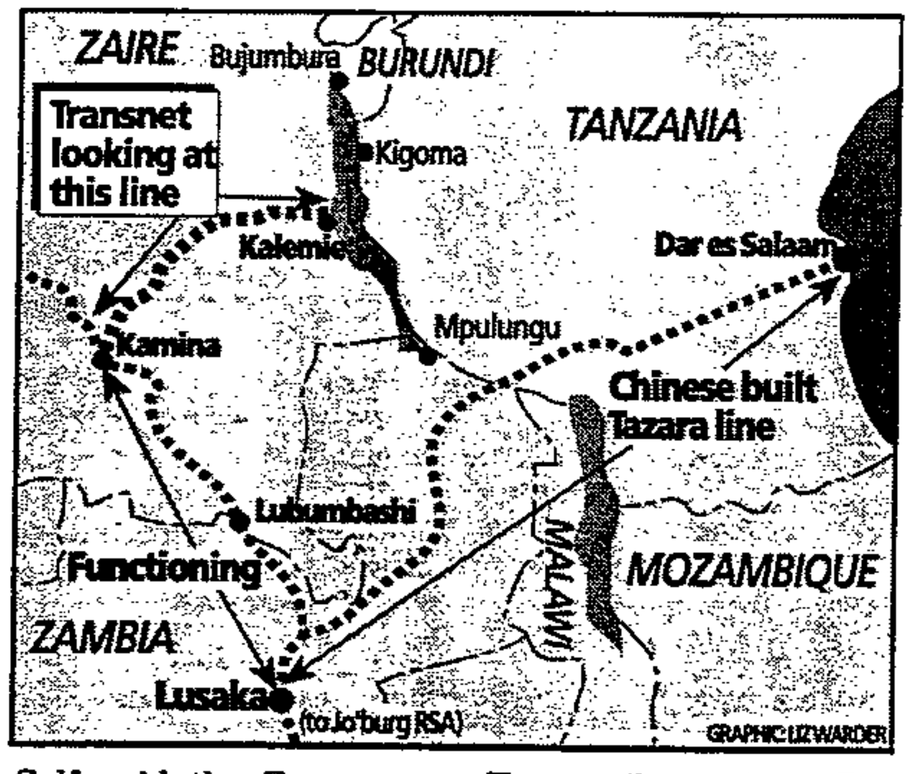

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Melted down

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Zaire's safe water dries up

CT 15/2/95 (358)

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 R392 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 German 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 sterilising chemicals. People were urged to pay their bills.

(358) Star 15/2/95

Women want more recognition at work

Star 16/2/95 (355A)

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 businesswomen.

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, hierachical management structures of most companies.

The breakfast meeting was hosted by Unisa's Graduate School of Business Leadership and the speaker was Trix Coetzer, 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 paypacket."

She said the future prosperity of companies lay in encouraging initiative and leadership, rather than experience and management — a development that would favour women.

Coetzer 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.

Small step forward for womankind

PUSHING AHEAD

Thousands of women around the world will celebrate International Women's Day on March 7. But just what is the position of South African women almost a year after the implementation of the new South Africa? **GLENDA DANIELS** reports.

(355A) Star 20/2/95

Remember the Women's Charter for Effective Equality?

For those of you who don't, it is a sort of "freedom charter" for women in the new South Africa, drawn up by the Women's National Coalition (WNC).

But the new South Africa has been around for nearly a year now and women's lives have not changed much.

National convener of the WNC Jean Ngubane says some small things have changed and there is much to look forward to.

For Ngubane, the increased number of women in government is cause for encouragement.

She feels that with more lobbying from the WNC before October's local government elections, more women could be encouraged to run.

Two women have been appointed Constitutional Court judges and new tax laws for married women are about to be instituted to end the presumption that it is the husbands who are the breadwinners.

The WNC, formed in September 1991, united 93 women's groups in a front to promote gender equality.

It was intended to unite women from across the political and social spectrum including the ANC, IFP, DP, Women for Peace, Black Sash, PAC, Kontak, Powa, Cosatu women and the Women's Bureau.

Such a show of unity was unprecedented in the history of South Africa.

The WNC conducted research and solicited demands from women from all walks of life — urban, rural, middle-class, working-class, black, white, young and old.

This resulted in the Women's Charter for Effective Equality, intended to give a voice to more than 3 million women.

On August 9 (National Women's Day), the charter was handed to President Nelson Mandela and the nine provincial premiers.

But there has since been no word on the charter, which is underpinned by the principle of equality for women in every aspect of life in SA.

"Our priority now is to ensure the equality clause appears in the new constitution. It was a major victory that it appeared in the first draft," says Ngubane.

"The status of the charter, as a guiding document for the decision-makers, will ensure this happens. The new constitution would be a failure and you could not call it a new SA for women if this did not happen.

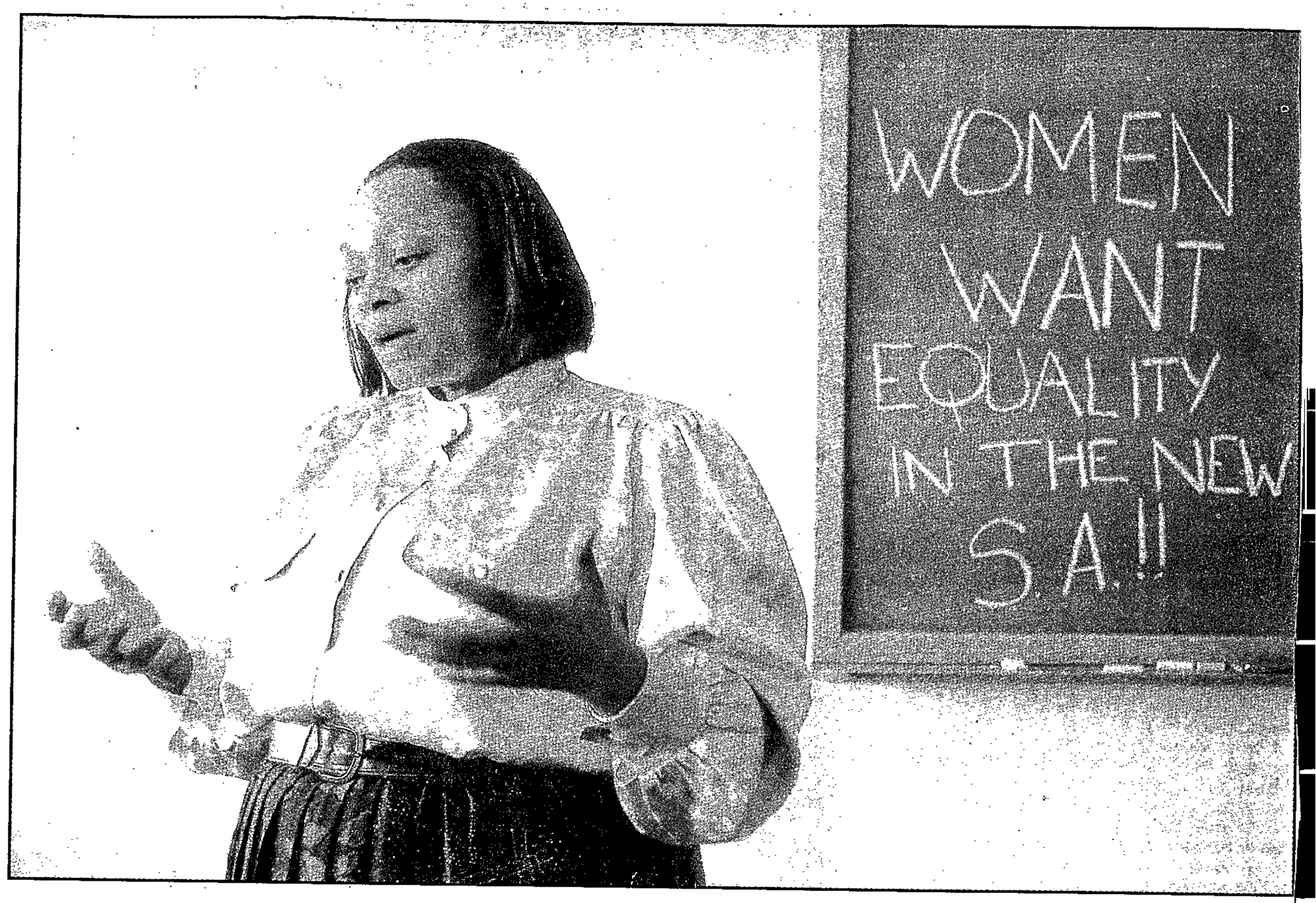
"Our next important task is to strategise and to find ways to ensure implementation of the charter, otherwise it is just a document of principles.

"We are at present ensuring that gender desks are set up in each ministry so that there is equality, for example, in health, education, agriculture and RDP.

"These desks or commissions would monitor gender sensitivity in the way decisions in society or laws are made," she says.

Ngubane says the WNC is hopeful women in South Africa will see change because the previous government did not have a clear policy promoting women, and this government is in the process of formulating one.

A further major gain for women, according to Ngubane, is that the charter clearly endorses the pro-choice option with regard to abortion.



Working for women's equality . . . Jean Ngubane is national convener of the Women's National Coalition. PICTURE: JODI BIEBER

"For years thousands of women have been having illegal, backstreet abortions. We want this stopped and for women to have proper care," she says. "Parliament is busy debating abortion and they will give us a decision soon."

But meanwhile rural South African women would just prefer a better life, with enough food and clothing and access to water and education.

Streetwise Mobutu is master of roads game

(358) BD 22/2/95

KINSHASA — Two years ago, the journey from Zaire's port of Matadi to the capital took five hours.

Bored expatriates would head for Muanda, 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 tooth-rattling, 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 145 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 ageing 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 Mpozo 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 (#58)

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.

Star 28/2/95

Reports: Star Foreign Service, Sapa, Reuter, Financial Times, AP and AFP

Zaire's public schools go public

WM 3-9/3/95

358

Alain Shungu Ngongo
in Brazzaville

ZAIREAN 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 uncaring 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 dictatorial 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 Ntambue. "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 uncles."

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 all the snack-bars in my neighbourhood 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's prime minister Kengo wa Dongo.

(258) ARG 18/3/95

■ In the confusion that is Zaire, the official promise of democracy is immobilised by economic decay and corruption. **DUNCAN GUY** of the Weekend Argus Foreign Service reports from Kinshasa.

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 reknowned 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 (R75,6 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.



Pictures: DUNCAN GUY

Mobutu Sese Seko still enjoys a following in Zaire with his face emblazoned on "panya" wrappings worn by Zairean women.

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 Révolution" also appears to have made something of a comeback in the last three years. More and more people wear — apparently voluntarily — the "panya" 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.

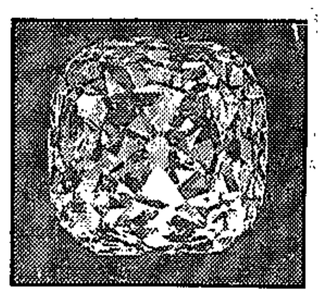
But, perhaps too, the delicate balance that contains Zaire's chaos and keeps the lid on the time bomb is the acute memory of life after the 1991 free-for-all: Harder than ever and much more expensive.

Zaire's illicit diamond traffic enriches diggers and dealers but does nothing for the country

Star 18/3/95

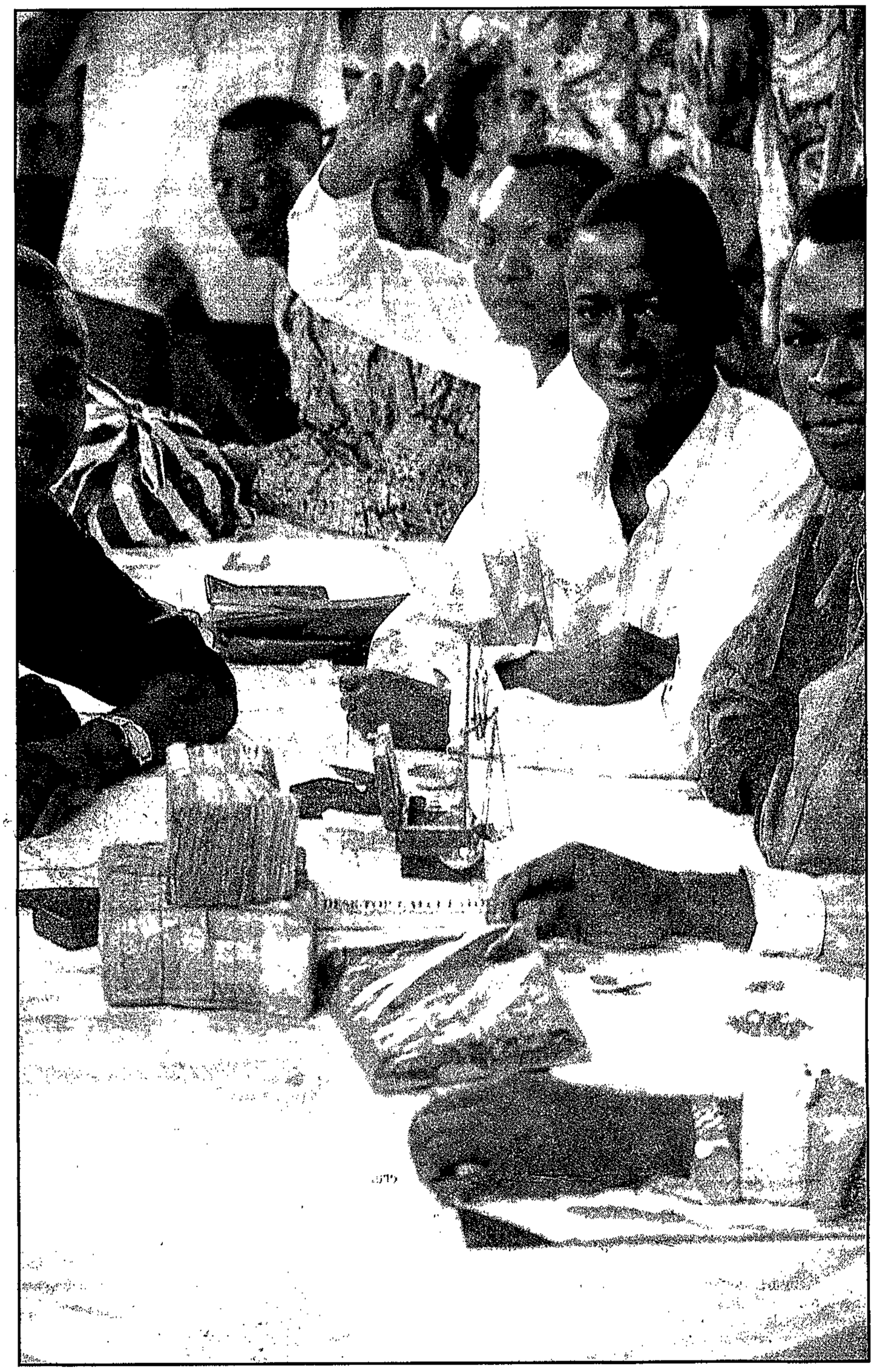
(358)

-muggling's glitterati





ZAIRE'S diamond wealth has little impact on the poverty of most Zairois. DUNCAN GUY of the Foreign News Service visits the 'Wild West' diamond towns.



BUSINESS IS BOOMING: Hundreds of precious stones, scales and piles of near-worthless "old zaire" notes clutter the bustling open diamond market in Mbuji-Mayi. *PHOTOGRAPHS: DUNCAN GUY*

TJIKAPA (Zaire) — Where the jungle invades the edge of an airstrip, plane wrecks rust and shiny 4x4 vehicles come and go with purpose. This is an isolated town in Zaire's West Kasai province and it feels like a South American "coke" camp.

But here "the goods", as diamond traders call their wares, are uncut stones dug up in rivers that flow from Angola, 60km away.

Informal diggers produce the bulk of Zaire's diamonds, mostly of industrial quality. They can earn anything between R10 000 and R200 000 for a stone, sold at local markets as if they were tomatoes or mealies, or to exporters in more formal shops or *comptoirs* — 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 go straight to Belgium and some to South Africa, but Zaire diamonds also disappear into the nine neighbouring countries over "the sieve of a border", as Prime Minister Kengo wa Dongo calls it.

"The Congo Republic, for instance, has no diamond resources but in 1993 it exported $355-million (R1,27-billion) worth of diamonds," said Kengo.

"Both diamonds and gold from Zaire also go through to Bujumbura in Burundi, Kigali in Rwanda, Kampala in Uganda, Dar es Salaam in Tanzania. Maybe Nairobi too.

"If you sum up all these exports Zaire has lost, they come to more than $1-billion (R3,6-billion) a year."

Kengo told how diamond production increased six-fold in 1982 when, during a previous stint as prime minister, he made it legal for citizens to trade diamonds and gold in Zaire.

Ironically, the last vestiges of control are to keep a strict check on non-Zairois entering the diamond areas.

Foreign observers rarely go into the area. I had twice attempted, but failed, to enter in 1991. Once I was ordered off an aircraft at Kinshasa's N'djili Airport and the second time I failed to find further transport having hitched on lorries halfway from Kinshasa.

FOREIGNERS may, however, obtain perfectly legal export licences. But once your papers are official, it's a free-for-all and the common practice is to sell a small quantity of diamonds through official channels while putting the rest into the smuggling network.

The premier has no regrets about having introduced liberalisation.

"It was a necessary evil because restrictions against the trade of minerals did not stop fraud, and we believe that with liberalisation we could provide incentives for the private sector to exploit the diamond sector better in order to improve the country's forex reserves," said Kengo.

He claimed that before this liberalisation, diamond production was only R125-million a month. It immediately rose by R18 million, but when he returned to office 12 years later last June, chaos had reasserted itself and Zaire was officially selling diamonds worth only R47-million a month.

"I believe that if we can stop this fraud we could export the equivalent of $50 to $60-million (R180 to R216-million) a month," he said.

Bigtime smugglers are widely believed to be members of the government itself — politicians and generals close to President Mobutu Sese Seko.

Zaire has several diamond areas where "the goods" are traded openly, including the city of Mbuji-Mayi in East Kasai province — 300km from Tjikapa, where Miba, a largely State-owned company, operates a formal mine.

A newer, informal diamond area has opened up on the rivers in the central area of deep jungle around Kisangani. Diamonds from here are characterised 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-changer in the diamond market at Mbuji-Mayi.



▷ **DIAMONDS IN THE ROUGH:** In Mbuji-Mayi's open market, diamonds are sold among tomatoes, 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.

Senior members of the diamond — gold branch at John Vorster Squa — this week returned from a visit to the diamond area.

"Gee but there are diamonds in the country," remarked Colonel Ko— Schreuder, who made the journey w— Adjutant-Officer George Seriteng.

South African ambassador Jan — Deventer had organised their familiarisation trip into Zaire's diamond wor— as part of a co-operation initiative.

Schreuder acknowledged the s— of Zaire's diamond smuggling probl— but nonetheless said optimistically "We could exchange information wi— Zaire. Maybe if the two countries t— it, it could be reduced."

Although no one would confirm t— Angolan rebel movement UNITA might be selling diamonds at Mbuji-Mayi or Tjikapa, it is generally believed that many of the diamonds sold in Zaire originate from war-torn Angola.

In these two towns the ungoverned diamond trade has resulted in a US dollar with an unrealistic value.

"People often have a false impression of dollars," said a British buyer from Sediza, the De Beers company in Zaire, which has a buying operat— aimed partly at keeping prices up.

"The smallest note in which they are paid is a $100 bill and, to some degree, that affects local prices."

Zaire's complex political situat— has also resulted in the fragmenta— of its monetary system, which adds another unique dimension to life in the Kasai diamond area.

The region refuses to recognise the introduction in September of a ne— currency, the new zaire, which knocked the zeroes off the old currency when it was in four-digit inflation.

Everywhere except Kasai, new zaires came on to the streets valued at nine to the dollar — but now are more than 3 500 to one.

In the Kasai region, the "old zaire", based directly on the dollar through diamond exports, has maintained its old value at 16-million to one.

Much of Zaire's inflation has been caused by the production of counterfeit money. Fingers have been pointed at the Lebanese community for this, and at previous prime minister Faustin Birindwa for allowing printers in Argentina and Brazil to print the old currency at liberty, then use it to buy hard currency on the black market in Zaire.

The diamond-rich Kasai is further influenced by political differences with the southern copper-mining province of Shaba, which used to be the engine of Zaire's economy until the fall in the world copper price.

THERE was a rash of ethnic cleansing in Shaba in 1993 against Kasai people who had lived there for a generation and performed largely artisan skills on the mines.

They fled back to their parental homes but remain alienated there too. Today some 250 000 are housed in refugee camps for "internally displaced people" outside Mbuji-Mayi and have not become party to diamond-digging.

A United Nations World Food Programme representative in Mbuji-Mayi said: "Locals are happy to have them here but only if they are not working the diamonds. They seem to hold on to that for themselves."

While there's notably less hunger and begging in Mbuji-Mayi than in other places in Zaire, there is little evidence that any of the diamond dollars have been invested in the diamond towns other than for the sake of purchasing more stones.

"That's the problem with the whole of Zaire," said an expatriate.

"There's a philosophy of emptying the country of everything and putting nothing back. Rich Zaireans don't bank their money here but rather in Europe."

They follow the example of President Mobutu, a dictator of 30 years who has accrued a fortune believed to match the country's debt.

Zaire faces long haul to self-sufficiency

ARG 25/3/95 (358)

■ Spoornet is slowly making tracks into Zaire, helping to get goods into the diamond areas. **DUNCAN GUY** reports for Argus Foreign Service from Lubumbashi.

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 unearthed 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, often on Spoornet trucks, to the station at Mwine Ditu, 1 300km into Zaire. The occasional train goes even further — to the brewery town of Kananga or the tin mining centre at Kindu.

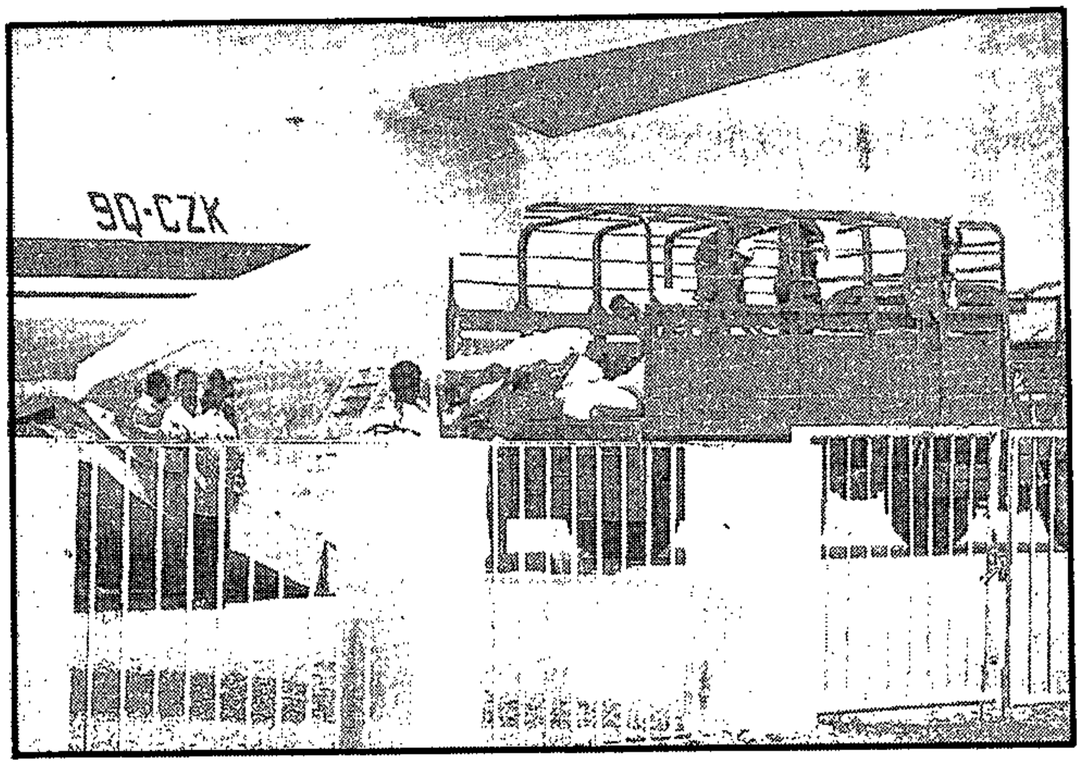
Spoornet has an agreement to ensure movement through southern Zaire with the Lubumbashi-based state railway company, Office Des Chemins de Fer de Sud (OCS). A third company, Southern Rail, based in Lubumbashi, was also involved in the agreement until February, ensuring that Spoornet receives its payments from OCS.

Spoornet 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 Kalemie on Lake Tanganyika.

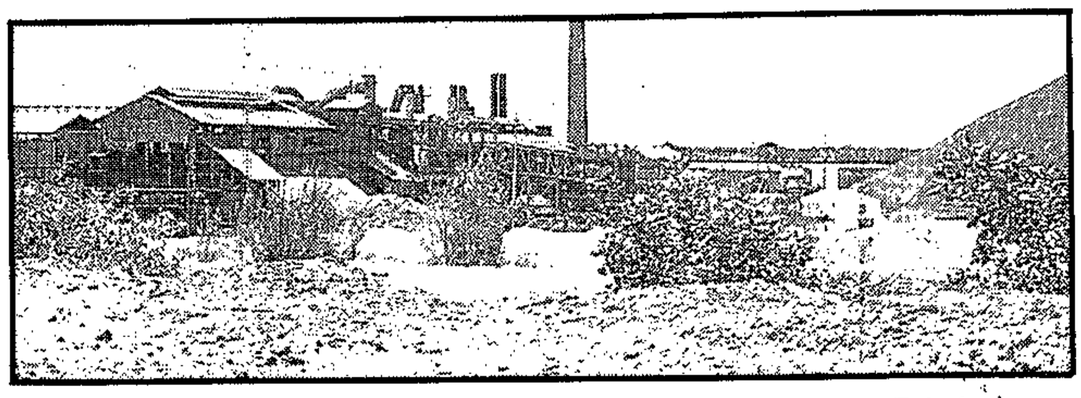
"But it's still early days," said Mr Lombard. "We do not yet have a clear cut agreement with Zaire.

"At present we are trying to assist the country in uplifting the level of operational activities. Once traffic picks up, we hope it will snowball and we shall be able to plough back into the infrastructure and get things going."



Pictures: DUNCAN GUY

□ **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 Waucquez 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 Waucquez.

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 there 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.

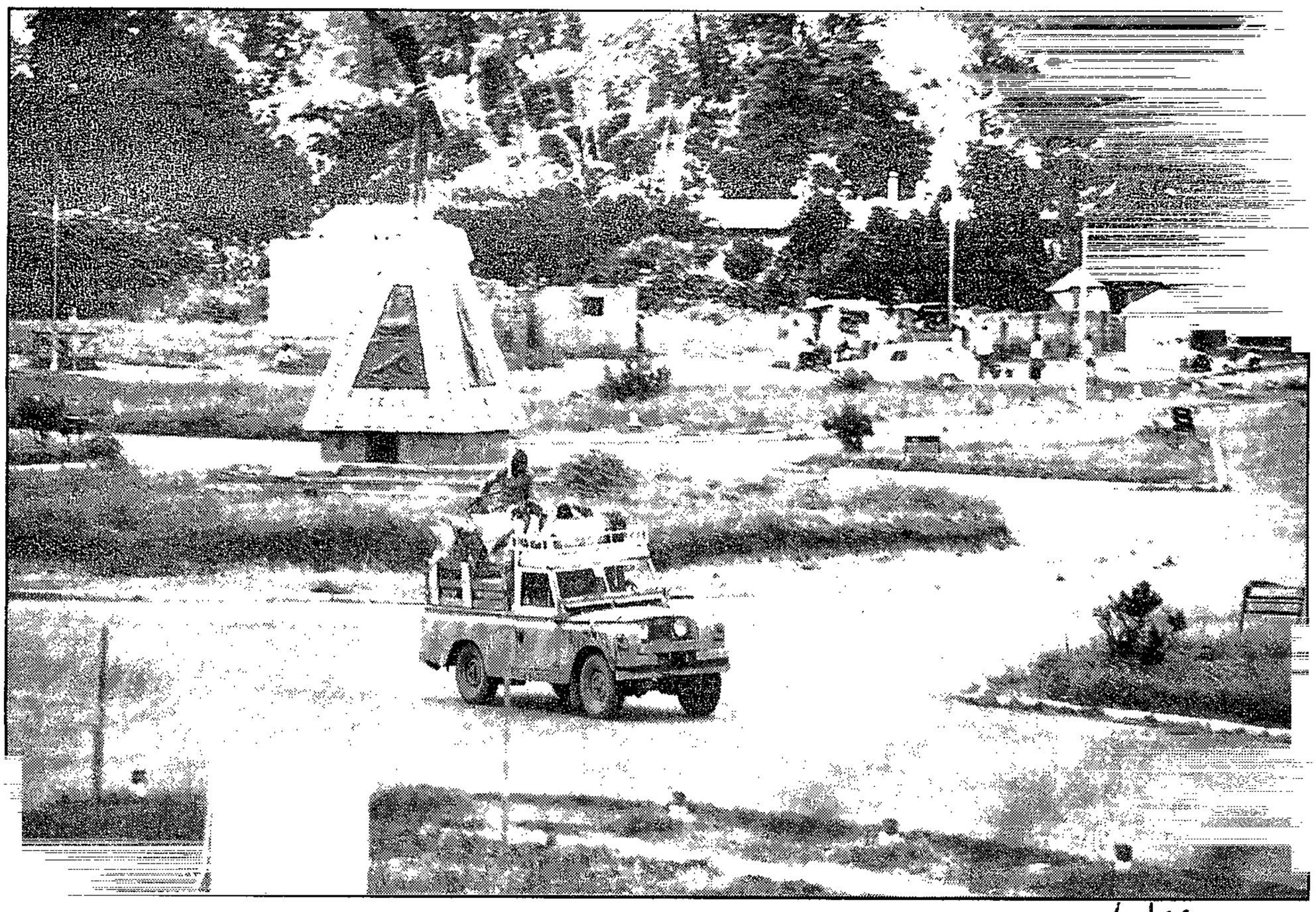
"They then load on maize and travel to the last station before Lubumbashi where they offload it once again."

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 Kaniama, passengers jumped out of the cars and staff sprang from out of the locomotive as wild bees attacked the train," said the source.



Star 27/3/93

Zaire's vital but frail artery

358

SPOORNET is slowly making tracks into Zaire, helping to get goods into the diamond areas. Duncan Guy reports for The Star Foreign Service from Lubumbashi

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"The locomotive driver is bribed. It's far too profitable for him to stop doing this. 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 other unavoidable mishaps on the train line penetrating Zaire's interior.

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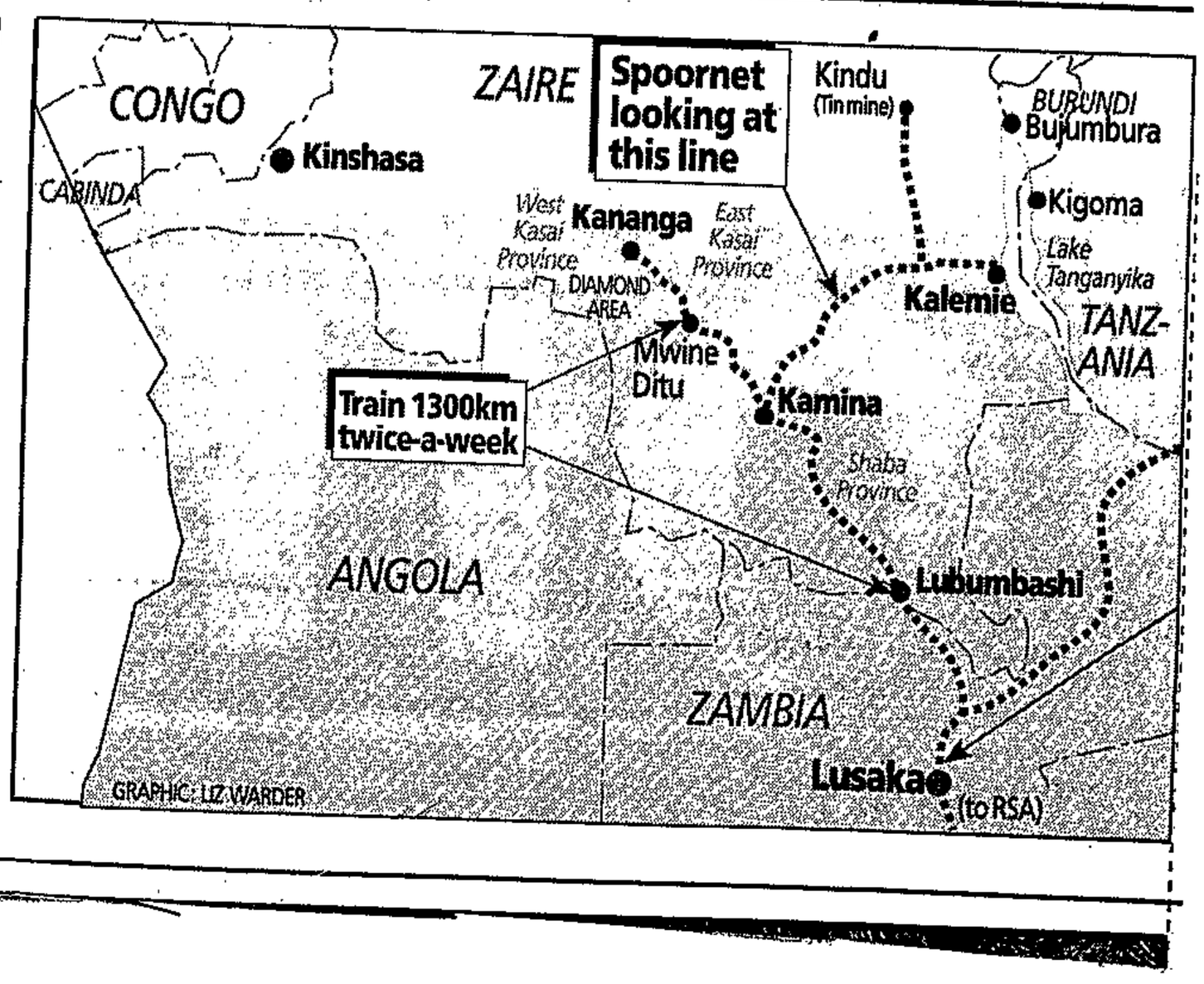
Road versus rail . . . a battered Land-Rover, carrying charcoal from Zaire's forests, rounds a memorial to the ruling Movement Populaire de la Revolution, in Lubumbashi, once Zaire's "copper capital". Zaire's apalling roads make rail transport vital.

PICTURE: DUNCAN GUY



Mobutu signs symbolic Budget: President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire yesterday signed the country's symbolic 1995 Budget, providing for revenue equalling $468 million against spending of $496 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. (358) CT(BR) 6/4/95

NEW

'WE EKE OUT A LIVING BY SELLING VISAS'

Unpaid diplomats living on the streets

CT 19/5/95 (358)

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 proving 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. — Sapa-Reuter

(358)

Zaire uses all its weapons to fight fear

(358) WM 2-8/6/95

Superstition and science have joined forces against the Ebola virus. Frédéric Fritscher 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 this extraordinary white American missionary and medical doctor.

Did he not put this terrible hex on the town ... the Ebola virus, the hæmorrhagic 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 Kuilu 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.

"People here think he really has too many powers," explained Moteba Ngoya, the Protestant minister of Kazamba, a working-class district in the south of the town. As a minister, he was "not certain of believing" the story. But as a "simple mortal", he was forced to agree that "there is some truth in it".

The legend of Dr Fontaine has had a calming effect on Kikwit's inhabitants in their confrontation with the Ebola virus — "our ancestors had never heard of it". The market is again buzzing with activity. Everybody has his own story to tell. The traders have changed neither their habits nor their high prices.

Formerly a prosperous place with the world's largest oil palm plantation, Kikwit has lost its shine. Residents have great difficulty in finding the resources to procure the manioc that makes up their staple diet.

"They came up to the field the other day in their car with a loud-hailer to explain what the illness was, what we should and shouldn't do," said Nissuana Kapuka, a part-time government employee. "It works," he conceded. "Even those who don't believe in the virus heed the advice. Leaflets in French and Kicongo 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 any more. 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 townspeople are shocked that they are not allowed to look after their dead in the traditional way.

"In our tradition," said Jean-Paul Kimassola, "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 outsize 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.



Recycling disposable gloves: A Zairean Red Cross volunteer hangs out disinfected gloves that have been used to treat Ebola patients (above), while a man dressed in a traditional dance costume (left) professes sympathy for those who have died of the virus outside the hospital in Kikwit PHOTOGRAPHS: DAVID GUTTENFELDER/AP

"This," explained Lieutenant-Colonel René Katuiki, 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 haemorrhagic 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 Mbumba, 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".

Mbumba 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 in 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, Kilumba 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 lack 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 Dondo'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 cast 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 leaders

mandate over, say rivals

(358) CT 13/7/95

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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.

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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

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10 die in Zaire political strife

KINSHASA: Zaire's government yesterday blamed a veteran radical leader loyal to murdered independence prime minister Mr Patrice Lumumba for weekend political violence which killed 10 people.

Information Minister Mr Masegabio 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 "banditry". 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 Nsinga Udjuu 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

ST 31/7/95

358

Pro-Lumumba party hard hit

(358) sowetan 8/8/95

Lumumbists count their dead and wounded in wake of violent attacks

KINSHASA – Thousands of members of the largest mainstream opposition party rallied in Kinshasa on Sunday.

But followers of the party named for the late prime minister, Patrice Lumumba, who led a secessionist drive in Eastern Kasai province before he was assassinated in 1961, were still trying to recoup from last week's attacks.

About 32 people were allegedly killed and several young girls were raped during the rampage by soldiers at the compound of Lumumba Party leader, Antoine Gizenga, last Saturday.

Exaggerated numbers

The number of victims could not be confirmed, other anti-government leaders said the Lumumba Party had exaggerated the numbers. Windows of the two-story stucco home that also served as party headquarters were smashed, and hundreds of pink Lumumbist membership cards, party documents and scorched sacks of zaires, the country's feeble currency, were scattered amid the gutted rooms.

Slashed furniture and bloody clothes, revealed something terrible had happened here.

By their count, 128 of their members are still being detained, including 32 whom they believe are at the notoriously brutal Makala prison in Kinshasa.

Forty-two Lumumbists have been killed in the last week. 135 injured and 24 have disappeared. — *Sapa-AP.*

Zaire's currency takes a dive as public sector payouts start

ARG 16/9/95 (358)

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 9 500 and 10 000 new Zaires. A week ago the rate was 7 350 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 not pay them, but when we pay them the consequences are devastating for purchasing power." — Reuter.

Mbuji-Mayi diggings spew diamonds

(358) CT(BR) 17/10/95

By James Tomlins

INDEPENDENT FOREIGN SERVICE

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 diggings 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.

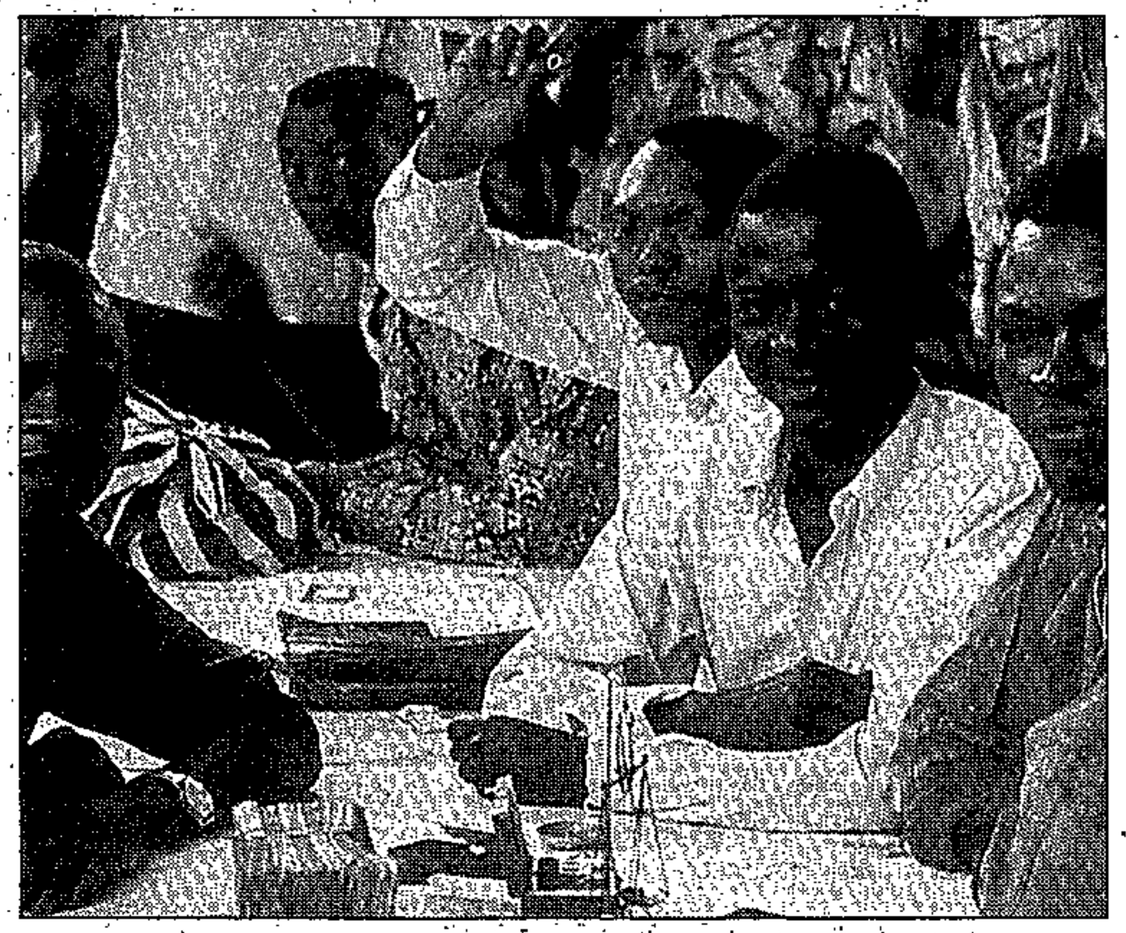
Marcel, a prospector, reckoned that he earned from R800 to R3 200 a month with his concession worked by 30 diggers in five-man teams.

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.



FREE-FOR-ALL *Informal miners selling stones in open markets in Zaire*

PHOTO: DUNCAN GUY

Zaireans resisting currency reform

CT(BR) 17/10/95 (358)

BY MATTHEW TOSTEVIN

REUTER

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 Diyoka 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.



INFORMAL *Banking done in Zaire's streets*

PICTURE: DUNCAN GUY

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

(358) Star 17/10/95

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Diamond free-for-all ... Informal miners in Mbuli-Mayi, Zaire dig for stones then sell them in open markets. The traders use Zaire's old currency based on the diamond trade Photo: Duncan Guy

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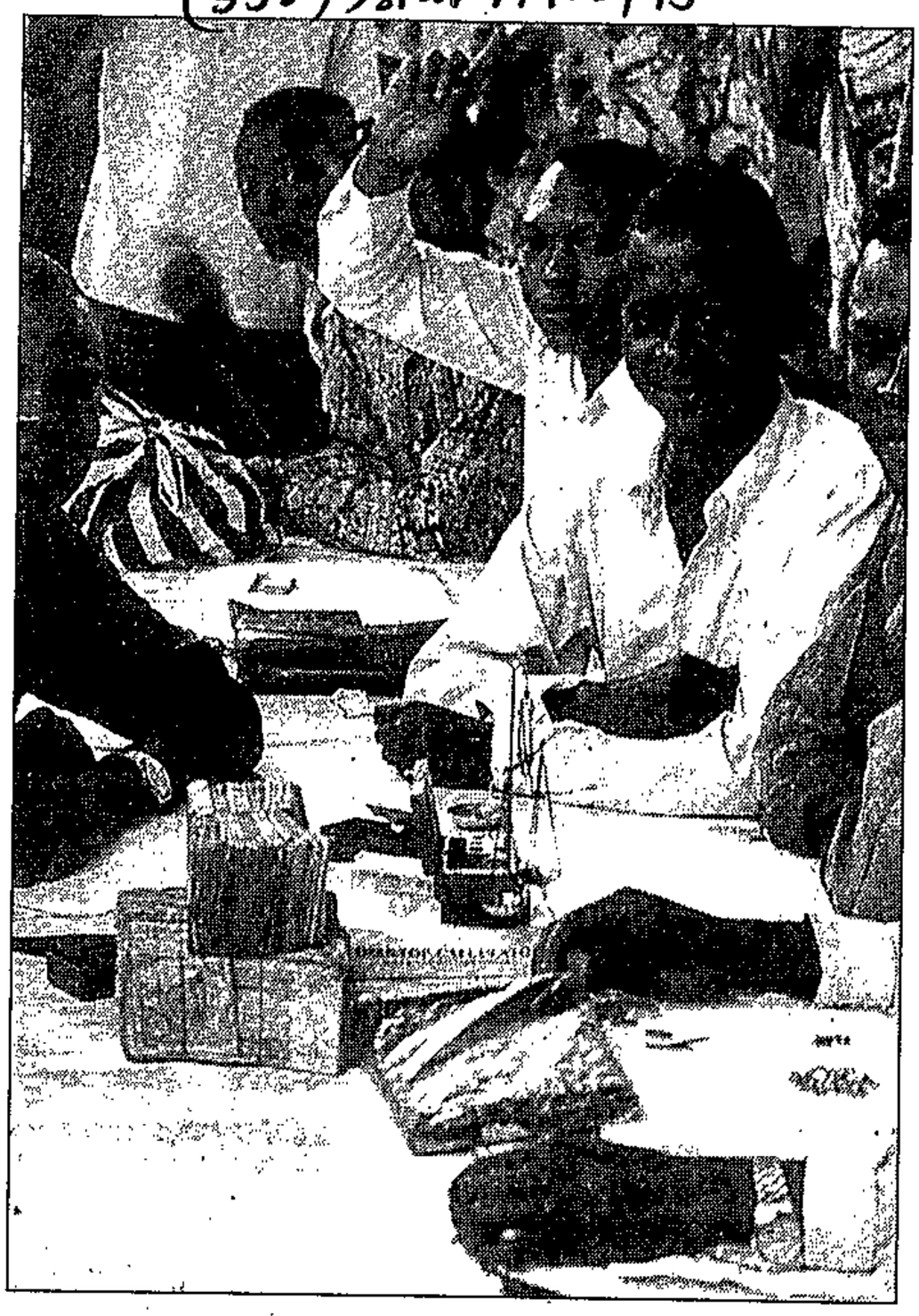

Diamond free-for-all ... Informal miners in Mbuli-Mayi, Zaire dig for stones then sell them in open markets. The traders use Zaire's old currency based on the diamond trade

Photo: Duncan Guy

Sparkling future for diamond mine

(358) ARG 18/10/95

The Argus Foreign Service

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.

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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?

MOYIGA NDURU of International Press Services reports from Nyanga, Zimbabwe, on a new plan to alleviate southern Africa's water shortage. (358) ARG 22/11/95

THE rivers and dams that provide water to towns, villages and farmlands in southern Africa are slowly drying up. Even the mighty Zambezi is just a shadow of its former self.

The Kariba dam, which it feeds and which supplies Zimbabwe and Zambia with electricity, is just centimetres above the lowest point at which its generators can operate.

Drought has battered the region in the past decade and, if it continues at the same rate, there will be little water to be found throughout southern Africa in three decades' time, experts say.

A no-hope situation? Not quite. There could be a solution, experts say: Zaire.

Zaire has most of central Africa's rain forests and a quarter of Africa's water resources, including the Zaire River, 4 700 km long, running through areas with heavy rainfall. The average annual precipitation in some zones is as high as 2 200 mm.

According to Alan Conley of the South African Department of Water Resources and Forestry, the Zaire River dwarfs all waterways south of it.

"The capacity is over 10 times that of the Zambezi and of the order of 100 times that of the Orange or Okavango," he says.

Besides, the potential of the Inga hydro-electric dam, powered by the Zaire, is estimated at at least 45 000 mW, more than sufficient to meet the present electricity demand of the whole of southern Africa.

One idea discussed at a November 16-17 meeting on integrated development and regional water resources, held at Nyanga in Zimbabwe and organised by the Harare-based Southern African Foundation for Economic Research, was that of building a 140 km pipeline to pump water from Zaire into the Zambezi.

The largest river south of the Zaire, it rises in eastern Angola, flows south through Zambia and then flows generally eastwards, forming the borders between Zambia and Namibia, and Zambia and Zimbabwe, before crossing Mozambique to the Indian Ocean.

The Zambezi River Trust of Zimbabwe has already commissioned a Swedish consultant to explore the feasibility of the Zaire-Zambezi pipeline.

"I think what we need is the political will to get the project rolling," says Victor Kasimona, a leading water engineer in Zambia.

The project would also benefit Zaire, since, while its southern neighbours are strapped for water, it has too much.

"The swampy river is constraining development in that country," explains Eric Bloch, a Zimbabwean economist, who supports the idea of a water pipeline.

The swamps along parts of the river are impeding Zaire's efforts to build roads, railways and other infrastructure, he says.

The Zaire's water could go a long way towards reducing the water woes of southern Africa, where the demand for water is projected to rise almost three per cent annually between now and 2020.

At least three of the region's countries — Botswana, Namibia and South Africa — are acutely short of water.

In Namibia, for example, demand for state-supplied water increased from 37-million cubic millilitres a year in 1970 to 95-million a year in 1993, an average of 4,2 percent, and well above the population growth rate of three percent.

Rainfall is erratic, unreliable and unevenly distributed, making Namibia the most arid country in the southern African region.

Botswana is not much better off.

"In Botswana, we drill up to 300 m to get water underground," says Moremi Sekwale, a top water engineer in the capital Gaborone.

Demand for water is also critical in South Africa which accounts for only 10 percent of the total water resource in the region although it is home to about one-third of the 120-million southern Africans.

If present trends continue, there will be virtually no water in the three countries within 30 years, according to Thomas Mpofu of the UN Development Programme.

Not all experts in the region, however, support the idea of tapping water from Zaire.

"There has always been a constant amount of 102 cu km of water in the Zambezi. This is enough for use in Zimbabwe for the next 300 years," says Sekwale.

"I suggest we tap the water in Zaire for generating power in time of drought in southern Africa."

According to Sekwale, there is plenty of water for everyone. What is required is to take water from areas where it is underutilised and move it to areas of high demand.

One such initiative is the Lesotho Highlands water project, designed to pump water from the mountain kingdom to South Africa, but the project is hotly opposed by environmental groups and people who depend on the rivers that are to be tapped. — Sapa-IPS

Bold plan to make the fields fertile again

(358) Star 28/11/95

Swampy areas lining parts of the mighty Zaire River are holding up development of roads, railways and other infrastructure

By Moyiga Nduru
Sapa-IPS

The rivers and dams that provide water to towns, villages and farmlands in southern Africa are slowly drying up. Even the mighty Zambezi is just a shadow of its former self.

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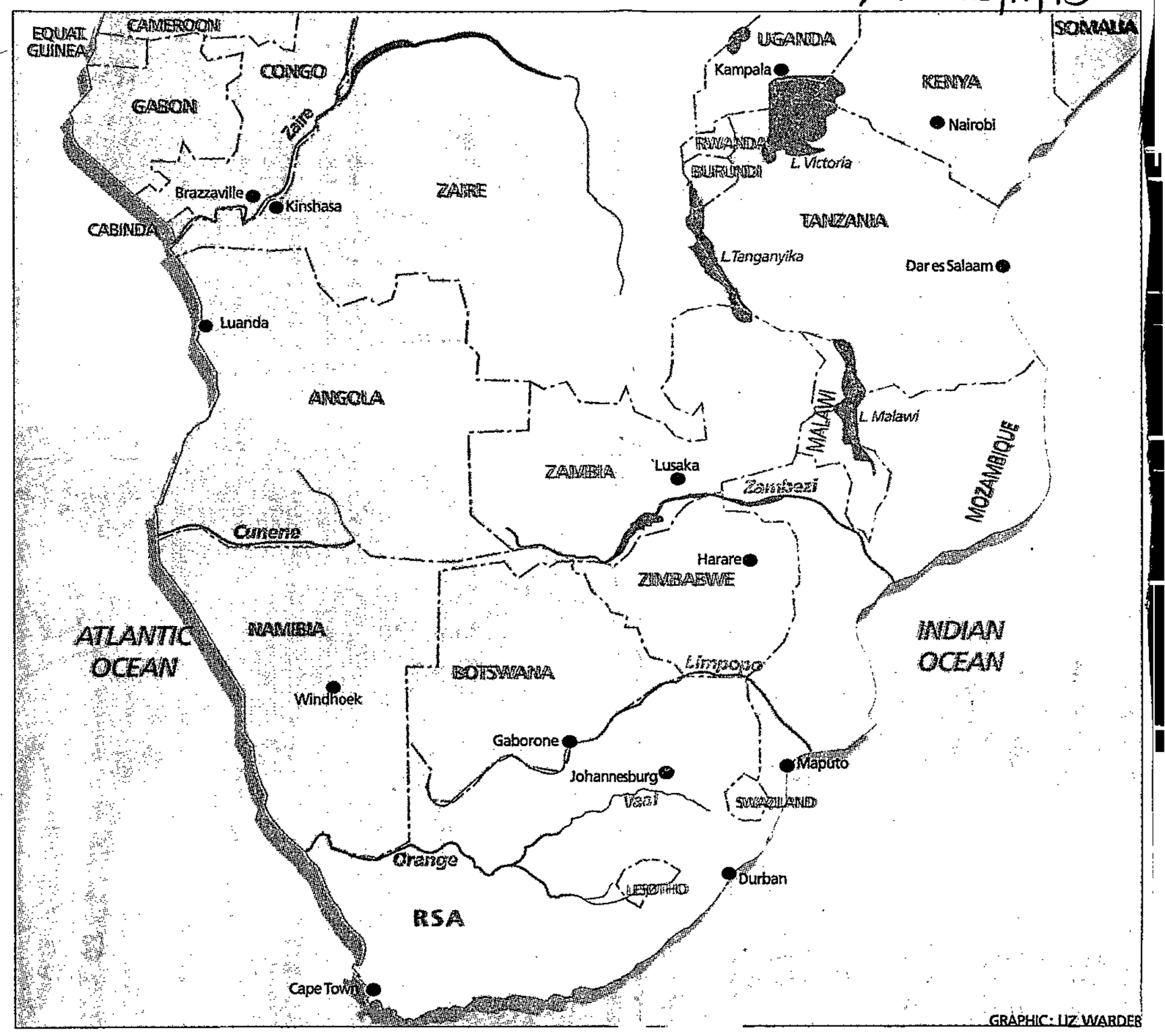

GRAPHIC: LIZ WARDER

Zaire says it won't (358) expel Hutu refugees

ARG 30/11/95

CAIRO. — Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko 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. — Reuter.