

The dust is yet to settle

THERE WAS a main feature, and a sideshow, in the political drama that is not yet over in Zimbabwe. The main feature was, and continues to be, the land issue from which, for a while, attention was distracted by the parliamentary elections which were essentially a sideshow. The land issue remains on top of the agenda of the ZANU-PF with the President, Mr. Robert Mugabe, announcing that the plans to acquire 804 white-owned farms were still on course. Indeed, even the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), so bitterly opposed to the ruling party, may have to appropriate the land question as its own as it gets accustomed to the reality of being the Government-in-waiting with a constituency and a base to nurture and enlarge.

As for the outcome of the elections sideshow, it was the MDC very nearly all the way. Characteristically, the MDC announced its 'shadow Cabinet' before the announcement of the composition of the new Government by the ZANU-PF. Its leader, Mr. Morgan Tsvangirai, has also called for the 'impeachment' of Mr. Mugabe more by way of focussing once again on electoral abuses than with any expectation of actually securing such an end.

For a mass movement with trade union origins which transformed itself into a political party less than a year ago, the MDC's electoral performance has been spectacular. The party won 57 of the 120 electoral seats in the 150-member parliament, with the ZANU-PF, unchallenged in its last 20 years in office, squeaking ahead with just 62 seats, a steep fall from the 117 it held in the dissolved Parliament. A ZANU faction led by the Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole (ZANU-Ndonga) held on to its traditional seat of Chipinge South. In the previous elections held in April 1995, the ZANU-PF had won 118 of the 120 elective seats, with the ZANU-Ndonga winning just two. Following the expulsion of the dissident ZANU-PF member, Ms. Margaret Dongo, in November 1995 and her resignation from Parliament and subsequent re-election as an independent, the Opposition had a strength of three.

However, even if the number of seats secured by the ZANU-PF and the MDC had been transposed, the MDC still would not have been able to form a

Apart from the land issue which will just not go away, the Mugabe Government in Zimbabwe, fresh from an election victory, faces other pressing issues,

reports
M. S. PRABHAKARA.

Government, given the powers vested in the President to appoint 30 additional members of whom, strictly speaking, only 12 would be nominees of the President. The remaining are made up of eight provincial governors and ten elected by the council of traditional chiefs. Mr. Mugabe's position was never an issue since the Presidential poll is due only in March 2002.

It is ironic that had the ZANU-PF not lost the referendum early this year and had the new Constitution been adopted, this provision of nominated seats would not have been available to it. Though the new Constitution, against whose adoption the MDC and its friends successfully strove, provided for a bicameral Parliament with a vastly increased strength, it also provided for a Prime Minister

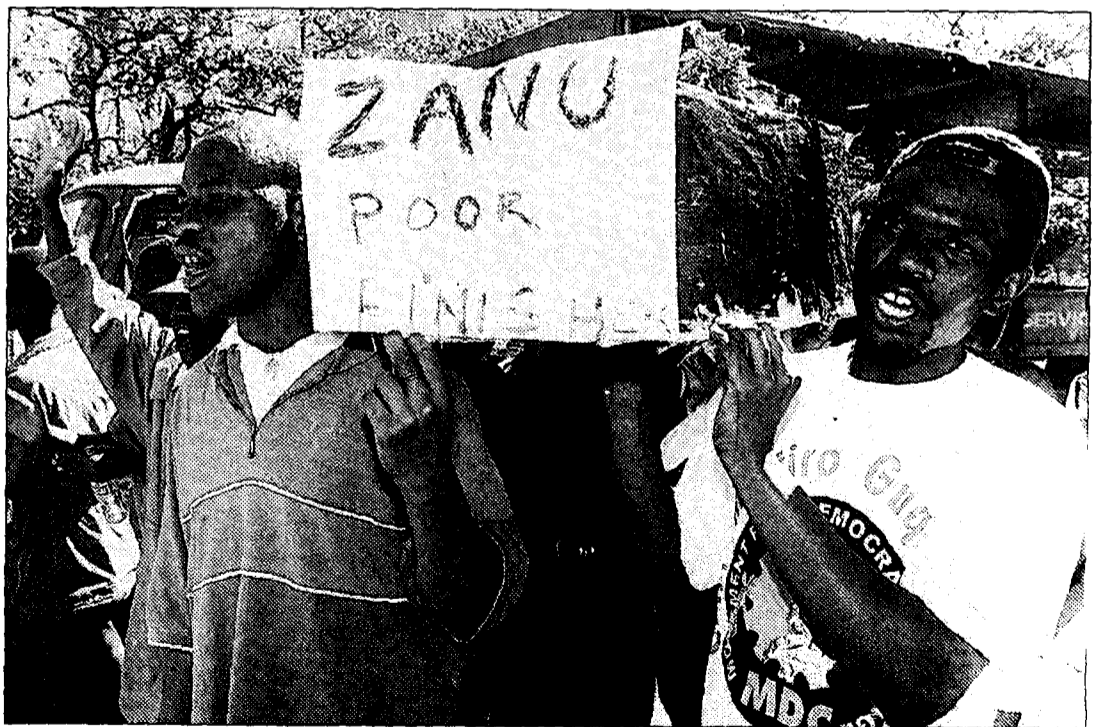
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who, though appointed by the President, was answerable to Parliament. The Cabinet was to be appointed by the President "acting on the advice of the Prime Minister". Indeed, only the National Assembly, comprising 150 directly elected members and 50 members elected under a system of proportional system had the powers to pass a no-confidence motion against the Government. The traditional chiefs and provincial governors, the main component of the nominated quota under the present Constitution which will enable the ZANU-PF to secure a majority of seats and fend off challenges inside the House, were consigned to the upper chamber, the Senate.

Was the outcome of the polls fair or, to use the more trendy expression popularised by South Africa's Electoral Commission after the pathbreaking experience in democracy in April 1994, "substantially free and fair"? As almost everything else in the events that led up to the poll, perceptions about the developments in Zimbabwe inescapably reflect a racial divide. This can only be explained in terms of the persistence of what might be described as the 'Rhodesian mindset' among a section of Zimbabweans (and their supporters in South Africa and Britain) for race, per se, is no more an issue in Zimbabwe. Not surprisingly, while the European

Union election observer team declared that the poll could not be declared free and fair and indeed called for the creation of a new structure to conduct elections in place of the Registrar-General whose office, according to the E.U., "did not operate in an open and transparent manner", the observer teams from the OAU as well as the one from the South African Parliament have endorsed the outcome. The MDC has, however, decided to challenge the outcome in 27 constituencies from where the ZANU-PF won.

Apart from the land issue which will just not go away, other pressing issues the new Government is facing are the economy and the problems generated by the involvement of Zimbabwe in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The problems with the economy are not new; Zimbabwe has been living with these — domestic and international debt, runaway inflation, industrial stagnation, shortages of essential goods.

While bad governance and corruption have worsened these problems, the tendency on the part of the 'international community' to see them merely within such a prescriptive and normative framework ignoring their historical roots has not helped matters. Historical facts have a habit of asserting themselves, as the land crisis has shown.



Opposition activists in Zimbabwe carry a mock coffin to proclaim the demise of the ruling ZANU-PF... premature celebrations.

THE HINDU

9 JUL 2000

Namibia, Angola to boycott OAU summit

By M.S. Prabhakara

CAPE TOWN, JULY 7. Namibia has decided to join Angola in boycotting the 36th summit of the Organisation of African Unity beginning at Lome next week (10-12 July).

Angola has been spearheading the move for a boycott by other African countries on the ground that the President of Togo, Mr. Gnassingbe Eyadema, has been indicted in a report prepared by a 'Panel of Experts' for the U.N. Security Council of supporting the Angolan rebel movement, UNITA, and specifically, its leader, Dr. Jonas Savimbi.

The Report, released in March, names, along with Mr. Eyadema, several other African heads of state and Government of supporting the UNITA and Dr. Savimbi, in defiance of the U.N. Security Council's mandatory sanctions against the UNITA. In a subsequent resolution adopted on April 18, the Security Council endorsed the findings of the Report and renewed its call to all members to comply with various U.N. Security Council Resolutions relating to the situation in Angola, stressing in particular "the obligation of all member-States to comply fully

with the measures imposed against UNITA" and that "non-compliance with those measures constitutes a violation of the provisions of the charter of the United Nations".

Angola's stand is that Togo being very much on the top of the list of countries indicted in the Report, the spectacle of the heads of state and government of OAU member-States trooping off to Togo for the summit goes against the substance and spirit of both the Report and several Council resolutions.

However, this argument has failed to carry conviction with the majority of OAU members, with only Namibia joining the boycott. Namibia, which is co-operating with Angola in the war against the UNITA rebels on both sides of their common border, has also joined Angola (and Zimbabwe) in supporting the Government of the President, Mr. Laurent Kabila, of the DRC against rebels supported by Rwanda and Uganda. It is not clear if this correlation of forces will be reflected in the boycott of the Togo summit by Zimbabwe as well, not to speak of the DRC.

The principal issue before the

summit is, self-evidently and as always, African unity, an objective that seems as remote of realisation as ever. In its most extreme, indeed utopian, form this aspiration has often found expression in proposals for a Pan-African political unity, a United States of Africa with a Pan-African Parliament. This vision was once again articulated at the 4th Extraordinary Summit of the OAU at Sirte in Libya in September last year in the form of a proposal for an 'African Union' put forward by the Libyan leader, Muammar Gadafi.

Such grand visions apart, even limited and eminently practical proposals for greater unity and co-ordination between the numerous economic structures with a seeming regional rationale to ensure economic integration of the continent have not made any headway. There are, at a rough count, at least 10 such structures, some of whose membership overlap.

These are: Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), Union of Arab Maghreb (UMA), Customs and Economic Union of Central Africa (UDEAC), whose

membership also doubles up as Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa, CEMAC), Economic Community of Central African States (CEEAC), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Southern African Customs Union (SACU), Southern African Development Community (SADC), and the Common Monetary Area (CMA), which is simply a grand sounding name for the reality that denominates an area where the currencies of Namibia, Swaziland and Lesotho are linked to the South African Rand.

Some of these structures are clearly in contention and competition with other similar structures for minor advantages vis-a-vis their economic relations with the advanced countries of the West. Such multiplicity of structures has in practice been useful to the West in negotiating trade and tariff deals to its own advantage. The most glaring of these anomalies is the continued existence of the SACU and the CMA, with their deeply entrenched history in colonialism and apartheid, and COMESA and SADC, all covering and overlapping each other's territory.

THE HINDU

6 JUL 2000

119-16 Report on Rwanda blames U.N., West

NEW YORK, JULY 7. A new investigation conducted by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) today squarely blamed the U.N. Security Council under the direction of the United States, Belgium and France for the deaths of up to 800,000 Rwandans in 1994.

The result of the investigation, titled "Rwanda, the Preventable Genocide," said the Catholic and Anglican hierarchies in Rwanda, the Governments of France and Belgium all had a role in the massacre of mostly Tutsis by the Hutu-led Government in Kigali because of their support for the Hutu.

The killing of Tutsis began right after Rwanda's President Juvenal Habyarimana, a Hutu, was killed

in a plane crash on April 6, 1994. The report said because of the nature of the killings, it was not possible to determine the exact number of the dead. But it said between 500,000 and 800,000 were killed during a 100-day period. A U.N. investigation on the genocide made public last December said an estimated 800,000 were killed. The current Tutsi Government in Kigali also backed the figure.

The OAU investigation said in 1994, the U.N. Security Council was "led unremittingly by the U.S. and simply did not care enough about Rwanda to intervene appropriately." "What makes the Security Council's betrayal of its responsibility even more intoler-

able is that the genocide was in no way inevitable," it said.

Belgium and the U.S. have apologised for the massacre. France and the Catholic Church have not, the report said. The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, apologised last year, citing ignorance. "The facts show, however, that the American Government knew precisely what was happening, not least during the month of the genocide," the report said.

The OAU investigation was carried out and led by the former President of Botswana, Mr. Ketumile Masire. The other members of the investigation were the former President, Mr. Ahamadou Toumani Toure, the child expert, Ms Lisbet Palme of Sweden, Mr.

Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, a former Liberian Minister, the former Chief Justice of India, Mr. P. N. Bhagwati, the former Algerian Senator, Mr. Hocine Djoudi and the Canadian Ambassador, Mr. Stephen Lewis.

The report said the U.S., France, Belgium, African Governments and the OAU, "all failed to define the massacres as a full-blown genocide" after it began. The Government of Belgium, after 10 of its soldiers working for the U. N. peace-keeping operation in Kigali were killed, decided to withdraw all its troops who were guarding a school with 2,000 children in Kigali. The report said all the children were slaughtered "within hours." -- DPA

THE HINDU

8 JUL 2001

UN Council plans embargo on export of Sierra Leone diamonds

REUTERS

UNITED NATIONS, JULY 5

Africa
92-9
AFTER several days delay, the UN Security Council on Wednesday hopes to impose a global embargo on diamond exports from Sierra Leone, where a thriving gems-for-guns trade is fuelling a simmering civil war.

The resolution would ban all rough diamonds from Sierra Leone until the government of the West African nation could set up a proper certification system for the gems - as well as regain access to lucrative diamond-mining areas under the control of the rebel Revolutionary United Front.

Among the points of dispute still to be settled is whether the embargo should run for 18 months as

France wants, or 36 months as the United States prefers.

In either case the diamond ban resolution, which includes a tightened arms embargo on the rebels, would expire unless the council took another vote. France has insisted that all future sanctions resolutions have a sunset clause because of the never-ending embargoes against Iraq, now in their 10th year.

Britain, the sponsor of the resolution, wants Sierra Leone to be a building block in the banning of "conflict diamonds" from countries whose mineral wealth were fuelling wars.

Diamonds, gold, iron ore and bauxite accounted for about two-thirds of Sierra Leone's exports before war in 1990s wrecked the economy of the former British colony.

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Rebels control some 90 percent of the diamond mines, which yield among the best stones in the world.

The resolution should have been adopted on Friday but members were unable to agree on the length of the embargo.

"The principle of diamond regime has been agreed and will stick. The section on the arms embargo remains as it is and will stick. There are discussions over the time limit," British Ambassador Sir Jeremy Greenstock told reporters. "The United Kingdom will take the resolution to a vote on Wednesday."

Much of the diamond trade goes through Liberia, whose President Charles Taylor was a close ally of RUF chief Foday Sankoh and for years supported the rebels.

INDIAN EXPRESS

INDIAN EXPRESS

- 6 JUL 2000

Durban Declaration differs with Mbeki views

By M.S. Prabhakara

CAPE TOWN, JULY 5. The release of the so-called 'Durban Declaration' worldwide, on the eve of the XIII International Conference on AIDS meeting in Durban next week (July 9-14) appears to have been taken as a personal attack on the President, Mr. Thabo Mbeki's initiatives to encourage a more open questioning of and inquiry into the causal links between HIV and AIDS. According to a spokesperson for Mr. Mbeki, had the Declaration been sent directly to him, it would have found 'its comfortable place among the dustbins in the office'.

The Declaration signed by about 5,000 scientists from around the world, including by some members of the advisory panel appointed by Mr. Mbeki in May this year, and appearing in the current issue of *Nature* constitutes the strongest rejection of initiatives from outside the scientific community on the issue.

"The evidence that AIDS is caused by HIV-1 or HIV-2 is clear-cut, exhaustive and unambiguous. This evidence meets the highest standards of science. The data fulfil exactly the same criteria as for other viral diseases such as poliomyelitis, measles and smallpox." While conceding that as with any other chronic infection, various 'co-factors' (like malnourishment, presence of other infections, and the general state of health) play a role in 'determining the risk of disease', the Declaration is categorical that "none of these factors weakens the scientific evidence that HIV is the sole cause of AIDS."

The criticism of the so-called 'dissidents' and by implication Mr. Mbeki, is preceded by three sentences whose context as well as their hectoring and prescriptive tone may well seem highly offensive. "Monkeys inoculated with cloned SIV (simian immunodeficiency syndrome) DNA become infected and develop AIDS. Further compelling data are available. HIV causes AIDS. It is unfortunate that a few vocal people continue to deny the evidence. This position will cost countless lives."



A wall graffiti protesting the high cost of HIV/AIDS drugs and giving statistics of the disease in Johannesburg. The 13th International AIDS conference will be held in Durban starting Sunday. — AP

The initiatives taken by Mr. Mbeki, in particular his appointment of a presidential AIDS advisory panel in May, challenge this 'received wisdom' about AIDS among the 'international scientific community', without directly questioning the causal links between HIV and AIDS.

Fundamental to Mr. Mbeki's initiative is the view that interventionist strategies that might have worked elsewhere in the world might not necessarily be appropriate for South Africa; and the undeniable fact that the AIDS orthodoxy has not met with great success elsewhere in Africa.

However, the initiative was seen as an impertinent questioning by one without any claim to scientific knowledge of the 'scientific consensus' about the casual and organic links between HIV and AIDS. Thus, the inescapable inference that such initiatives do question the

causal links between HIV and AIDS, despite the protestations from the office of Mr. Mbeki that he had never said that HIV did not cause AIDS, that his only 'sin' was in making contact with the 'dissidents' who did not subscribe to this 'consensus'.

In a statement released early this week, three Ministers in the Mbeki Government, Dr. Manto Tshabala-Msimang (Health), Dr. Ben Nugbanc (Arts, Culture, Science and Technology) and Mr. Essop Pahad (Minister in the Presidency) returned to the theme maintaining that Mr. Mbeki's initiatives and consultations with the 'dissidents' did not amount to disputing the links between HIV and AIDS.

The polemics and the underlying bitterness may well detract from the seriousness of the issue, on which there are no differences, that needs to be tackled during the forthcoming conference.

Heavy fighting erupts in Afghanistan

REUTERS

KABUL, July 1. — Afghanistan's ruling Taliban clashed with opposition forces north of the capital today, witnesses said.

They said the Taliban and forces loyal to commander Ahmad Shah Masood exchanged heavy artillery fire and mortar rounds on two main roads that stretch to the Shomali plains, north of Taliban-held Kabul.

"We can't figure out who started the fighting, but it is very serious," said a witness.

Taliban fighters at Khair Khana Pass that leads to Shomali, prevented journalists from going to the front.

The clashes come amid reports of troop build-ups by the two

sides. Both have accused each other of attacking first.

The Taliban said Masood's fighters attacked its positions in the northern province of Baghlan yesterday, while the opposition blamed the Taliban for launching a "massive" offensive.

"Their (Taliban) report is utterly false. They themselves staged a major assault on our positions before dawn today," Ustad Abdur Rasoul Sayyaf, a top anti-Taliban leader said. He added that opposition fighters pushed back the attack and inflicted heavy material and human losses on the Taliban.

"Dozens of their men have been killed and many more taken prisoners," Sayyaf added. He said thousands of Taliban men and Pakistani vol-

unteers took part in the offensive to flush out Masood from his main stronghold, the Panjsher Valley to the north of Shomali plains.

Taliban jet fighters and helicopter gunships were also involved in the fighting in Shomali, he added.

Shomali, a big, lush region, from where the opposition draws most of its support, has been the scene of several rounds of clashes since the Taliban drove out Masood from power more than three years ago.

UN sanctions: The UN has threatened more sanctions on Afghanistan if new fighting breaks out in the country which has been devastated by more than two decades of war and a drought considered the worst in 30 years.

The fighting comes a day after foreign ministers of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference urged all parties to the conflict to stop hostilities.

At the end of a four-day meeting in Kuala Lumpur, the OIC yesterday said all states should immediately stop the supply of arms and ammunition to the warring parties.

Donors complain that the Taliban — already under Security Council sanctions for giving sanctuary to Osama bin Laden — wastes money on an unwinnable war.

Despite numerous offensives, it has failed to crush Masood who is well entrenched in the Panjsher Valley and other parts of northern Afghanistan.

THE STATESMAN

- 2 JUL 2000

Zimbabwe, Congo boycott OAU summit

By M. S. Prabhakara

CAPE TOWN, JULY 11. The President of Zimbabwe, Mr. Robert Mugabe, and his counterpart from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mr. Laurent Kabila, have decided to stay away from the OAU summit which began in Lome, Togo, yesterday.

This is the first time that Mr. Mugabe is absent from an OAU summit ever since Zimbabwe won its independence 20 years ago. The Presidents of Angola and Namibia too are boycotting the Lome meet. The common stand of the four countries reflects the broader correlation forces in southern Africa where these countries are on the same side in respect of the conflict in the DRC and the rebellion in Angola led by Dr. Jonas Savimbi of the UNITA.

Angola has been spearheading the move for a boycott of the Lome meet on the ground that the regime in Togo, and personally the President, Mr. Gnassingbe Eyadema, has been openly indicted in a report submitted to the U.N. Security Council, of supporting the Angolan rebel movement, UNITA and Dr Savimbi, in defiance of the sanctions against UNITA imposed by the Security Council.

The report, prepared by a panel of experts headed by Mr Robert Fowler of Canada, was released in March this year. One of the recommendations made by the report in respect of sanctions against Governments found to have been "intentionally breaking" the sanctions against UNITA (Recommendation 37) reads thus:

"In order to encourage compliance with Security Council resolutions relating to sanctions against UNITA, the panel recommends that the Security Council apply appropriate sanctions against Governments found to have been intentionally breaking the sanctions. In addition to other measures recommended by the panel, additional measures which the Council should consider include: (i) formally declaring the offending countries to be sanction breakers; (ii) discouraging member states from supporting the candidacies of nationals from listed countries for senior positions within the nations system until the listed countries are declared to be complying with the sanc-



The Palestinian leader, Mr. Yasser Arafat (centre right) embraces the Libyan leader, Mr. Muammar Gadhafi, during the opening ceremony of the heads of state summit of the Organisation of African Unity in the Togo capital Lome on Monday. — AP

tions; (iii) a ban on the holding of United Nations conferences or meetings in the listed countries until they are declared to be complying with the sanctions; (iv) discouraging other international organisations from holding conferences or meetings in the listed countries, or electing the country concerned as Chairman in office of any organisation.

Angola's opposition to the OAU summit being held in Lome, and its proposal that the summit should be moved to a neutral venue like Addis Ababa, the headquarters of the OAU, was based on the last item of this recommendation.

A key issue before the summit is the proposal for the formation of a new structure, Africa

Union, along the lines of the European Union, to replace the OAU. The new structure also envisages the incorporation of the various regional economic alliances that now exist.

Indeed, in the perception of the Libyan leader, Col. Muammar Quadhafi, who mooted the idea last year, the creation of an Africa Union is only a prelude to an even grander prospect of a fullfledged African Federation, a United States of Africa.

However, according to reports from Lome, the ambassadorial and ministerial level meetings that preceded the summit only reached an "agreement in principle" on the proposal, while insisting on a "step-by-step" approach.

THE HINDU

12 JUL 2000

HO-17

Mbeki questions commitment of cadre

By M. S. Prabhakara

JOHANNESBURG, JULY 14. The African National Congress has begun a four-day meeting of a "National General Council" at Port Elizabeth, with its President, Mr. Thabo Mbeki, acknowledging that the ANC had attracted and continued to retain in its ranks "opportunists and careerists".

The meeting, essentially one of review and retrospection, is being attended by about 2,000 delegates from the branch level upwards. At its last national conference in Mafikeng in December 1997, the ANC decided to have such a review midway through the term of the executive elected in Mafikeng. The ANC which had held its three previous national conferences since its unbanning at intervals of three years (Durban, July 1991, Bloemfontein, December 1994 and Mafikeng, December 1999) decided at Mafikeng that future sessions would be held at intervals of five years. Thus, the mid-term review.

In advance of the NGC meeting, the ANC released three long Discussion Papers to stimulate debate in the structures of the movement and among the members. These are: 1. Tasks of the National Democratic Revolution and the Mobilisation of Motive Forces; 2. ANC: People's Move-

ment and Agent for Change; and 3. Uprooting the Demon of Racism. The discussions, which are closed to the media, will focus on the issues raised in these papers as well as the Secretary General's Midterm Organisational Report.

Mr. Mbeki's hour-long speech (text running to over 12 pages) was notable for its sharp criticism not so much of the ANC as an organisation as of its membership. He spoke of people joining the ANC "with great ease that our procedures as a mass movement permit" without, however, any commitment to its programme and "strategic objective". Speaking about the tendency towards self-enrichment, Mr. Mbeki referred to the evidence of Mr. Hansie Cronje before the King Commission which had highlighted the "dominance in our society of a value system based on the pursuit of personal wealth, at all costs". "It is this society that has conditioned us by the time we decide to join the ANC", Mr. Mbeki said.

Mr. Mbeki was equally outspoken on the issue of corruption to which the ANC was no less immune than any other liberation movement which had become a ruling party of the Government. "As we have already seen in our own country and learnt from sister African countries that have en-



joyed longer periods of liberation, it is not difficult for corrupt practice to become an entrenched social phenomenon. Our experience in the last six years tells us that there is absolutely no reason why we should assume that we ourselves stand no danger of becoming victim to the widespread corruption we have seen in other countries of Africa and elsewhere in the world."

Mr. Mbeki also spoke of the phenomenon of "fluctuating membership", reflected in the midterm report of the ANC Secretary General. The ANC membership is known to have steeply fallen with some estimates putting it at less than half of what it was in 1994. "As we all know, they

(ANC membership) build up rapidly whenever we are going to hold our conferences to elect our leadership and in the run-up and during the general and local government elections", Mr Mbeki said.

The major thrust of Mr Mbeki's speech was, however, on the economy, and what he saw as the inescapable imperatives of globalisation.

He scoffed at the critics of globalisation saying, "There is nobody in the world who formed a secret committee to impose globalisation on a unsuspecting humanity".

The harshness of the criticism is just one indication that these issues continue to be contested within the ANC itself, and not merely among the allies of the ANC in the tripartite alliance, the SACP and Cosatu.

This is evident in the discussion papers as well, in particular, the first one.

Mr. Mbeki also spoke of the imperatives of foreign investment as an agent of growth and noted that Port Elizabeth, a major centre of South Africa's automobile industry, had benefited from the establishment of a catalytic converter plant to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from motor vehicles.

THE HINDU

15 JUL 2000

Rescued Indian soldiers run into rebel resistance

Sierra siege smashed

FROM PRANAY SHARMA & AGENCIES

July 15: Nudged by New Delhi and a distress call, the United Nations agreed to a rare display of force and freed all 222 Indian peacekeepers as well as 11 military observers held by rebels in eastern Sierra Leone.

The observers were flown to Sierra Leone's capital Freetown, but the Indian peacekeepers encountered heavy rebel gunfire as they inched ahead. Late-night reports said the convoy is fighting its way towards safety. Details remained murky on the convoy's fate as dusk approached on the road winding through a rebel-controlled forest.

A military spokesman said the Revolutionary United Front (Ruf) tried to resist the armed action but the peacekeepers returned fire using helicopter gunships.

"Along the road, there has been (some resistance) but this is a strong force that they (the rebels) have to deal with," a civilian spokesperson, Hirut Befecadu, said. "They (the UN soldiers) have to clear the road as they come along."

Unamsil force commander Major-General Vijay Jetley's special assistant told a news conference that the column had come under attack after leaving Kailahun, where the soldiers had been pinned down since May.

"Ruf rebels did engage our column extensively and our troops had to carry out firing," he said, adding that two Indian UN soldiers had been slightly wounded. The special assistant described the situation as 'fluid' and said the Ruf had suffered heavy casualties.

The rescue operation at dawn was launched after an Indian emissary met UN chief Kofi Annan and pushed the case for military action. The UN also received a distress signal from the detained troops regarding dwindling food and medical stocks. "There was no alternative to a military option," a UN statement said.

Though India played a role in persuading the UN to mount a rescue mission, the external affairs ministry was reticent this evening.

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Sierra troops

FROM PAGE 1

A statement issued by the foreign ministry said: "The United Nations authorities in Sierra Leone have informed that early this morning, Unamsil has launched military operations to extricate Unamsil troops who have been illegally detained by the Ruf in Kailahun."

The only oblique reference to the Indian role was in one sentence: "The force commander (of Unamsil), Major-General V.K. Jetley, is personally controlling the operations from Daru."

The subdued tone was in contrast to Delhi's aggressive stand after the nuclear tests in May 1998. The decision to underplay its role in today's operation shows not only Delhi's maturity but also ensures that it does not put off the other Unamsil members.

Breaking the impasse in Sierra Leone had become a necessity for the Centre as it feared the prolonged agony of its peacekeepers could become an issue in India, especially in the monsoon session of Parliament.

With this in mind, it sent K.V. Rajen, secretary (east) in the foreign ministry, to Mali as observer for the crucial Organisation of African Unity summit that ended on Thursday.

At the summit, Rajen met with Annan and other senior leaders of the region to get their stamp of approval on an Indian proposal for military action.

The UN endorsed India's assessment that diplomatic options having been exhausted, use of force to free the detainees was unavoidable, said an official in Delhi.

The current mandate of Unamsil permits use of force. However, the official made it clear that this did not mean the status of Indian soldiers would now change from peacekeepers to peace enforcers.

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THE TELEGRAPH

16 JUL 2002

Peacekeepers break free in Sierra Leone

REUTERS & AP

FREETOWN, July 15. — All 222 Indian soldiers pinned down by Sierra Leone's rebel Revolutionary United Front since May broke out from their positions with the help of peacekeeper comrades and began fighting their way toward safety today, a UN spokeswoman said.

The 11 trapped foreign military observers too were rescued. The peacekeepers and observers were on the 80-km road from Kailahun to the nearby UN base of Daru, and were meeting with some resistance, the spokeswoman said. When news last came in, they were approaching Pendembu, an RUF stronghold.

"Along the road there has been some resistance but this is a strong force that they (the rebels) have to deal with," the spokeswoman said. The Indians have UN's aerial support.

Maj Anatheram Arun, special assistant to Unamsil commander Maj-Gen VK Jetley, earlier said two Indian soldiers were slightly wounded. He described the situation as "fluid".

THE STATESMAN

THE STATESMAN

16 JUL 1997

Peacekeepers break siege in Sierra Leone

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JULY 15. The 220 Indian peacekeeping troops and 11 military observers have broken out of their encirclement in eastern Sierra Leone following coordinated ground and air operations by the U.N. forces which began this morning.

These troops along with U.N. observers had been ringed since the last two months at Kailahun — a U.N. base in northeast Sierra Leone.

According to sources here, the U.N. forces, comprising mainly of Indians and a sprinkling of troops from Ghana and Nigeria, have launched a pincer strike revolving around Pendembu in eastern Sierra Leone. With Daru as the base, some troops moved along the road axis towards Pendembu, 40 km to the north. Others were shifted towards Kailahun in the east. According to U.N. sources, some forces were also inducted using helicopters provided by the Indian Air Force (IAF). The UN-AMSIL deployed the IAF's Cheetah helicopters for reconnaissance as well as its three Mi-35 attack helicopters for air to ground assaults.

U.N. helicopters extricated 11 U.N. observers and 40 peacekeepers earlier today. The rest of the detainees were on their way by road to Daru.

THE HINDU

1997

Burundi peace formula in final stages

By M.S. Prabhakara

CAPE TOWN, JULY 21. A peace accord bringing to an end the conflict in Burundi, expected to be signed on Thursday during the current round of peace talks in Arusha, Tanzania, part of the 'peace process' going on for two years, is now likely to be signed on August 28.

According to an agency report from Arusha, the former South African President, Mr. Nelson Mandela, (who is facilitating the peace process) told media at the end of the meeting on Wednesday that only two issues remained to be resolved before the accord could be clinched: the leadership of the transitional government and the timing of the ceasefire. The transitional government, as envisaged in the draft

peace agreement put before the participants, is to be in charge for three years leading to elections.

These are hardly simple and straightforward issues capable of easy resolution, even without the deep animosities that have characterised the ethnic relations in Burundi, and the even more complex role of the political parties and rebel groups. These, of which 19 were represented at the talks, represent the predominantly Hutu majority which has been virtually excluded from political power ever since the current crisis began with the assassination of Burundi's first democratically elected (Hutu) President, Melchior Ndadaye, in October 1993, during an attempted coup by the (Tutsi dominated) armed forces.

That assassination set in course a se-

quence of events, massacres and counter massacres, which culminated less than a year later in the shooting down of a plane carrying the Presidents of Burundi and Rwanda, both Hutu, over Kigali airport on April 6, 1994, an event even now shrouded in some mystery, and the far larger massacres with the minority Tutsis as victims in both the countries, though the specificities of the situation in both the countries, despite their superficial similarities and a somewhat common shared colonial history, are very different.

The Arusha meeting was attended by the Presidents of Burundi, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia and the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, and 19 Burundian delegations representing various rebel groups and political parties.

This is the first time that a delegation of the CNDD-FDD has participated in the Burundi peace talks, having kept itself out from all the earlier rounds of talks, including the immediately previous one in March. Indeed, the leaders of the CNDD-FDD were opposed to the appointment of Mr. Mandela as the mediator. They contended that South Africa was close to the (minority) Tutsi dominated regime in Burumbura and indeed had helped it to bypass a regional arms embargo and could not be expected to play an impartial role.

Ever since he assumed the mediatory role in December, Mr. Mandela strove to secure the participation of the main rebel group, viewing this as a necessary condition for ensuring a lasting peace in Burundi.

THE HINDU

22 JUL 2000

Soul searching

Africa #1 D-17

THE FOUR-DAY meeting of the National General Council of the African National Congress (July 12-15) in Port Elizabeth was notable for the candour of its self-critical review of the state of the organisation and the performance of the government, as well as for some interesting shifts, even if only in emphasis, in the economic policy even while reaffirming the seemingly irreversible commitment to the reality of market forces and globalisation.

The meeting, attended by about 2,000 delegates, was essentially a mid-term review of the state of the party, being held almost exactly halfway through the five-year term of the ANC executive elected at its National Conference in Mafikeng in December 1997. The ANC being the ruling party, this also necessarily entailed a review of the Government, though the main focus was on the state of the party.

Preparatory to the NGC, the ANC released three long discussion papers with a view to "stimulating debate in the structures of the movement and amongst our cadres and members". These were: 1) Tasks of the National Democratic Revolution and the Mobilisation of Motive Forces; 2) ANC: People's Movement and Agent for Change; and 3) Uprooting the Demon on Racism. The Secretary-General's Midterm Report and Review, encapsulating the salient points in these position papers and presented on the opening day of the conference, constitutes the core document of the NGC, along with the opening address by the President, Mr. Thabo Mbeki.

Even in a political culture where it is now common for every political party to engage in self-criticism and introspection, Mr. Mbeki's criticism of the "opportunists and careerists within our ranks", of factionalism especially rampant in the provinces and in structures lower down, corruption and a culture of personal enrichment and other seamier aspects of the ANC's political culture was both sharp and informed by a sense of the larger historical reality.

Interestingly, he referred in this context to two major events from the world of South African sport which have dominated the media: the Hansie Cronje controversy, and the failure of South Africa to win the bid to stage the 2006 Soccer World Cup. While the first vividly illustrated "the dominance in our society of a value system based on the pursuit of personal wealth at all costs", the second, Mr. Mbeki said, highlighted the continued marginalisation of Africa as an "irrelevant appendage" and the persistence of the phenomenon of "globalisation of apartheid".

These are the all-too-familiar

The ANC's recent national general council meeting was notable for the candour of its self-critical review of the state of the organisation and the Government's performance, says M. S. PRABHAKARA.



The South African President, Mr. Thabo Mbeki...
refreshing candour.

problems that any liberation movement faces from the moment of its triumph as it strives to transform itself into a working party of government. Most of them, except those committed to total revolutionary change, cope well enough, and the contradictions are soon resolved or at least contained. However, in the case of the ANC, the very immensity of the odds it faced as a liberation movement and the unspeakable barbarity of the apartheid regime that wreaked havoc on the masses of the people has made the transition process extremely complex, even though the ANC is now in control, at least formally, of all organs of the state. This is evident in both Mr. Mbeki's speech and in the more detailed Midterm Review and Report by the Secretary-General, Mr. Kgalema Motlanthe.

The economy, as always, remains the crucial issue. While the commitment to the market forces

and the acknowledgement of the reality of globalisation remain central, there are indications of a less rigid commitment to the dogma of fixed inflation targets and the desideratum of a progressively reduced budgetary deficit towards a perfectly balanced zero deficit budget — the normative values that have informed the budgetary exercises over the last four years ever since the adoption of the macro-economic policy going under the name of GEAR, Growth, Employment and Redistribution in mid-1996. Indeed, the expression GEAR, virtually a dirty word with the rank and file of both the SACP and Cosatu, was most conspicuously absent in both Mr. Mbeki's speech and in Mr. Motlanthe's Midterm Review and Report. One recalls what a rumpus the expression caused during the 10th Congress of the SACP in Johannesburg in July 1998, the chanting of anti-GEAR slogans and Mr. Mandela categorically admonishing the del-

egates that GEAR remained central to the economic policy of the Government.

Though the ideas and philosophy of GEAR have a place, even without being named so, in one paragraph in the Midterm Review and Report (Para three of Section 3.4.1) the emphasis now is more on creating investment flows and jobs, and facilitating black economic empowerment — subjects that are dealt at length in the Midterm Review and Report. Indeed, the recent controversy about inflation targets and interest rates between the guardians of these two holy cows, the Finance Minister and the Governor of the central bank, with the former, supposedly totally committed to rigidly set inflation and budgetary deficit targets, questioning whether growth should be sacrificed on the altar of "something that a model tells us is the only correct answer", an astonishing reversal of roles, in the words of a *Business Day* editorial, the shift at least in emphasis, if not perhaps in substance, was foretold. One of the more interesting shifts in political vocabulary is the reformulation of "national democratic state", a standard ANC usage for long along with "national democratic revolution" even if without the political import associated with the Third International, as "national democratic and developmental state".

The larger question, however, is whether all this is yet another spin, or whether this bespeaks a genuine acceptance that the orthodoxy of the market has not provided answers to the problems facing South Africa's economy. The problem perhaps lies in the fact that though the ANC in its achievement in securing the removal of the apartheid regime has truly been revolutionary, in so far as its economic programme went, it never even pretended to be revolutionary. This is so even of the Freedom Charter which, for all its eloquence and passion, was little more than pithy statements of intent, in the form of a manifesto, than a thought-out economic programme.

However, in the course of the struggle, the causal links between the apartheid state and South African and global capitalism could not be ignored and were anyway evident to the broad masses of people — a perception that was further strengthened by the heroic role of the SACP in the liberation struggle and the support that the struggle received from the Soviet Union and other communist countries. Thus, the anti-capitalist rhetoric of the ANC as a liberation movement, and the compulsions of working as a party of government to promote capitalism, now black capitalism. Can it square the circle?

Out of 300 people who appeared before the panel, only one was white

Racism lives on in SA, Commission hears

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE
JOHANNESBURG, JULY 24

WHITE racism lives on in South Africa and is still taken for granted by many blacks 10 years after the abolition of apartheid laws, the South African Human Rights Commission is hearing as it prepares for a major conference.

Older blacks explain the racism by saying: "We have to live with it. It is inborn, it is philosophical, it is part of our life," Moses Khorowmbi, a student collecting witness accounts, told AFP. "Racism and tribalism won't end... You are a young man, you can't understand," they tell him, often refusing to allow him to quote them by name.

The Commission, sitting in Bloemfontein, Nelspruit, East London, Johannesburg is hearing the same stories everywhere: insults at work; entry refused to restaurants and nightclubs, racial slurs, casual violence. At Mafikeng, about 400 kilometres (250 miles) northwest of Johannesburg, some 300 people showed up on Thursday. Only one was white.

The most blatant racism often takes place on huge white-owned farms in the hinterland, where little has changed. There, farmworkers are routinely beaten, given degrading jobs as punishments, or attacked for crossing a farm without permission; they are thrown into rivers and dams, humiliated, even covered with paint. "I've been with the Commission for five years. Through the media and through the complaints that reach us,

I had a sense that the situation in farms was very bad. But yesterday, it was shocking," a commissioner told the South African Broadcasting Commission the day after the Mafikeng hearing.

"People have lost legs, people have lost eyes, people's ears have been bitten by dogs, it's just an awful, awful situation of vicious racial attacks that are taking place in the farms in the North West (province)," he said. Few complain in person to the Commission, however, because they are so used to the racism, or because they depend on an abusive white employer for a job in a continent where each wage-earner generally supports

IN BLACK & WHITE

about 20 people. In towns and offices, "There are no (whites only) signs any more, but it is a code of conduct, a rule of practice," said one witness at the Johannesburg hearing. That means that in at least one company, the black employees still dare not use the toilets once reserved for whites. In the central city of Bloemfontein, a number of witnesses recounted similar stories. Welcome Kanto said he had lost two jobs in succession in the building industry after lodging complaints with the police over racism. In the first case, he was refused a safety helmet because it was reserved for whites; in the second, he was beaten up by white colleagues.

Ngceke Mohgezi told the Bloemfontein hearing how he and a group of friends were as-

saulted by whites while crossing a farm in May. "They took us in their cars to a neighbouring farm where they ordered us to take off our clothes and get into the dam," he said.

Once in the water, the men were allegedly ordered to sing, before being assaulted with iron pipes and sjamboks (whips). In Johannesburg, the South African Prisoners' Human Rights Association told of everyday racism in the nation's jails. In the women's prison in Pretoria, the organisation said, "There are jobs for whites and other jobs for blacks. White inmates are given all soft jobs, black inmates are given all hard jobs. The only office where there is a black doing something soft is the store-room."

The International Organisation for Migration meanwhile warned at the Johannesburg hearing that many black South Africans resented immigrants from other African countries. "There is racism among black people themselves — it is called xenophobia, which is hatred and discrimination so it can be dealt with as another form of racism," the IOM said. "Black South Africans do not easily accept (other) black Africans — they are at best tolerated and at worst brutalised and marginalised... subjected to generalised stereotyping depicting them as 'job-stealers', 'women snatchers', criminals and border-jumpers." The reports of the human rights commission will serve as a basis for a National Conference on Racism to be held from August 30 to September 2, and which will be opened by President Thabo Mbeki.

INDIAN EXPRESS-

25 JUL 2000

Guest Column

K Y AMOAKOA

Africa & G-8 summit

6-6 29/7
What Africa looks for is an assertive partnership following up on increasingly progressive stances taken by the G-8 in past summits. Now is the time to make a difference. No one owes Africa a living: in the end, Africa's destiny is in Africa's hands. But the world's richest countries must translate into action their avowed support for Africa's efforts to break out of its vicious spiral of stunted economic growth and conflict.

Following the acknowledged policy disasters of the eighties, the majority of African countries have implemented stabilisation and adjustment programmes, including liberalisation of prices and exchange rates, privatisation of state enterprises, and public sector reforms.

Declines in per capita income have been reversed, albeit modestly. And, compared to fifteen years ago when only a handful of African countries claimed multi-party democracies, today the reverse is true. Moreover, independent media and civil society organisations are mushrooming.

Still, close to half of Sub-Saharan Africa subsists below the poverty line and one fifth lives in countries affected by conflict. For Sub-Saharan Africa to achieve the internationally agreed target of reducing poverty by half by 2015, its economies would have to grow by eight per cent per annum; more than double the rate achieved last year.

Clearly, Africa needs to do much more, but its development partners also need to move faster in implementing new modalities of assistance, focused on commonly agreed, Africa-led development agenda with agreed priorities. These include improving Africa's competitiveness, the structural transformation of its economy, diversification of output and exports, and speeded up integration into the new global economy. And at the political level, governments and citizens alike must take a far firmer stance against corruption, build more democratic institutions and commit themselves to avoiding conflict.

There must be decisive steps to follow up the recent acceptance that debt for the poorest countries must be cancelled, not re-scheduled. The debt relief terms agreed last year in the G-8's Cologne meeting for the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) need to be extended to more countries and the criteria made less stringent.

One example is Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation, now embarking on bold economic and political reforms. It is generally agreed that Nigeria's \$31 billion debt is not sustainable. The number of poor in Nigeria has risen to 66 million compared to 35 million a decade ago.

Though counted among the world's thirty poorest nations, Nigeria is not eligible for relief under the HIPC initiative — one of many anomalies that needs to be urgently corrected, as a step towards strengthening the nascent democratic processes now underway.

Second, decisive action is needed to support Africa's participation in global trade, including opening up markets in OECD countries

Third, the G-8 must send out a clear signal that the rich countries are committed to reversing a major slide in concessionary finance to poor countries. Net aid transfers per capita have fallen sharply, from \$32 in 1990 to \$19 in 1998.

Fourth, G-8 countries should support the United Nations and especially its capacity to respond speedily to conflict. It is a shame that the only institution we have for global governance is labouring under severe financial pressure at the very moment when we need it most. There will be neither international peace nor international equity so long as the United Nations is financially compromised.

Fifth, Africa seeks to urgently confront and eradicate infectious diseases, especially HIV/AIDS — a crisis in Africa of unimaginable proportions that is already reversing the continent's fragile social gains. The latest UNAIDS report estimates that Africa will need \$1.6 billion to \$2.6 billion annually just to contain the disease — not to mention the cost of treatment for 23 million Africans already dying from it.

Finally, Africa will be looking to the G-8 for tangible support for developing information technology, a centrepiece of the summit. I believe that Africa can use IT to leapfrog into the 21st century. It's time — to quote Prime Minister Mori — that we turn the "digital divide" into the "digital opportunity".

What the G-8 does regarding the world's neediest region should be one of the critical barometers in determining the Okinawa Summit's success.

(The author is Executive Secretary of UN Economic Commission for Africa)

The Economic T...

29 JUL 2000

India should review its commitment to UN peacekeeping operations

Guns of Sierra Leone

THE TELEGRAPH

The predicament faced by the Indian contingent of the United Nations peacekeeping force in Sierra Leone has generated concern in India. India is perhaps one of the few countries which has been a participant in UN peacekeeping operations off and on continuously over the last 55 years of the existence of the UN. Indian military contingents have functioned as UN peacekeeping forces in Lebanon, in Gaza, in Cyprus and in Korea in the Fifties and the Sixties, and more recently, we have been involved in peacekeeping operations of the UN in Cambodia, Somalia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Haiti and lastly in Sierra Leone.

The 21 Indian soldiers who were taken hostage by the anti-government Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone were released because of the mediation by Liberia in the last week of June, after nearly five weeks of detention. Another 245 Indian soldiers remain surrounded by cadres of this same group. Instead of being engaged in maintaining peace, the UN peacekeeping force, especially the Indian contingent, is in a confrontationist predicament with one of the parties engaged in the year long civil war in Sierra Leone.

The UN security council got involved in the Sierra Leone crisis from October 22, when the security council in its 4,054th meeting decided to establish a UN mission in Sierra Leone to send its military personnel there. It is also well known that, apart from internal civil strife, west African countries like Liberia and Nigeria are involved in the domestic political imbroglio of Sierra Leone. The UN peacekeeping force is commanded by an Indian general. So India has a special role to play in developments in that country, developments which at present are not very palatable.

Some historical background and analysis of the current developments would be relevant. Sierra Leone has been enmeshed in a violent civil war since 1999. The duly constituted government of Sierra Leone faced violent opposition from a group calling itself the Revolutionary United Front. The levels of violence reached such a threshold that the Sierra Leone government asked for assistance from west African states.

The economic community of west African states led by Nigeria tried to bring the conflict to an end but did not succeed. Consequently, the political situation was brought to the notice of the UN security council under chapter 6 of the UN charter which relates to the pacific settlements of disputes in a situation where the dispute is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security in that region.

The author is former foreign secretary of India

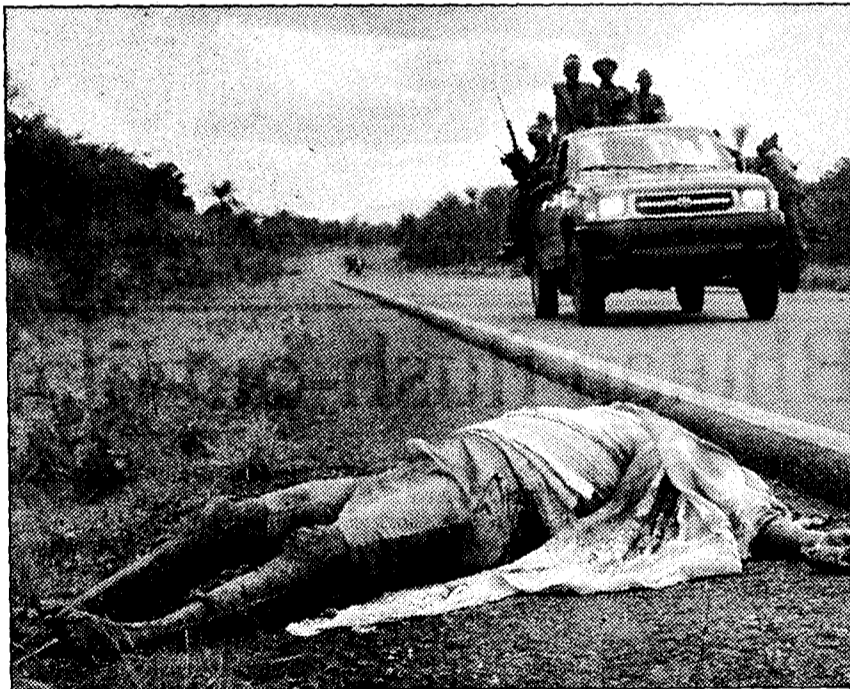
Africa

The crisis was initially sought to be managed by a west African peacekeeping force. But it did not succeed because of the partisan and political affinities of the countries involved in the Sierra Leone crisis. Consequently, the security council took a decision to send a multinational UN peacekeeping force. A little over 13,000 troops from nearly 32 countries stand deployed under the command of the Indian general, Major General Vijay Jaitley.

This contingent of the UN troops has units from a number of African coun-

foremost, both Sierra Leone authorities and the rebel RUF have resiled from the commitments which they gave regarding conditions under which the UN peacekeeping force was to operate. The Sierra Leone government's arrest of the leader of the RUF, Foday Sankoh, has put the fat in the fire.

As mentioned in the beginning, 245 Indian soldiers remain surrounded by RUF rebels at Kailahun. While 21 Indian soldiers taken hostage have been disarmed, the larger contingent of the 245 Indian soldiers are in the predicament of



‘ The crisis was initially sought to be resolved by a west African peacekeeping force ’

a tenuous stand-off with the rebels. The rebels have demanded the release of their leader and their cadres in the custody of the Sierra Leone authorities as a condition for lifting the siege against the larger Indian military contingent.

Parallel to this tense drama was the unwarranted controversy created by the UN secretary-general and west African governments about the Indian peacekeeping force. The secretary-general made statements which were obliquely critical of the manner in which General Jaitley was performing his duties and conducting operations. The heads of state and government of west African countries, in a resolution adopted by the ECOWAS asserted that the Indian com-

mander, not being familiar with west African conditions, had mismanaged the operations and that he should be replaced by a commander from the west African region. Even more important, this resolution suggested that the multinational peacekeeping force should be replaced by a regional west African peacekeeping force.

The secretary-general has made amends for his initial criticism in the face of strong protests from the Indian government and military establishment. But the combined opposition of west African governments continues. A special delegation led by the director general, military operations, of the Indian army, Lieutenant General N.C. Vij, and consisting of representatives of our defence and foreign ministries, is now in Sierra Leone and is proceeding to New York to get Indian military personnel out of their present predicament.

The discussions have been inconclusive so far though the UN has demanded their unconditional release and restoration of the freedom of movement to the peacekeeping force. The stand of the west African governments is patently irrational because it was their failure to manage a regional crisis which resulted in their accepting the presence of a multinational UN peacekeeping force. It is also clear that the UN secretariat did not clearly define the terms of reference of the Sierra Leone peacekeeping operations. Neither did it seek guarantees that the disputing parties in Sierra Leone would abide by the obligations which they undertook to ensure the smooth operation of the UN peacekeeping force.

Major General Jaitley has acted with consummate tact and restraint despite the Indian forces being in danger. He has sufficient coercive force at his command to take corrective action against the RUF. But he has chosen the more rational path of negotiations. It is the responsibility of the UN secretary-general to ensure that the regional forces of west Africa do not question the credibility, the impartiality, understanding, and motivations of the Indian commander of the peacekeeping force.

The manner in which the UN resolves the impasse in Sierra Leone would be a litmus test for the advisability and practicability of UN peacekeeping operations to manage internal conflict situations of member states. Besides, despite India's longstanding commitment to be a participant in UN peacekeeping operations, our Sierra Leone experience should make us pause to reexamine the criteria and conditions under which India should participate in UN peacekeeping operations in future, especially when no tangible interest of India is affected by the situations into which India is invited.

G-12

11/2

Boycotts mar OAU summit

LOME, JULY 10. The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) summit opened today, marred by boycotts by leading players on the continent over alleged support given by the hosts, Togo, to the rebel UNITA movement in Angola.

Four countries have refused to attend the 36th annual summit — Angola, and its allies Namibia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Zimbabwe — marking a major rift in the 53-member grouping. Zimbabwe's President, Mr. Robert Mugabe, is missing an OAU summit for the first time in 20 years in power and officials in Harare told AFP the reason was a heavy workload.

But summit officials here said they believed the Zimbabwean President was boycotting the event out of solidarity with his allies in the war in the DRC, and the President of Angola, Mr. Eduardo dos Santos.

The reason for the boycott is a damning U.N. report which has claimed that Togo's President, Mr. Gnassingbe Eyadema, has channelled support to the UNITA rebels in Angola's long-running war, in return for diamonds.

The decision of the DRC President, Mr. Laurent Kabila, to stay away from Lome has also taken the conflict in the vast central African country off the summit's official agenda. — AFP

THE HINDU

11 JUL 2000

VIOLENCE & TERROR

How elections are lost in Zimbabwe

MUGABE won. The Zanu-PF party took 62 out of a 120 seats in the new Parliament. It is nothing short of a miracle, considering that before the vote, independent opinion polls were predicting over 70 seats for the opposition Movement for Democratic Change and Mugabe's concluding election rally was attended by no more than 4000 people. The reasons for this "miracle" the media says is unprecedented violence and terror targetting the opposition campaign. This has been highlighted both by the EU which sent monitors and the Commonwealth. What anybody can do about this is not clear, since any suggestion that he relinquish power transforms Mugabe into an anti-colonial agitator willing to use the war veteran storm troopers led very appropriately by "Hitler" Hunzvi, to retain control. But the results do indicate that there has been a significant erosion of support for Mugabe even in the countryside where land hunger is the issue. Black workers on White farms are not too enthusiastic about the new order, since they won't have much of a role in it.

What this implies for the future is difficult to tell, especially with regard to land reforms. The MDC stands for a more ordered settlement and Mugabe tried to strike a note of reconciliation when he invited the opposition to collaborate with him. But elsewhere, he has been vitriolic, asking White farmers to either cooperate or leave the country. The question of compensation remains undecided; if he has to face pressure, mainly from Britain and international financial institutions, he also has support in the region, notably from South Africa. Trouble is, Mugabe has got hold of a real issue and is milking it at crucial junctures of his own political career. Also, he has now expanded the scope of his rage against White interests in the country to include other businesses run by them, including mining. By a happy coincidence, this is also aimed at the support the MDC, an organisation founded by the trades union, enjoys among workers. One doesn't know what the MDC gameplan is, since it has to cope with the disadvantage of not having muscle power at its disposal and it is clear that Mugabe, despite the elections just held, is not amenable to democratic argument.

THE STATESMAN

140 16 Zimbabwe Opposition finds new strength

MARONDERA (ZIMBABWE), JULY 2. In one week, Zimbabwe has become a new country. Every section of the population has been affected by the result of last weekend's election. This town is an example.

Marondera is not attractive. It reminds you faintly of a new town in England, except that the sun shines and the streets are crawling with secret policemen. You can tell such men everywhere in the world by their clothes. Here, in their sports jackets and ties the men of the CIO look smarter and more formidable than the average citizen. They walk down the middle of the pavement, and everyone else makes way for them.

We went upstairs to the CIO office. A steel grille prevented us from going in, but yet another man in a sports jacket told us through the grille that the local CIO boss wasn't there. That was a pity, because we wanted him to explain to us the link between the Government, the CIO and the gangs of supposed war veterans who have been touring the white farms in this area, telling the farmers they have until Monday to leave. He would probably have refused, but this being Zimbabwe, several white farmers have successfully asked him for help.

Marondera is, however, as rasty as Zimbabwe gets. The national head of the CIO stood for the ruling Zanu-PF here, and when it became clear that he was losing, men in police uniforms arrived at the count, threw out everyone except the head of the local election observers, and counted the votes themselves. The CIO boss won by a small margin. As for the chief observer, he was so terrified that he refuses to make a report — the only constituency where this has happened.

Still, the Opposition MDC has lodged a legal challenge to the result, and it is likely to be upheld. Then the men in sports jackets will be out with a will — looking for people to beat up. At most constituencies around Marondera, the MDC did well. We came across a small group of men by the side of the road, and



The Zimbabwean Opposition leader, Mr. Morgan Tsvangirai, whose Movement for Democratic Change made massive gains in the recent parliamentary polls, seen among his supporters in Harare in this file picture.

knew they were MDC because they started cheering when they saw us. (Zanu-PF is just as opposed to the Western media as Mr. Ian Smith's Rhodesia Front was in the old days).

The head of the group was very short, and very tough. "I'm not worried, because I've got my gang," he said. Members of the gang clapped and laughed and waved the red cards which are their symbol. Suddenly, the MDC has realised how strong it is: 57 seats in Parliament mean a lot of votes, a lot of clout and the kind of self-confidence which simply didn't exist in the days before the election.

Zanu-PF knows it too. The hit squads of activists who are going around threatening white

farmers are small in number, and slightly less confident than they were.

At the junction of the main Marondera road and Theydon Road, outside the town, we came across a group of people with mobile telephones. The boss was a sharp-witted woman called Susan, with a mirthless laugh. Her sidekick, Eddie Muswe, was wearing one of those leather jackets you see only in Africa, with panels made from every type of skin from elephant to ostrich. Seeing us, they were deeply embarrassed, and denied having anything to do with the taking over of farms. It was, they said, definitely someone else. — ©Telegraph Group Limited, London, 2000

THE HINDU

3 JUL 2000

Voters opt for 'Movement system'

By M. S. Prabhakara

CAPE TOWN, JULY 2. The "Yes" vote for continuance of the "Movement Political System" in Thursday's referendum in Uganda is a clear victory for the President, Mr. Yoweri Museveni, and his political ideology of "non-party politics".

As widely expected, the overwhelming majority of those who took part in the referendum which, according to some reports from Kampala, had a relatively low voter participation, voted for the continuance of the Movement system, rejecting the alternative of a return to the multi-party system.

The outcome was considerably facilitated by the ambiguous stand of the Opposition parties towards the whole exercise. While formally two of these, United People's Congress and the Democratic Party "boycotted" the referendum, known leaders of these parties were active in the National Multiparty Referendum Committee which sought to mobilise a "No" vote.

Further, the UPC, DP and other political parties have never been clear in their stand towards the Movement system to which they are in principle opposed but with which they have in practice collaborated. Perhaps it is not fair to blame them entirely for their predicament in painting themselves into a corner. They simply have not been able to match the superior political skills of Mr. Museveni, his exploitation of the fears of "sectarianism, dictatorship and misrule" of the years before he came to power, content to be allowed to exist legally, but not function freely.

In practice, this has meant that political parties are "free" to function to the extent that they can have offices and office-bearers but not free to canvass their views freely, or hold public meetings on a political platform and the like. Well-known political leaders are free to contest elections for Parliament (and many have successfully done so) but not in the name of their parties.

This was achieved by having two Articles in the Constitution which in practice cancel out each other. While Article 29(1) (e) guarantees "freedom of association ... including the freedom to form trade unions and political and other civic organisations", Article 73, dealing with "Regulations of political organisations" virtually negates with this provision: "... notwithstanding the provision of paragraph (e) of clause (1) of Article 29 ... of this Constitution, during the period when any of the political systems provided for in this Constitution has been adopted, organisations subscribing to other political systems may exist subject to such regulations as Parliament shall by law prescribe".

In other words, since the Movement Political System is the "existing political system" legitimate in terms of the well-known principle of necessity — after all, it is the political heir to and voice of the National Resistance Movement which captured power after a protracted war in January 1986 — "any other political system", including "multiparty system", though provided for as an alternative to the Movement system is subjected to "such regulations as Parliament shall by law prescribe".

Some comparisons and contrasts in the reaction of that indefinable creature called "the international community" (IC) to the conduct and outcome of the election in Zimbabwe (24-25 June) and the referendum in Uganda (29 June), both taking place almost at the same time, are instructive. In contrast to the virulent condemnation by the British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, his Foreign Minister, Mr. Robin Cook, and company, all as much eloquent voices of the IC as the IC is of them, of the Zimbabwean President, Mr. Robert Mugabe and the ZANU-PF, and their axiomatic assumption for weeks before the polls that the outcome of the Zimbabwe elections was bound to be rigged, the referendum in Uganda whose outcome has for long been accurately forecast in the Ugandan media has scarcely merited attention by the IC. Indeed, Mr. Museveni and his ideology of "non-party politics" has for long found wonderful resonance in the most democratic of sensibilities of the IC, indistinguishable from the national interests of the Western countries, which have also been the quickest and the sharpest in their condemnation of the "political thuggery" of Mr. Mugabe.

Another related contrast. Uganda's (and Rwanda's) intervention in support of two contending rebel factions in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is seldom related to the economic problems of these countries, in contrast to the causal links seen between Zimbabwe's support, along with Angola and Namibia, to the DRC Government, and their economic problems. One of the most underreported stories from the Great Lakes region is the continuing fighting between the forces of Rwanda and Uganda deep inside the territory of the DRC, a situation beyond belief.

One wonders whether these perceptions will be affected by the ruling by the International Court of Justice at The Hague yesterday, on a complaint by the DRC, directing Uganda to withdraw its forces from the DRC. The ruling, reported by a Dutch public broadcasting radio service yesterday, has not yet made to the print media.

THE HINDU

40-16

Mugabe evasive on MDC

HARARE, JUNE 30. The Zimbabwean President, Mr. Robert Mugabe, has said the seizure of more than 800 farms would begin soon, despite the huge showing of the Opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in parliamentary elections over the weekend.

"We have given notices to the farmers during this first phase, notices that expire on July 3, that is Monday next week and we begin the process of acquisition thereafter," Mr. Mugabe said yesterday, in an interview on national TV.

"It's going to happen," Mr. Mugabe said in the interview, in which he remained evasive on the question of the inclusion of opposition candidates in his Government. Under the constitution, Mr. Mugabe appoints the Cabinet.

"The game of election is the game of Government," Mr. Mugabe said. "If you lose, you lose the power to govern, and if you win, you win the power to govern. We have won the power to govern."

"As to whether we will include MDC does not arise at the moment, because firstly we don't know who they are. We must have a little more time to interact," he said. — AFP

Harassment resumes

© *Telegraph* reports:

Meanwhile, squatters are resuming their aggressive harassment of farmers. Just two days after Mr. Mugabe called for reconciliation and 'unity across race, tribe and ethnicity', farmers fear that the uneasy calm after the bitter and violent election campaign is about to be shattered.

Several white farmers in the Marondera region, south of Harare, said they had been warned to move out of their homes by Sunday because so-called war veterans were going to take over the properties next week.

"The war vets have become a lot more active in recent days and they are very hostile again," said one farmer.

But it was not clear whether the squatters' restiveness was linked to Monday's deadline for appeals against the government's plan to



A supporter of the Opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in Harare looks concerned as the implications of the parliamentary elections sink in. — Reuters

resettle more than 800 farms.

The Information Minister, Mr. Chen Chimutengwende, said the resettlement would begin immediately. "The people who will be resettled have already been nominated," he said. "It can begin next week. The price to be paid to the farmers can be negotiated at the same time as the resettlement process is going on."

Despite overtures from Britain and the European Union for a 'fresh start' in relations if Zimbabwe returns to the rule of law, Mr. Chimutengwende said the Government had given up hope of receiving foreign cash. He said there was no need to wait for the new Cabinet to be named by Mr. Mugabe, whose ruling Zanu-PF party narrowly won the election against a strong challenge by the Opposition Movement for Democratic Change.

But there were signs of growing divisions within Zanu-PF on Thursday after it lost scores of seats in the weekend elections. Independent papers quoted new MPs as saying Mr. Mugabe should step down.

Many Ministers fear that continued turmoil over land could wreck the agriculture-based economy. The party chairman, Mr. John Nkomo, said land re-

form should now be carried out 'in a sober manner' according to a programme agreed in 1998.

Some farmers suspect that Mr. Mugabe wants to rush the land seizures before Parliament is convened and can challenge them. "Mugabe cannot back down without losing face, and a big man like him cannot lose face," said one farmer.

The swift redistribution of land might also help to fend off pressure from squatters, whose systematic intimidation of farm workers and political opponents was vital to the ruling party's victory.

Intriguingly, Mr. Chimutengwende said he expected the squatters to leave the more than 1,000 farms they were occupying as soon as the resettlement begins.

The Government's comments caused dismay at the Commercial Farmers' Union. It had hoped for an orderly land reform programme to be adopted after the emotions of the election campaign had passed.

"This is very worrying, particularly because we have offered about 200 farms to Government, which has shown no interest in them," said the CFU's spokesman, Mr. Jerry Grant.

1 JUL 2000

HD-16 Africa

Is Lusaka Accord on the rocks? 4/6

By M. S. Prabhakara

CAPE TOWN, JUNE 3. It is nearly a year since the Democratic Republic of the Congo Ceasefire Agreement, the so-called Lusaka Accord, which was intended to bring to an end the conflict in the DRC, was signed.

After protracted negotiations involving all the major parties to the conflict, the accord was signed first by the five countries involved in it, (the DRC and its allies Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe; and Rwanda and Uganda which had intervened in support of two rebel factions) on July 10, 1999; and by the two principal rebel factions, the Congolese Rally for Democracy and the Movement for the Liberation of the Congo, on August 31, 1999.

The complicated peace process — spelt out in an elaborately drawn up 'Calendar for the implementation of the ceasefire agreement' spread over a full year — envisaged 'cessation of hostilities' to take effect within 24 hours of the signing of the accord, grandly denoted in the accord as D-Day. The timetable had two other crucial components. One, the 'Beginning of the National Dialogue' (D-Day plus 45 days), with a deadline for the completion of

such a 'national dialogue' also set (D-Day plus 90 days) immediately after which there was to be 'Establishment of New Institutions'.

Secondly, the accord provided for the 'Deployment of U.N. Peacekeeping Mission' (D-Day plus 120 days). Other deadlines spelt out were disarmament of armed groups and orderly withdrawal of all foreign forces; verification of monitoring; re-establishment of state administration; disarmament of non-military personnel; and finally measures to normalise the security situation along the international borders.

Each of these carefully spelt out measures has a bearing on the perceived territorial and security interests of the state of the DRC as well as of Rwanda and Uganda.

The fact is that none of these deadlines, not even the very first one, has been met on the ground. There are reports almost every day of hostilities between the government forces and the rebels, as well as between various rebel factions.

It is in this context that one has to view the extreme caution that is being exercised by South Africa in respect of its pledge to contrib-

ute to the U.N. peacekeeping force in the DRC. This, with an envisaged strength of a little over 5,500, which should have been in place at the beginning of this year, is still in the process of being put together. The frequent reports in recent days that South African forces are ready to leave for the DRC were described by a defence department spokesperson two days ago as 'speculative'.

The status of the 'national dialogue' too is mired in uncertainty. The former President of Botswana, Sir Ketumile Masire, named as the 'facilitator' for this dialogue by the OAU, has made little headway. (He had some problems soon after his appointment even in travelling freely in the DRC.)

According to an agency report from Kinshasa, the preparatory meeting he has called for in Cotonou, Benin, next week is likely to be boycotted by the DRC which has consistently refused to sit together with the rebels, though ever ready to talk with their backers, Rwanda and Uganda.

African solutions for African problems, to use the current catchphrase, seem still far away.

AFRICA

4 JUN 2000

Detention of soldiers in Sierra Leone denied

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JUNE 7. The Government today denied media reports that 400 Indian peace-keepers have been detained by the rebels in Sierra Leone.

Explaining the ground situation, the Army headquarters, in a statement, said that there was a stand-off between the 213 Indian soldiers and the 11 military observers and the forces of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) at Kailahun in Sierra Leone. These troops belonged to a battalion of the Gorkha Rifles.

Twenty-three Indian soldiers, however, continued to be detained, but have now been shifted from Kuiva to a 'brigade head-quarter' of the RUF at Pendembu.

Representatives of the Indian contingent in Sierra Leone had established direct contact with the RUF. An Indian company commander spoke to the RUF field commander, Brigadier Issa Sesay. Brigadier Sesay acknowledged the "positive and impartial contribution" of the Indian peace-keepers in Sierra Leone and based on his orders, vehicles of the Indian battalion which were carrying rations but detained at Kailahun were immediately released. He assured that the Indian battalion vehicles in future

would not be held up.

The release of the 23 Indian troops was also likely after Brigadier Sesay discussed the matter with his brigade commander.

The statement pointed out that the chances of the release of the Indian soldiers had brightened after these discussions.

Sources here said that Indian troops have been posted in the difficult diamond mining area in eastern Sierra Leone. The Sierra Leone Government was keen to establish complete control over this area. The RUF, on the contrary, is determined to hold ground as the resources generated by the diamond trade are used for the procurement of its arms and ammunition.

Rules out sending emissary
UNI reports:

Meanwhile, the Government today ruled out sending any emissary to Sierra Leone for negotiating the release of 23 soldiers and hoped for their early release.

An External Affairs Ministry spokesman said that the force commander in Sierra Leone was negotiating with the RUF local commander for their release. "The Indian Government considers this as a positive move," he said.

RECEIVED

28 JUN 2000

Fresh fighting in Horn of Africa

ASMARA, JUNE 8. Ethiopia and Eritrea today said fighting had broken out in the southern desert close to the Red Sea port of As-sab, as peace talks aimed at ending the border conflict limped on with no sign of a breakthrough.

Each side accused the other of provoking the latest bout of fighting, and each said it had inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy. "The (Ethiopian) regime launched an attack on the left flank of the front yesterday late afternoon involving two brigades," Eritrea's Foreign Ministry said in a statement today.

"The attack was repulsed with the Ethiopian army suffering losses. Ethiopia has again launched a similar attack in the same area this morning."

Ethiopia's account was exactly the opposite, claiming that Eritrea had initiated hostilities on Tuesday evening. "During the course of the fighting, the Ethiopian defence forces trashed Eritrean troops, causing heavy damage," it said in a statement.

"Despite being extremely weakened by the Ethiopian defence forces on Tuesday night, the Eritrean army last evening once again instigated conflict, but their feeble attempt was quickly crushed by Ethiopian forces." After a string of unsuccessful attempts at mediation, Ethiopia last month reignited the two-year-old war between the Horn of Africa neighbours with a massive offensive that took its army deep into western Eritrea.

— Reuters

59 JUN 200

Indian soldiers disarmed, taken hostage in Sierra Leone

The Times of India News Service

NEW DELHI: Peace-keeping in Sierra Leone has been no cakewalk for the 21 Indian soldiers who were disarmed and taken hostage on Thursday by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Pendembu. The RUF had earlier forwarded a set of demands to the UN for their release. The details of the RUF's demands are not known.

These Indian peace-keepers, sent on a UN mission, had been held since Tuesday by the RUF and were awaiting their release. Earlier, they were armed and negotiations were on with the local commander, Issa Sesay. In fact, a spokesman of the external affairs ministry had earlier said India was confident of their early release.

Two officers, one JCO and 18 jawans are among those held hostage. Originally, there were 23 of them, but two of the soldiers escaped in a vehicle 'borrowed' from the rebels. Whether this triggered the disarming of the rest still held by the RUF is not known. The escape of the two soldiers has jeopardised the release of the rest of the group.

Whatever the reason for the disarming, New Delhi is furious. The task for the UN mission in Sierra Leone is peace-keeping, which is not a combat situation and should not ordinarily have put the lives of Indian soldiers in danger. Peace enforcement missions can sometimes lead to exchange of fire, but the mission to Sierra Leone should have carried no unwarranted risks.

As per the rules, UN troops are seen as neutral forces, not involved in war, and hence should not be taken hostage.

The government is taking this issue very seriously and has already got in touch with the UN.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

10 JUN 2000

No quick end to Sierra Leone crisis

By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, JUNE 10. With Indian peacekeepers taken hostage in Sierra Leone, it is now becoming clear that there are no quick fixes to bring the impasse in the West African State to an early end.

While the United Nations will have to show immediate resolve to get the hostages released, it will have to reevaluate the conditions that will yield a durable solution to the crisis in the resource-rich State.

In fact, the U.N.'s ultimate success would depend on how quickly it can curb the country's clandestine diamond trade. Besides, a breakthrough in stopping Sierra Leone's civil war would also depend on how quickly a political deal, which gives the key rebel groups a greater say in the government, can be fixed.

Analysts here point out that a basic flaw in the last year's Lome power-sharing accord, which temporarily brought Sierra Leone's key rebel groups together, is responsible for the current bloodshed. The U.N. sponsored accord, in which the U.S. and U.K. played a key role, did not give enough powers to the Revolutionary Unit-

ed Front (RUF), a key player, led by Mr. Foday Sankoh.

Unhappy with the power-sharing deal, Mr. Sankoh's RUF once again trained its guns on the Government forces, resulting in greater pressure on the 13,000 strong U.N. peacekeeping force, in-charge of supervising peaceful adherence to the Lome accord. Britain has also stepped in to keep the accord intact. But with the memories of its disastrous participation in Somalia still alive, the U.S. has decided to stay away militarily. The Congress has also constrained a U.S. activist role for overseas U.N. tasks.

The RUF's control over the diamond mines in the country's east has become a major hurdle in reigning it. Diamonds, which are sold for buying arms, are routed through neighbouring Liberia. Flushed with arms, the RUF continues to pose a major challenge to the U.N. peacekeepers as well as the British forces, the bulk of whom, in any case, are on their way out from the country. Britain, however, has positioned two of its warships in the hope that gunboat diplomacy may discourage the RUF from staging a comeback. The RUF has been driven out of capital Freetown and the

government forces have retaken the strategic town of Lunsar, gateway to the diamond mines of the east.

The future of the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Sierra Leone will in large measure, depend on the success of complex international efforts to curb illegal diamond trade. The British Foreign Secretary, Mr. Robin Cook, who was in Sierra Leone earlier this week, is now seeking an international embargo on diamond sales.

Implementing an embargo may not be easy and would require the cooperation of leading companies engaged in diamond trade. In fact, one of the roads which brings Sierra Leone's diamonds to the outside world ends in Mumbai.

The key to curbing this trade is neighbouring Liberia. The U.S., more than Britain, can influence the Liberian President, Mr. Charles Taylor. It was U.S. influence on Liberia that resulted in RUF's participation in the Lome accord. The U.S. special envoy to Africa, Mr. Jesse Jackson, who reportedly enjoys a close personal equation with Mr. Taylor, who is connected to Mr. Foday Sankoh, brought the RUF to the negotiating table.

THE HINDU

11 JUN 2000

Lost on Sierra Leone

The United Nations has now to act decisively to release the Indian hostages from the clutches of the Revolutionary United Front guerillas in Sierra Leone. The safety of the 21 Indian troops who have now been disarmed by the RUF men is in the hands of the UN which can no longer find refuge in rhetoric, and has to step up the efforts to secure the release of the soldiers. India has taken the correct position by maintaining that the safety of its men who were sent as part of the UN peacekeeping forces in the region, is the responsibility of the august body which has lost its efficacy as an independent and autonomous organisation over the years. India's permanent representative at the UN, Kamlesh Sharma has got in touch with the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. Mr Annan reportedly shares Delhi's outrage and concern but rhetoric cannot replace action, and the UN must now step up efforts to get the hostages released. The RUF men are desperate and are quite capable of resorting to any means to get their end. The recovery of mutilated bodies of Zambian troops is an indication that the guerillas are prepared to go to any lengths. They have made four demands which are far reaching and unacceptable. They want the negotiation process for the resolution of the civil war to be revived and the ECOWAS mandate to be fully implemented; two, they have demanded the release of Moday Sankoh; three, the release of all RUF personnel and collaborators and four, that Major General V.K. Jaitley who is the Indian commander of the 11,000 strong Unamsil forces, forward their demands to all concerned. The UN has, predictably, rejected the demands saying that there can be no negotiations without the unconditional release of the hostages. This, is of course, the correct official position to take but it does not change the plight of the Indian soldiers and their families back in India. The RUF, a rag-tag army controls more than two thirds of this West African country. It has been holding the 21 soldiers for over five weeks, with little to no reaction from Delhi or the UN. The soldiers were being referred to as detainees until their arms were taken away from them. They are now officially recognised as hostages, with Delhi now approaching the UN to secure their release. Over 200 soldiers have been similarly restricted at Kaliahum, and recent developments now show that they are also prisoners. Officially this has been denied as they still have their arms, but then their movements have been similarly restricted by the RUF which has sealed off all the roads leading to the Indian troops position. Significantly the UN did not issue a single statement of protest, despite the fact that the Indians have been detained for over a month now. A joint team of Indian defence and foreign office officials is in Freetown to oversee the developments, but even this was sent several weeks after the crisis began. Clearly neither the UN nor the Indian government took the situation seriously, and have responded only after the RUF has taken the arms from the hostages. So what could have been handled a little more easily, perhaps, in the initial stages has been left to grow into a crisis which now neither India nor the United Nations has any clue how to handle. India which has sufficient border problems of its own can certainly not afford to use valuable officers and men for a war which is not its own. And the UN will have to pay more than lip service to the issue to convince Delhi that it does have its interests at heart.

THE ASIAN AGE

11 JUN 2000

Whose truth is it anyway?

Some of the recent decisions of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission's amnesty committee raise the question whether the whole process takes into consideration the victims' sensitivities, says M. S. PRABHAKARA.

SOME OF the recent decisions of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's amnesty committee raise the question whether the whole process takes into consideration the victims' sensitivities.

Last week, the so-called super spy of the apartheid regime, Major Craig Williamson, and his deputy, Mr. Jerry Raven, were granted amnesty in the case of the parcel bomb murder of Ruth First in Maputo, Mozambique (August 17, 1982), and of Jeanette Schoon and her six-year-old daughter, Katryn, in Lubango, Angola (August 28, 1984). Major Williamson commanded the operation and Mr. Raven put together the bomb.

Loyal and committed fighters of the liberation movement, neither Ruth First nor Jeanette Schoon (far less her child) were, however, actively involved in the armed struggle against the apartheid regime — the rationale offered by Williamson and many other amnesty applicants to justify their killings — at the time of their murder. The testimonies of the victims' families during the amnesty hearings showed that the perpetrators were motivated not by any political objectives but by personal hatred; in the case of Ruth First, also by the failure to successfully target her husband, Mr. Joe Slovo, then General Secretary of the South African Communist Party and chief of staff of Umkhonto weSizwe.

Further, the testimony of Major Williamson did not meet the two other crucial requirements for grant of amnesty: full disclosure of all the relevant facts in the case; and establishment of



A file picture of the former South African Security Police chief, Mr. Eugene de Kock, with his legal advisors at a Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearing in 1998.

'proportionality', that is, the act for which amnesty is being sought should be proportional to the 'political objective' to achieve which it was committed.

Major Williamson's case is an extreme one and has attracted attention only because of the high profile of both the perpetrator and his victims. But there are numerous other cases of amnesty granted where the requirements have not been fulfilled. Crude and racially-motivated murderers have, literally, got away with murder.

Indeed, the amnesty process seems to be proceeding to a similar denouement in respect of another high-profile apartheid assassin, Mr. Eugene de Kock, convicted murderer serving two life sentences and a further 212 years in prison on various charges including murder, conspiracy to murder, assault and fraud. He has already received amnesty for some (relatively) minor crimes; and were he to be granted amnesty for the two murders for which he got two life sentences, he may well walk free soon — as his lawyer recently hoped.

All this, while painful, is not surprising. For, the provision in the Interim Constitution under the heading, "National unity and reconciliation" makes it clear that such legislation as set

up the TRC should be enacted primarily to enable the granting of amnesty "in respect of acts, omissions and offences associated with political objectives and committed in the course of the conflicts of the past"; and hopes grant of amnesty will "advance such reconciliation and reconstruction".

However, such reconciliation seems nowhere in sight, let alone between victims and perpetrators but even in respect of the TRC process itself. Nearly two years since the publication of the TRC Report, controversy surrounds even the recommendations for interim reparations, let alone the larger scheme for more comprehensive individual reparation grants.

The release on April 13, this year, of an oral history of South Africa's tormented past, in the shape of six compact discs incorporating some of the most harrowing testimonies before the TRC, was the occasion for a commissioner of the TRC, Ms. Yasmin Sooka, to pose some telling questions regarding the implementation of the recommendation for reparation and rehabilitation of victims. More recently, in article published in a Sunday newspaper, Archbishop Desmond Tutu spoke of "insensitive comments being

made by some Government spokespersons" regarding the TRC's recommendations for monetary reparation, only one of a range of measures proposed by the TRC. He also noted that while there was disagreement on how much to spend on reparations, "money already allocated is going unspent for lack of a decision on how to spend it".

While the total funds required for implementing the TRC's recommendations on individual reparation grants, intended to benefit an estimated 22,000 victims, are Rands 447,400,000 annually; or over the six years envisaged for such support, Rands 2,864,400,000, as an interim measure, the Report also recommended urgent interim recommendations involving modest one-off payments of between Rands 2,000 and Rands 2,500 to the designated victims. The money was to be met by the President's Fund. To meet this, the Budget allocated Rands 100 million to the President's Fund in 1998-99 and Rands 200 million in 1999-2000. However, only Rands 32 million had been paid as of March this year to about 10,000 persons. Over and above all, the Justice Department is yet to spell out its Final Reparation Policy and what it proposes to do on the TRC recommendations in this regard.

Fresh Ethiopian attack as Eritrea accepts peace plan

REUTERS

ADDIS ABABA, June 10. — Ethiopia launched a new attack on Eritrea today, hours after the latter said it had accepted an internationally-brokered peace plan.

Ethiopia attacked the towns of Guluji and Tesseney at 4 a.m., "in line with instructions to deal decisively with attacks made by the Eritrean army," the Ethiopian government's spokeswoman, Ms Selome Tadesse, said in a statement.

Both sides also reported heavy fighting today near Eritrea's Red Sea port of Assab, in the south-east of the country, where Eritrea said Ethiopia had launched an "all-out" assault yesterday.

The latest fighting raises doubts on whether Ethiopia wants peace with its northern neighbour, despite declaring that the war was over last week.

Late yesterday, Eritrea said it had accepted ceasefire proposals from the Organisation of African Unity to end the two-year-old war, after peace talks got over in Algiers. But Ethiopia has not yet responded. Its team in Algiers, headed by its foreign minister, Mr Seyoum Mesfin, was expected to give an answer by noon today.

The Eritrean foreign minister, Mr Haile Woldensae, said OAU's proposals called for an Ethiopian troop withdrawal to positions they held before hostilities broke out in 1998.

THE STATESMAN

11

Mess in Sierra Leone

NOTWITHSTANDING UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's pledge to give the "highest priority" to the release of the captured Indian soldiers in Sierra Leone, it is doubtful if any firm measures will soon be taken. The reason is that the world body is seemingly clueless about its next move in a highly volatile situation. India, too, does not seem to have acted with adequate caution, considering that even when there was considerable uncertainty about the fate of the kidnapped soldiers, New Delhi did not hesitate to send a fresh batch of troops. The move may have been in keeping with India's long-standing role in such ventures, but the policy makers would have been better advised to take greater account of the new dangers involved in today's war zones. It is precisely the fear of getting caught in a situation over which an outside force has no control that has made the US refuse to participate in peace missions after several of its troops were killed in Somalia.

The other permanent members of the UN Security Council show a similar reluctance. Britain, for instance, did send its troops to Sierra Leone, but mainly to evacuate its own and other foreign nationals. After its latest experience, India should be similarly choosy. The chances of getting trapped in a messy situation is particularly high in Africa because there it is usually a question not so much of maintaining peace as of keeping two warring groups apart. Peace can only be ensured if both sides desire it. In the African countries, however, at least one of them is always intent on continuing the fight.

What makes it all the more difficult for an interventionist force is unfamiliarity with the terrain, the language and the local politics. Moreover, since the peace-keepers are usually lightly armed, it makes them an easy prey for the battle-hardened rebels. Unfortunately, there is so much weariness in the rest of the world about the news of wars and civil strife pouring out of Africa that the capture of a group of Indians is largely ignored. India should be wary, therefore, about committing its troops for duty in unknown trouble spots without first making a thorough appraisal of the pros and cons of the situation.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

13 JUN 2000

Ethiopia okays Africa Eritrea peace

REUTERS

ADDIS ABABA, June 12. — Ethiopia's government has said it agreed in principle to a peace plan already accepted by Eritrea, its enemy in a two-year border war, but deferred a formal decision to its Parliament and Cabinet.

"Ethiopia remains committed to ensuring a lasting and sustainable solution to the conflict and has agreed in principle to the proposals put forward in Algiers," the government said in a statement issued late yesterday.

Eritrea accepted the proposals on Friday after the 11-day peace talks in the Algerian capital, Algiers, brokered by the Organisation of African Unity.

Mediators said on Saturday that both sides had agreed to the plan in principle, but there had been no word from

Ethiopia's government until the statement.

The Algerian justice minister, Mr Ahmed Ouyahia, said on Saturday that he hoped a ceasefire deal would be signed in Algiers by next weekend. The deal calls for both sides to withdraw to positions held before hostilities began two years ago and for a UN force to be deployed in a 20-km buffer zone till international arbitrators demarcate their 1,000-km border.

Ethiopia's Parliament, which is dominated by the ruling party, is in session, but it was unclear when it would consider the peace proposal. The statement said there was continued fighting on Sunday at the eastern and western fronts. It said that Ethiopian forces had captured a number of prisoners of war, military hardware and munitions.

THE STATESMAN

THE STATESMAN

1986

U.N. team finalising report on Sierra Leone

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

UNITED NATIONS, JUNE 13. The United Nations team which went to Sierra Leone to assess the situation against the backdrop of some very troublesome developments has returned to New York and is in the process of finalising a report. However, it is not clear if the report would be made public now. The official view here is that the situation in the troubled African nation is relatively quiet.

Nearly 250 United Nations peacekeepers — mostly from India — are being held by rebel forces and negotiations are on to secure their release. While 21 Indian peacekeepers are being held in eastern Sierra Leone after being moved from the town of Quiva to Pendembu, another 224 armed peacekeepers and 10 unarmed observers are held in the rebel stronghold of Kailahun.

The focus now is on ways to secure the safe release of the U.N. personnel. For instance, there is a view that there are at least two battalions of U.N. troops who are in a position to

challenge the rebels who have surrounded the 224 plus 10 U.N. personnel. At the moment though, a pointed offensive strategy is not on the cards, it is said.

With the British Commandos to leave Sierra Leone by the end of the week there is an urgent need for a lasting strategy that takes into account not only the fragile political environment in Freetown but also on the U.N. peacekeeping units' agenda. The British are leaving a 50-strong "training" force, but with shifting loyalties more the rule than the exception, there are questions on who this force will "train".

The major powers in the Security Council such as Britain and the U.S. are also looking at ways to restore a semblance of order in Sierra Leone after nearly a decade of civil strife. That there is no order within the ranks of the Revolutionary United Front of Mr. Foday Sankoh was evident in the fashion the accord on the release of kidnapped peacekeepers was vetoed by so-called "higher" authorities in the outfit. This also raised questions on the extent to

which London or Washington had "influence" on Mr. Sankoh. In fact, serious doubts have been raised on the RUF leader's role in the emerging scheme of things in Freetown.

Last week Britain proposed raising the strength of the U.N. force in Sierra Leone to 16,500 from the present authorised level of 13,000. Along with this came the idea that if the backbone of the RUF rebels was to be broken, some tough measures would have to be taken to deny them access to funding through clandestine diamond sales. There has also been talk of bringing people such as Mr. Sankoh before a war crimes tribunal.

As part of a deal to enable funding to Sierra Leone operations, the Clinton administration has told Congress (the Senate) that Mr. Sankoh cannot be part of any final settlement in that country. With peacekeeping operations and the U.S. role coming under criticism, the last thing the administration and the Democrats want is to provide additional fodder to the Republicans in an election year.

14 JUN 2000

A CRUSADE FOR THEIR LAND

BY JR HIREMATH

ONE OF Archbishop Desmond Tutu's favourite jokes during the apartheid period in South Africa has an edge of bitter truth: 'When the white man first came here, he had the Bible and we had the land. He invited us to kneel with him and pray together. When opened our eyes again, lo and behold, we had the Bible and he had the land!'

I wonder whether many of my countrymen consciously appreciate how lucky we are to be citizens of a hot tropical country. India did not attract permanent western settlements during the long years of colonial rule. Many other countries have had a different tale to tell — Australia, for instance, as well as the United States, with their vast domains endowed in many parts with a temperate climate, and also with rich mineral and other resources. There the indigenous populations were systematically reduced in numbers, so that the settlers could graduate to the status of natives.

But there are some, like Namibia and South Africa, where the original inhabitants were far too numerous to be transformed into an insignificant minority. Zimbabwe belongs to this category. At the University of Cape Town, there is a statue of Cecil John Rhodes looking out into the far distance as if he were fantasizing his favourite dream of extending the British Empire in Africa from the Cape to Cairo. Even if he did not succeed in this, his exploits were duly recognised — the conquered lands northwards from South Africa beyond the Limpopo River was renamed 'Rhodesia', a generic name for what is now Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Of the three, the last named was the least fortunate, in the sense that its climate was the most suitable for the transmigration of white settlers.

Rhodes initially entered Southern Rhodesia (which became Zimbabwe after independence) believing that it was rich in gold like the Transvaal in South Africa. In 1888, his envoys were able to 'persuade' the Matabele King Lobengula into 'granting them, their heirs and representatives, complete and exclusive charge over all metals and minerals situated in his kingdoms, principalities and dominions' — for the lordly sum of a thousand rifles, a hundred thousand car-

tridges and a patrol boat that was later substituted by a one-time payment of \$ 500 ! They promptly 'sold' this concession to a company set up by Rhodes, even as another gold rush of white settlers arrived in Southern Rhodesia. When it became apparent that the new territories were not endowed with unimaginable underground riches, the colonists decided to compensate themselves by making their fortunes through the commercial farming of these fertile lands.

By 1898, some 15 of Zimbabwe's 96 million acres had been appropriated by settlers without any compensation. And an estimated 38 per cent of the total population of Matabeleland had been forced into 'reserves'. The poor natives were completely bewildered, as they had always considered land as something very sacred, *cinovera*, which belonged to the whole tribe. Subsequent developments regarding the sordid tale of how the indigenous people of Zimbabwe were rendered paupers in their homeland need not be detailed here. Suffice it to say that the colonial government in Salisbury (renamed Harare after independence) successfully managed to deprive the indigenous population of the best lands in their native country.

A 'Land Apportionment Act' was promulgated in 1930 institutionalising the racial division of land. The best and most fertile areas were ear-



Going native: Robert Mugabe campaigning for the upcoming general elections

marked for the whites, while the native blacks were allowed to purchase only the less productive parts which had poor soil and little rainfall, besides being infested with the tsetse fly. By 1961, more than one-third of Southern Rhodesia was 'owned' by Europeans, who numbered only one-seventeenth of the population.

It was not only in land distribution that the Africans were discriminated against. There were other areas, like education and health care, housing social welfare and employment opportunities. But the main focus of discontentment has been the land question. In November 1965, Prime Minister Ian Smith announced a unilateral Declaration of Independence, to remove whatever ineffective pressure the British Government in London had been exerting on him to correct the inequities against the blacks. Meanwhile, the natives had commenced a no-holds-barred guerrilla war that raged for many years, with the open support of sympathetic newly independent African countries like Tanzania and Mozambique. The turning point came at 'CHOGM-79' in Lusaka, where the Commonwealth Heads of Government compelled Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher to agree reluctantly to take remedial action. The ensuing Lancaster House Conference resulted in the adoption of a set of measures that finally lead

to the birth of an independent Zimbabwe on April 18, 1980.

But the Constitution that had been agreed to at Lancaster House had an important proviso: the new state would strictly safeguard the fundamental rights of all Zimbabweans. This meant that private property could not be acquired without adequate and justifiable compensation.

The European landowners had thus been enabled to safeguard their ill-gotten lands, due to the legal and financial constraints under which the government had to function.

President Mugabe told American journalists as long back as in

February, 1981 that he had been assured that the British government would give Zimbabwe the necessary funds to compensate the white settlers for the acquisition of their lands. But this was not done. The following year, he frankly told the then-US Vice President George Bush that the Zimbabwean blacks rendered landless during the colonial period now wanted to get back the land of their ancestors. After all, this land had been virtually stolen from them with little or no compensation. It was therefore right and proper to take it back without paying for it, except perhaps for any infrastructure development. If necessary, the relevant laws would be changed, to make the quantum of compensation non-justifiable, so that judges would not have any grounds to reverse government action.

Nothing was done, however, for a long time even after the passage, in 1992, of the Land Acquisition Act. But the last couple of years have witnessed a flurry of activity to implement its provisions. This invited instant condemnation by the western world and by the international financial institutions. Early in 1998, the managing director of the IMF suggested obliquely to President Mugabe that Zimbabwe's application for a loan from the Fund could be jeopardised unless he issued a 'public and

official' statement that he would adhere to the Constitution and laws of the land. It has been insinuated by others that the President is launched on a populist campaign in preparation for the general elections, slated for June 24 and 25. That the farms already confiscated had been given to his cronies. That the poor blacks wanted jobs, and not land. That the economy would suffer if white expertise and know-how was driven out.

At a Donors' Conference in September, 1998 the World Bank's country director advised Zimbabwe not to 'go native' as the 'downside risks' would be high in terms of social and economic costs. The EU representative recommended that the government's proposal to acquire five million hectares from the large-scale commercial farming sector over a period of five years, in order to settle 150,000 households, 'should be part of a transparent, integrated and consultative process' or it may lead to avoidable complications. Fine words, but little concrete help was offered to finance the acquisition of the white farms.

There has apparently been some rethinking, and it was reported in May last year that the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the US had decided to provide a million dollars through the UNDP 'to fund technical support for the inception phase of Zimbabwe's land reform and resettlement programme'. The object of this largesse appears to be to 'space out the acquisition process and make it more easily digestible. Only a million hectares, which would include 120 farms that had been voluntarily offered for sale, are to be targeted in this phase, for the resettlement of 77,000 rural families. Zimbabwean blacks wonder why all this concern about the 4,000 or so large commercial white farms in the country, rather than about the 10 million blacks.

The latest reports from Harare indicate that the Land Acquisition Act has been amended recently to allow the president to seize up to 841 white-owned farms by proclamation and without compensation. This has led to more of the impatient rural poor invading white farms and taking them over, besides encouraging a copy-cat movement from others. Could this also be reflected in imitative ripples in Namibia and South Africa, where too the native blacks yearn for their ancestral lands?

Mugabe's feared aide pitching for Parliament seat

18/6

Africa HD 12

CHIVHU (Zimbabwe). JUNE 17. In the dusty back streets of Chivhu, children wear caps emblazoned with the face of a parliamentary candidate whose name their parents whisper with fear.

Mr. Chenjerai "Hitler" Hunzvi, leader of Zimbabwe's independence war veterans' association — the prime mover behind the violent occupation of white farms — and the President, Mr. Robert Mugabe's most feared henchman, is standing for Parliament in the election next weekend.

In his prospective constituency of Chikomba, the Opposition Movement for Democratic Change has been driven underground by a ruthless campaign of intimidation.

Mr. Peter Kaunda, the MDC candidate, has been forced to flee his home, move his family and sleep in safe houses in Harare. "We have been unable to campaign since these guys started being violent," he said. Mr. Hunzvi secured the nomination of the ruling Zanu-PF party in characteristically devious style by displacing a rival who had already won a primary election. Days later, thugs began the campaign to guarantee victory for their master by moving from house to house hunting down anyone suspected of backing the MDC.

Mr. Kaunda dismissed his opponent. "I actually hate his criminal background," he said. "If the rule of law were what it is meant to be, he would be behind bars."

Mr. Hunzvi's supporters have attacked scores of people and begun a protection racket, demanding sums of pounds 50 or pounds 100 in return for guarantees of safety.

At least 40 teachers are among those who have fled the area, and Mr. Kaunda said his opponent's gangs had singled out schools for attack.

At one secondary school, a few kilometres outside Chivhu, 20 of the 26 teachers had been forced to flee

after death threats and assaults. Mr. Brance Maronjwe, one of the teachers, described how an innocent conversation in a bar had landed him in trouble. "I was talking with my brother and we were saying how bad the present government was," he said.

A loyal supporter of Mr. Hunzvi overheard him talking and hours later 15 thugs chanting "Forward with Comrade Mugabe, forward with Zanu-PF" surrounded Mr. Maronjwe's home beside the school, while he slept inside.

"They were banging on the door and shouting for us to get out. We just hid," he said. Unable to break into the house, the gang hurled stones at the teacher's car, shattering the front and rear windscreens and causing damage Mr. Maronjwe cannot afford to repair. "Mr. Hunzvi is a very bad man," he said. "He is the very man who has caused all this violence in the first place."

Human rights groups have documented the scale of the national terror campaign and say it has forced 13,000 people to flee their homes and claimed 35 lives.

Mr. Tony Reeler, director of the Amani Trust, said Zanu-PF mobs had been responsible for "murder, attempted murder, torture, rape, beatings, setting people on fire, arson and other forms of violence."

He added: "This is a complete subversion of the democratic process... Free and fair elections are not possible."

Constant violence has created an atmosphere of terror in Chikomba. Most teachers refused to be named for fear of reprisals. We were unable to visit MDC activists in Chivhu for fear of attracting the attention of the Zanu-PF gangs. Yet Mr. Kaunda is confident that he will defeat Mr. Hunzvi. "Certainly we are going to win," he said. "I have no doubt." —
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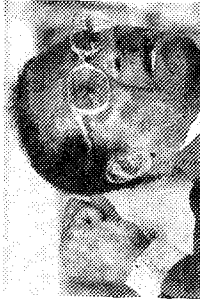
ZIMBABWE / 'OPPOSITION HAS A WINNING CHANCE'

Stakes high for Mugabe as voting begins

Africa

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN ZIMBABWE

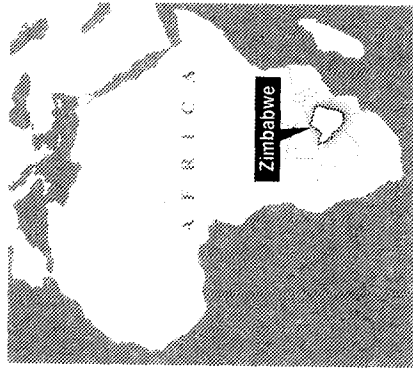
Hundreds of international election observers have been deployed to monitor the voting process in 4,000 polling stations, amid widespread concern about possible fraud. The two days of voting follow a campaign marred by political violence and intimidation in which more than 30 persons have been killed.



President Robert Mugabe



Opposition leader Tsvangirai



Total number of seats in Parliament	150
MPs to be elected	120
Provincial Governors	8
Non-constituency MPs	12
Chiefs	10

Graphics by VARGHESE KAYLADA

HARARE, JUNE 24. Zimbabwean voting on Saturday in elections for a new Parliament, posing the biggest threat to the President, Mr. Robert Mugabe's ruling Zanu-PF party since independence in 1980. Voting in the two-day poll began shortly after 7 a.m. (local time), in over 4,000 polling stations across the southern African country.

The campaign for the vote has been scarred by violence that has drawn strong international condemnation. At least 30 people, most of them supporters of the Opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), have died since February. The MDC, formed seven months ago, has gained widespread support and observers say the party has a realistic chance of winning a majority of the 120 parliamentary seats up for grabs. Mr. Mugabe, whose presidency does not come up for a vote until 2002, can handpick a further 30 Members of Parliament.

The voting is taking place against a backdrop of murder, beatings, rape, abductions and arson throughout the country — a "terror campaign" designed to crush the Opposition, human rights organisations charged — and the often violent invasion and occupation of some 1,500 white-owned farms.

At least four policemen were standing by there, but there was no sign of tension and the police chatted jovially with mediapersons.

The MDC leader, Mr. Morgan Tsvangirai, 48, who was head of Zimbabwe's powerful Trade Union Congress, campaigned for the ouster of a governing team presiding over a ruined economy, with galloping inflation, high unemployment, frozen aid and a critical shortage of foreign aid hurting every Zimbabwean. — Reuters, AFP

Telegraph reports:

Mr. Mugabe has played many tricks to take unfair advantage of his rivals in the election — and there could be more to come during the voting. In the run-up to every poll, the Government redraws constituency boundaries and compiles a new electoral roll. Zanu-PF's fingerprints were all over last month's review.

To the astonishment of observers, Harare and Bulawayo, both Opposition strongholds, lost one constituency each despite the great population shift to the cities prevalent in all African countries. When international observers began arriving in the final fortnight, the official



Whites and blacks stand in line to vote in the Zimbabwean parliamentary poll, in the city of Bulawayo on Saturday. — Reuters

obstruction campaign moved into high gear. A cumbersome accreditation process was set up to delay the observers in Harare. Civic group teams were rejected wholesale.

Just 72 hours before polling day, the Government threw its own Electoral Supervisory Commission into disarray by limiting the number of monitors at polling stations to one. Then it yielded to pressure and raised the number to four. There will be further opportunity for trickery. Counting of votes does not begin until Monday and ballot boxes will stay in the polling stations until they are driven to counting centres on Sunday — without monitors.

25 JUN 2000

Zimbabwe Opp. faces power bar

FROM DAVID FOX

Harare, June 25 (Reuters): President Robert Mugabe's Zanu-PF party said on Sunday the Opposition would be barred from government whatever the result of Zimbabwe's election.

John Nkomo, the party's national chairman, told a news conference that Mugabe had the sole right to appoint his Cabinet from those elected to Parliament in two-day elections which end on Sunday night.

"He can even have a Cabinet of just five if he wants," Nkomo said. "Mugabe is an institution."

But Nkomo said he expected Zanu-PF, which has been in power since independence in 1980, to win an overwhelming majority of the 120 seats up for grabs.

Mugabe, who himself does not face re-election until 2002, has sole executive power and chooses a Cabinet from Parliament.

Analysts say there is a real possibility of the Opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), winning a substantial number of seats in this election.

Previously, the combined Opposition had held just three seats. If the Opposition controlled more than two thirds of Parliament, they would be able to reject any legislation proposed by Mugabe, but could not vote him out of office or bring forward presidential elections.

Nevertheless, analysts say, that scenario would make the country virtually ungovernable and Mugabe would almost cer-



President Laurent Kabila (L) of Congo with Robert Mugabe in Harare. (AFP)

tainly have to seek re-election.

Zanu-PF officials are refusing to contemplate defeat. "No other party has a chance," Nkomo said. "We have done our work and the results will speak for themselves."

Nkomo said the defeat of a government-sponsored referendum in February to amend the Constitution was not a good measuring stick for the current elections.

But opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai said Mugabe would be "history" after watershed week-

end elections.

"Mugabe is history. There is life beyond Mugabe," said Tsvangirai, the leader of the Movement for Democratic Change, as he toured polling stations on the second and final day of voting.

He said the high voter turnout would favour his party and dismissed comments that Mugabe would bar the opposition from government.

"It doesn't matter what he does. That's the end," the former trade union leader told reporters

in the poor township of Budiro, near Harare.

"There is always a stage where the curtains will be drawn," said Tsvangirai, who was trailed by a 10-car convoy of foreign television crews who mobbed him at each stop.

The charismatic Tsvangirai launched the MDC only nine months ago, but repeatedly hammering Mugabe on the crisis-hit economy, he has mounted a potent challenge to the President's 20-year rule.

THE TELEGRAPH

25 JUN 2000

Mugabe party calls EU report on violence 'real garbage'

Zimbabwe counting begins

FROM DARREN SCHUETTLER

Harare, June 26 (Reuters): Vote counting began today in Zimbabwe's election after European Union observers condemned the polls as neither free nor fair.

President Robert Mugabe's ruling party dismissed the EU report, which blamed his Zanu-PF party for the bulk of pre-election violence, as "real garbage."

As counting started, news came in of a new incident in the violence that led EU monitors to condemn the conduct of the poll, with five Opposition supporters reported severely beaten.

The turnout to elect 120 members of parliament looked like being one of the highest since independence in 1980 when Zanu-PF won a sweeping majority that they have not relinquished since.

The high turnout came despite what the EU team said were intense levels of intimidation by Zanu-PF officials that made it virtually impossible for opposition candidates to campaign.

"The term 'free and fair elections' is not applicable in these elections," said Pierre Schori, head of the EU observers, the biggest group of foreign monitors.

"The level of violence and intimidation in the pre-election phase makes the term not applicable," the former Swedish government minister told a midnight news conference.

Zanu-PF secretary for administration, Didymus Mutasa, a close aide of Mugabe, told Reuters: "That is real garbage."

"They are biased and with this report they have confirmed that the EU's real mission is actually

out to help those trying to overthrow President Mugabe and our party."

At least 30 people, mostly supporters of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), have died in violence linked to the elections and invasions of hundreds of white-owned farms by pro-government militants since February.

In the latest incident, five MDC members were severely beaten by suspected Zanu-PF thugs on Saturday night in the Mataga area of central Zimbabwe.

They were violently assaulted. People are really scared down there," human rights worker Val Ingham-Thorpe told Reuters after rushing three of the men to a Harare hospital today.

Mudondo Timomenda was burned on the buttocks and beat

on his feet, while Simbai Murigwa had suffered a large, deep burn on his shoulder. Alphayo Shoko's face was badly swollen after he was battered on the head, she said.

The other two MDC members were still missing, Ingham-Thorpe said, adding that there had been 120 violent incidents in the Mataga area in the run-up to the elections.

Schori said that while weekend voting itself was "highly positive", the level of pre-poll violence and a "lack of transparency" by the government suspected also seriously flawed. "Zanu-PF leaders seemed to sanction the use of violence and intimidation against political opponents and contributed significantly to the climate of fear so evident during the election campaign," Schori said.

THE TELEGRAPH

27 JUN 2000

Mugabe retains hold on Parliament

REUTERS & AP

51-9 28/6
HARARE, June 27. — Zimbabwe's ruling Zanu-PF Party has secured an absolute majority in Parliament following weekend elections.

With results in for 100 out of the 120 seats contested, President Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union — Patriotic Front Party had won 52 seats.

These members, along with the 30 others which Mr Mugabe personally appoints, are more than enough to give Zanu-PF a majority in the 150-member Parliament, despite huge Opposition gains.

Analysts had said that the record voter turnout in the weekend elections meant that people wanted to see the end of Mr Mugabe's 20-year rule.

The newly-formed Opposition Movement for Democratic

Change had gained 47 seats, but its leader, Mr Morgan Tsvangirai, was defeated.

Mr Tsvangirai contested Budhare north seat, but was beaten by his cousin Mr Kenneth Manyonda.

War veteran leader Mr Chenjerai Hitler Hunzvi, who spearheaded the often violent invasion of hundreds of White commercial farms in an operation backed by Mr Mugabe, won his Chikomba district seat comfortably.

In Harare, the mood on the streets was tense after Zanu-PF chairman Mr John Nkomo declared the party would form the next government regardless of who won the election.

And for those who did not accept the verdict, the police commissioner told a news conference: "police will ensure that the people are forced to accept the outcome". / /

British warning: Britain today said it will withhold \$ 54 million earmarked for land reform in Zimbabwe unless President Mugabe pursues national reconciliation.

"In the event of real reforms which reflect the people of Zimbabwe's clear desire for change, Britain will be ready to respond," foreign secretary Mr Robin Cook told reporters.

He did not congratulate Mr Mugabe's party on the victory. Instead, he lauded voters for courage in voting strongly for opposition candidates despite "two months of intimidation and gerrymandering".

But Britain's main Opposition Conservative Party asked Mr Cook to rule out aid. "This election drives a stake through the heart of Mugabe's claim to represent the legitimate will of the Zimbabwe people," Mr Francis Maude said.

28 JUN 2000

ZIMBABWE POLL / OPPOSITION MAKES MASSIVE GAINS

Asia HD-18 **Mugabe party scores narrow win** 28/6

By M. S. Prabhakara

CAPE TOWN, JUNE 27. Though failing to win a majority of seats, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in Zimbabwe has done astonishingly well for a mass movement which transformed itself into a political party less than a year ago.

The MDC has secured 57 of the 120 elective seats in the 150-member Parliament while the ZANU-PF, the unchallenged ruling party in the last two decades of independent Zimbabwe, has won 62 seats. In the dissolved Parliament, ZANU-PF held all but three of the 120 elective seats.

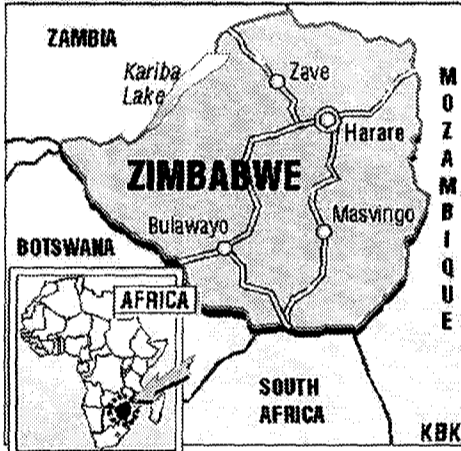
The MDC's triumph was, however, clouded by the defeat of its leader, Mr. Morgan Tsvangirai, projected as much by the MDC as by the British and South African media as the leader poised to replace the President, Mr. Robert Mugabe.

One seat has been won by ZANU-Ndonga, a faction of ZANU led by the Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole, the politician who refuses to go away. In the run-up to the elections, there were reports that Rev. Sithole, along with the other clergyman-politician of the same vintage, Bishop Abel Muzorewa, had joined hands with Mr. Ian Smith to form a new party called United Democratic Front.

According to radio reports, the MDC did extremely well in urban areas, capturing the seats in Harare and Bulawayo, as well as in Kwe Kwe and Butare. Regionally, the MDC did extremely well in the western part of the country, giving legitimacy to the "divide" that many analysts maintain still exists in Zimbabwe between the majority Shona and the minority Ndebele — a "historical" inheritance exacerbated by the "disturbances" in Matabeleland and the Midlands in the 1980's. The ZANU-PF, in contrast, did well in the rural areas and in its "strongholds" in the north, east and south, in Mashonaland, Manicaland and Masvingo.

ZIMBABWE POLL OUTCOME

ZANU-PF	62	President Mugabe is allowed to appoint 30 seats himself to the 150-seat parliament
MDC	57	
ZANU-Ndonga	1	
Elections held	120	



Of the 30 seats which were not in contest, 12 are to be filled by nominations from the President. Eight are reserved for the provincial Governors who are ex-officio Members of Parliament. The remaining 10 seats are reserved for persons elected by the Council of Traditional Chiefs.

Even if it is assumed (which may not necessarily be the case) that all the 30 "nominated" seats will be taken up by persons supporting the majority party, this still will not give ZANU-PF a two-thirds majority in the 150-member House.

Put simply, this means that any amendment to the Constitution will require a consensus approach from all the parties in Parliament.

It is to be seen if the MDC will turn out to be obstructive if further amendments to enable a more equitable distribution of land were to be introduced by the Government.

The outcome of the parliamentary poll will not affect the position of Mr. Mugabe whose sixth term will expire only in March 2002.

There are already indications that Mr. Tsvangirai will be contesting for the office of President when the election is due.



The leader of the Movement for Democratic Change, Mr. Morgan Tsvangirai, speaks to the media at the Meikles Hotel in Harare after the results of the Zimbabwean parliamentary elections were announced on Tuesday. — Reuters

29 JUN 2000

Pyrrhic victory *Africa*

ZIMBABWE'S RULING ZANU-PF party may have won the parliamentary election, albeit by a slender margin, but President Robert Mugabe's moral right to rule has been largely compromised because of the huge gains made by the Opposition. Moreover, the manner in which he is hoping to retain power will not enhance his reputation. Mr Mugabe is of course not the only Third World leader who has used all the tricks of the game to hold on to office. He came to power using one ideology and is retaining it by using another, that is, intimidation of voters and electoral manipulation. Like many African national heroes who turned despotic and failed to redeem their pledges, Mr Mugabe too has failed to bring about a material change in the lives of the people. As a consequence, his popularity is rapidly dwindling.

When political power appeared to be slipping ^{29/6} out of his hands, he began to evoke the spirit of the 'bush war' that had ended white rule in Rhodesia two decades ago. But the veterans of that war became pawns in Mugabe's power game. He has been sailing comfortably all these years in the absence of a viable opposition. However, the jolt came last February when the ruling party lost the referendum on a new Constitution. Suddenly, he experienced the revelation that he had not done enough for the war veterans and his farcical land nationalisation programme had been a failure. Hence the ethical justification for the forcible occupation of land owned by white farmers.

Even though Mr Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the Movement for Democratic Change, failed to win in his constituency, his outfit has run very close to the ruling party in the number of seats won. However, Mr Mugabe will have no difficulty securing a majority in the 150-member Parliament after he nominates 30 members to the new House. Despite the climate of fear, the Opposition had fielded candidates for the first time in all the 120 seats which were open for contest. And the large turnout was the first sign that ZANU-PF may be in trouble. Indeed, the Zimbabwe outcome suggests that winds of change are blowing across Africa. The continent has rejected the Idi Amins, the Hastings Bandas and the Mobutu Sese Sekos. Democracy may still be a tender plant in Africa, but the slow advent of multi-party rule and transition through democratic means are reasons for optimism.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

29 JUN 2000

U.N. troops break through rebel lines

FREETOWN, MAY 11. Kenyan troops serving with the U.N. mission in Sierra Leone have broken through the lines of rebels who had surrounded them in Makeni and Magburaka, east of Freetown, the Government said today.

Six of the Kenyans were shot and wounded by Government soldiers who took them for rebels, the Information Ministry said.

After breaking through the rebel lines, the Kenyans reached Kabala, 220 km northeast of Freetown, according to a Ministry security update on state-run Democracy Radio.

On their arrival in Kabala, the troops were fired on by the Sierra Leone army which mistook them for rebels in U.N. uniforms, according to the radio. Six Kenyans were wounded and have been transferred to Freetown for treatment.

Makeni, 240 km inland from the capital, is a stronghold of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), whose forces last week took hostage some 300 U.N. peacekeeping forces, while another 200 went missing, also believed captive.

The RUF has taken uniforms, weapons and equipment from several hundred U.N. mission troops held hostage since May 2.

The Kenyan contingent at Magburaka made it to Bumbura, 50 km further east, according to the Government communique. Meanwhile, British troops have evacuated around 400 foreign nationals from Sierra Leone amidst fears of a return to full scale civil war, the Defence Ministry today said in London. — AFP



Refugees from the war-torn provinces of Sierra Leone cram into a car in the centre of Freetown on Thursday. Despite the Army repelling attacks by the rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF) forces, many locals are afraid to return to the provinces and opt to stay in the relative calm of the capital. — Reuters

MAY 11 1996

MAY 11 1996

MAY 11 1996

MAY 11 1996

Mugabe manifesto to focus on land reforms

Harare, May 3

PRESIDENT ROBERT Mugabe kicks off his ruling party's re-election bid today with a manifesto expected to focus on a land reform programme, which has plunged Zimbabwe into its worst crisis since independence in 1980.

Aside from broadly outlining plans for redistributing White-owned farms to landless Blacks, Zanu-Pf's platform for the coming parliamentary elections is expected to address an ailing economy.

"It is a manifesto that will clearly win us the election," Eddison Zvobgo, a senior minister and the party's secretary for legal affairs, said after addressing the Harare Press Club late yesterday.

Mugabe, under escalating diplomatic pressure at home and abroad, discussed the land issue with his cabinet on Tuesday and scheduled talks with his party's Politburo on Wednesday.

Information Minister Chen Chimutengwende said after the cabinet meeting: "We have noth-

ing to say." Zvobgo declined to comment but said the government might issue a statement today.

The opposition movement for democratic change poses the biggest threat to Zanu-Pf's 20-year-old rule and has built its campaign on Mugabe's mismanagement of the economy.

15 dead: At least 15 people have died — as Opposition followers were beaten to death by suspected Zanu-Pf backers on Monday — in 10 weeks of land invasions and violence related to the elections.

There was no indication from the Cabinet session of an election date, which the Opposition had been hoping for. The session was the first meeting of the 76-year-old leader's Cabinet since a ministerial delegation returned from London last week empty-handed after bilateral talks on British aid for Zimbabwe's land reforms.

The tobacco industry, the country's biggest export-earner, is reeling from record low deliveries as White farmers withhold supplies due to the civil unrest. (Reuters)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

4 MAY 1980

4 MAY 2000

Land issue result of colonisation: Mbeki

By M.S. Prabhakara

CAPE TOWN, MAY 5. It is not often that a Head of State begins an address to the nation broadcast over radio and TV with a swipe at the media.

This is precisely what the South African President, Mr. Thabo Mbeki, did yesterday evening when he began his speech criticising the media for failing to report his views on the situation in Zimbabwe though he spoke on the subject thrice in the space of 10 days, between the Good Friday summit in Victoria Falls and May Day, in the presence of the South African media. Frustrated, Mr. Mbeki said, he had chosen to speak directly to South Africans.

The remarks are to be seen in the context of the criticism in the same media, as also by the Democratic Party and the New National Party, that Mr. Mbeki has not been more harsh and forthcoming in criticising the Zimbabwean President, Mr. Robert Mugabe, over the 'land invasions' and the 'collapse of the rule of law' in Zimbabwe.

The racial dimensions of such criticism articulated overwhelmingly by the white people, some of whom openly hanker for the 'good old days of Rhodesia before the terrorists and communists took over', come through in the reporting and editorial comments and edit page articles, in interventions on radio talk shows, in correspondence/columns, and even in casual conversations. Indeed,

(10)-17 6/5 Africa

lapse of the state of Zimbabwe which could well have been transplanted in today's newspapers.

In the event, what Mr. Mbeki referred to as 'agreement on various measures to solve the Zimbabwe land question' never got implemented because of fundamental differences on how Zimbabwe and the donor countries perceived the land question.

Zimbabwe's plans for massive land redistribution programme, envisaging a progressive take over of 1,480 of the over 4,000 mostly white-owned commercial farms, already 'listed' for such take over, never got off the ground.

Even the relatively modest financial input of \$1.6 billions that Zimbabwe expected from the donor conference did not come through, with the E.U. and the World Bank representatives at the conference cautioning against 'unwise attempts to do too much all at once'.

In Mr. Mbeki's words: "Things did not proceed as had been agreed. The results of the failure to deal with this matter in the manner agreed in 1998 is what has led to the events that have dominated our media in the recent period."

This is a reading and a perception profoundly disturbing to Mr. Mbeki's critics broadly identified above whose reading of the situation in Zimbabwe is dominated by a demonised image of Mr. Mugabe.



The Zimbabwean President, Mr. Robert Mugabe (right), leads his South African counterpart, Mr. Thabo Mbeki, by the hand upon Mr. Mbeki's arrival in Bulawayo for the opening of the Zimbabwean Trade Fair on Friday. — AP

while the distant European Union has expressed its 'extreme concern' about the situation in Zimbabwe, no African country individually or collectively in a structure has expressed any such concern.

To the great anger of his critics, Mr. Mbeki reiterated first things first in his address. He said the land question, the direct product of colonisation of Zimbabwe still remained to be addressed. Everything else, he said, flowed there-

6 MAY 200

Zimbabwe Opp leaders held after clash

ASSOCIATED PRESS

HARARE, May 6. — The head of the main Opposition party was detained for four hours and two of his aides remained in police custody today after clashes between rival party workers in south-east Zimbabwe.

Mr Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the Movement for Democratic Change, was stopped at a police road block after holding a campaign rally at Chiredzi, party spokesman, Mr David Coltart, said.

A ruling party official received a cut on the head in clashes outside a gas station in the town. Mr Tsvangirai was not on the scene but was headed to Harare when he was detained, Mr Coltart said.

An Opposition security adviser, former police officer Mr John Nkutazo, and party administrator Mr Dennis Murira — who were following Mr Tsvangirai's car — were arrested and taken to a police station, the Opposition spokesman said. They were not informed of any charge. "Arrests late at night are deliberate harassment of senior Opposition members," Mr Coltart said.

No ruling party supporters were held after yesterday's clashes in Chiredzi.

37 MAY 2000

Sierra Leone hostage crisis intensifies

REUTERS

SR-12 215
FREETOWN, May 6. — Sierra Leone's hostage crisis intensified today with the UN reporting at least 318 of its peacekeepers captive under rebels in the West African nation and signs of rebel forces on the move.

Veteran rebel Foday Sankoh — whose revolutionary United Front — is at the centre of the potentially explosive stand-off, insisted that his men are holding no hostages and suggested that the missing peacekeepers may have lost their way.

As diplomats puzzled over his true intentions, the UN asked the USA and other leading members to bolster the force.

The USA said it is thinking of dispatching logistical support but again ruled out sending in ground troops.

The UN Secretary-General, Mr Kofi Annan, enlisted the support of influential African leaders to pressure Sankoh to bring his supporters into line.

This brought the first releases — a four-man Russian helicopter crew and two civilian passengers who arrived in Freetown aboard a helicopter that had been blocked by Sankoh loyalists in Kailahun near the Liberia border.

UN officials were due to meet representatives of troop contributing countries today.

MAY 2 1997

MAY 2 1997

White farmer

Africa
AD-16
HARARE, MAY 8. A white farmer in Zimbabwe has died after he was beaten unconscious by suspected liberation war veterans leading the violent seizure of white-owned farms and attacks on opposition supporters.

Mr. Alan Dunn was the first white farmer to be attacked in two weeks and the third to die since veterans of the 1970s war against white rule began invading farms in February, demanding land they say was stolen by British settlers. "I can confirm that the patient is dead," said a spokesman for the Harare hospital where Mr. Dunn was being treated for severe head injuries sustained on Sunday.

Police said Mr. Dunn had been assaulted on his farm, about 40 miles southwest of the capital Harare, during a confrontation with people believed to be war veterans. Zimbabwe's political crisis has shown no signs of abating. Four more white-owned farms were invaded by veterans on Sunday and opposition supporters beat two men wearing shirts with the logo of the President, Mr. Robert Mugabe's ruling ZANU-PF at a rally.

Dunn was a regional executive committee member for the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), which poses the first serious threat to Mugabe's party in 20 years of post-independence rule.

"It is all aimed at intimidating the opposition. It is part of a terror campaign that has been going on for the last three months," said the MDC leader, Mr. Morgan Tsvangirai.

"White farmers who support the MDC are seen as a challenge to ZANU-PF and they are made to pay — some with their lives. It is very tragic," he said.

killed in unabated violence

Africa
The MDC secretary for legal affairs, Mr. David Colhart, said a dozen serious assaults had been reported to party headquarters in the last 24 hours. He accused the ZANU-PF of trying to intimidate voters ahead of parliamentary elections due by August.

Farms invaded

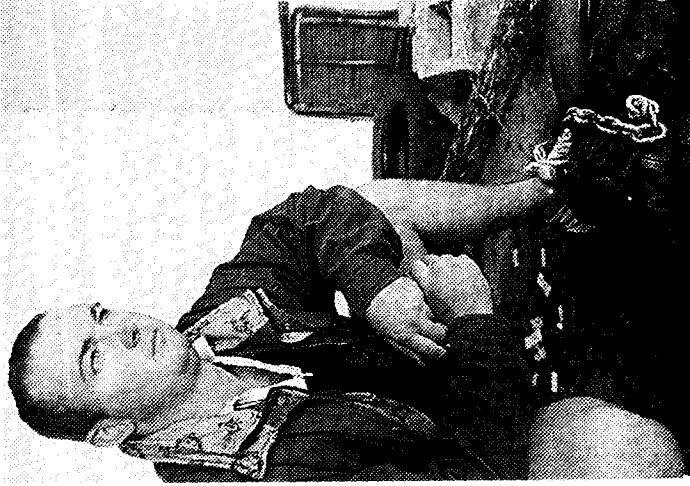
Mr. Dunn was at home with his wife and three teenage daughters when a man knocked on the back door and asked him to come outside, said his friend Mr. Guy Watson-Smith. Once in the yard, five men beat him unconscious and left him for dead.

"I guess that this is the agenda. There is a serious campaign against anyone who is perceived to oppose the Government and I presume that Alan Dunn was perceived to oppose the Government."

Some 700 white-owned farms have been invaded and at least 19 people killed since the land reform crisis and related political violence began.

"This (Dunn's murder) is not about the land issue. Alan Dunn was an MDC supporter and maybe that has something to do with it," said Mr. Jerry Grant, deputy director of the Commercial Farmers' Union (CFU), which groups 4,500 mainly-white farmers.

The CFU cut a deal with the veterans nearly two weeks ago to stop the invasions, end the violence and allow farmers to plant winter wheat crops. Since then more than 50 farms have been invaded and attacks on farm workers perceived to be opposition sympathisers have gone unchecked. — Reuters



The farm manager, Mr. Jason Carrett, at the blood-stained scene in Beatrice, 56 km from Harare in Zimbabwe, where, according to the head of the white farmers' association, squatters killed the white farmer, Alan Dunn, on Sunday. — AP

915
49-16 SIERRA LEONE / U.N. OFFICIAL ON WAY TO FREETOWN

U.N. exploring ways to keep peace

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MAY 8. The Chief of the United Nations Peacekeeping, Mr. Bernard Miyet, is on his way to Sierra Leone even as the world body has clearly been rattled at the increased fighting there in the last several days. The Under Secretary General for Peacekeeping is expected to arrive in Freetown on Tuesday to step up diplomacy and give a badly needed morale boost to the U.N. force. Some 500 of the force are being held hostage by the Revolutionary United Front of Mr. Foday Sankoh.

The United Nations Security Council held a rare closed door session on Sunday where the members were briefed on the ground realities in Sierra Leone. The Council did not issue any statement after the meeting. However, the word is that the situation is much calmer than what it had been last week with officials there arguing that mis-communication or failure of communication links with U.N. forces in at least two places had given rise to the impression that these had been overrun by the rebels.

There is no doubt that the U.N. is trying desperately to put in place a solid mechanism in Sierra Leone that would allow the peacekeeping operations to continue without a hitch. For there is the all round consensus that if the situation flopped to the extent that the U.N. force was at the receiving

In the last few days, the U.N. forces have been accused of meekly handing over their weapons and equipment. Caught unawares, vastly outnumbered or with superior weapons, contingents from India, Kenya, Nigeria and Zambia have been detained or taken hostage by the RUF. Meanwhile, of the four Kenyan soldiers previously believed killed, two have turned up alive.

As of now, it is maintained that only one Kenyan soldier has been killed and the other listed as missing.

The attitude of the major powers to the fighting and violence has remained unchanged as far as sending in ground troops is concerned. (APP reports that a first contingent of 250 British troops arrived in Sierra Leone on Monday to secure the international airport of Freetown, where tens of thousands of people protested against rebels holding U.N. peacekeepers.)

The Clinton administration has warned Americans against travelling to Sierra Leone, ordered its non-essential staff out of its embassy in Freetown and has begun a helicopter airlift for those citizens who wanted to leave that country. The State Department has said that the international airport in Freetown is subject to a suspension of operations "without warning."



A member of the British Department for International Development looks out of the window of a helicopter waiting to be evacuated from Freetown in Sierra Leone to a neighbouring country on Sunday. — AP

end, there was no telling what the next sequence of events could be. And there could be political and diplomatic ripples in the corridors of the U.N. and world capitals as well.

In a bid to end eight years of brutal civil war, the U.N. ham-

pered out an accord that saw an end to the fighting, a supervised disarming of the rebels and an 11,000 United Nations Force to oversee the peace. Thus far, an estimated 8700 blue berets are in Sierra Leone and some 2000 more from Bangladesh and Jordan are expected to arrive shortly.

About 170 foreign citizens have been evacuated even as the US says it may offer logistical support to the UN Mission in Sierra Leone

Brit paras start evacuations

AGENCIES
LONDON, MAY 9

B RITISH troops on Tuesday began a major operation to evacuate Britons from violence-ravaged Sierra Leone, the Ministry of Defence said.

A spokesman in London said a group of about 170 British, European Union and Commonwealth citizens had been airlifted to Senegal. More were waiting to be evacuated. British paratroopers, who arrived in Freetown on Monday, had secured the capital's Lungi airport and moved across to a hotel where Britons had been told to gather.

"It's all gone very smoothly so far," the spokesman said. The operation was expected to continue as more Britons were expected to arrive at the Mammy Yoko hotel. The foreign office said 550 British citizens had registered with the its high Commission. Around 250 European Union and 50 Commonwealth citizens were also included in the evacuation. An advance force of 250 British paratroopers was dispatched from Senegal to secure the airport for both the evacuation and the arrival of more United Nations peacekeepers. A further 250 British troops arrived in Freetown from London, while several hundred others were on standby in Senegal.

The helicopter carrier HMS Ocean, the frigate HMS Chatham and three support vessels

are due to arrive in Sierra Leone early next week. Vice Admiral Sir Ian Garnett, who has operational command of British forces in Sierra Leone, said the paratroopers' main role was to protect the lives of Britons and take them to safety. "The troops are equipped to stay there for several weeks because it might take quite a number of days to evacuate all the British citizens for whom we are responsible," Garnett told BBC radio. Any expansion of their role after the evacuation was a matter for politicians, he said.

Meanwhile, the US said on Monday it may offer logistical support to the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), but added that ground troops were not under discussion. "There is no discussion about ground troops to aid the 8,700 UN peacekeepers already there," White House spokesman Joe Lockhart told mediapersons. President Bill Clinton said, "We're working now on what can be done to restore the bigger UN peacekeeping mission there and make it work." Clinton told mediapersons. "It's very important. I spent a lot of time on it the last four or five days and we're working on it," Clinton said.

The UN asked for logistical support late Friday, a source close to Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said. The specifics of such support are being examined by specialists at the Pentagon. The deteriorating situation forced the US to evacuate some of its nationals.

Freetown once again on edge
Rebels hold some 500 UN troops and observers hostage

UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL)	May 8:
Nigeria 3,233	500 (of 1000) British troops arrive
India 1,662	
Kenya 868	
Zambia 775	May 7/8:
Guinea 774	UN personnel evacuated to Conakry
Ghana 773	
Jordan 614	
TOTAL 8,699	

But the State Department stressed that the US would not withdraw its support from the beleaguered UN mission. Albright discussed the situation in Sierra Leone with UN Secretary Gen Kofi Annan. UN sources said the US and Nigeria were discussing how to use large US military aircraft to fly two extra battalions of Nigerian troops to Sierra Leone.

Forgotten in Sierra Leone in the fire and fury of Sri Lanka

BY R. RAJAGOPAL

May 9: A father-in-law has a question for Jaswant Singh: "Have you forgotten our own in Sierra Leone in the rush to save Sri Lanka?"

His son-in-law, part of the UN peacekeeping force in civil war-torn Sierra Leone, was incommunicado for the last six days.

On Friday, foreign news agencies reported that 35 Indian soldiers of the peacekeeping force have been taken hostage by rebels in the West African country. Next day, UN secretary-general Kofi Annan called up

Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee to say all hostages are safe.

After that, a long silence till this evening, drowned only by the cacophony on Sri Lanka, left relatives of those in Sierra Leone in an information blackhole.

The father-in-law last night called up The Telegraph to find out whether the Indian government, breathing easy after a busy day discussing the Lanka crisis with the Opposition, had any information for people like him. The government did not have, but global television networks were incessantly beaming images of gunfire scattering

mobs and British commandos landing in Freetown, the capital, to evacuate their citizens.

The father-in-law had a telephone number in Sierra Leone. But for the last six days, his calls were being lost somewhere along the treacherous information dirt track to Sierra Leone, one of the world's least developed nations.

The Telegraph also dialled and, by the hit-and-miss law of averages of international calls, made contact today. The son-in-law (name withheld for reasons of privacy), who has access to the hospital of the UN mission in

there is nothing to worry now," he told. The Telegraph from the outskirts of Freetown. But he does not have much information about the 35 Indian hostages. "No news. But we hear they are all well," he said. After two eventful days, the situation was calm today. "There is no steady firing, only sporadic shots," he said.

The Indian defence establishment broke its silence on Tuesday evening—four days after the hostage news was reported—but could not shed much light. Army chief Gen. V.P. Malik echoed Annan by saying "our boys are safe" but his ministry

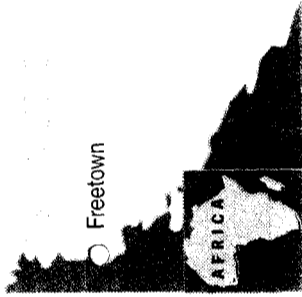
conceded that the situation was "grim". "We are in touch with the ministry of external affairs and the force headquarters in Sierra Leone which is in touch with the UN," Malik said. The rebels tonight suggested the soldiers could have lost their way.

(A UN report quoting an army spokesman said an Indian MI-8 helicopter has been hit. The crew was rescued, but the MI-8 has reportedly been taken by the rebels.) India is represented in the 8,700-strong UN force—led by Maj. Gen. V.K. Jaitley—by 1,600 troops.

The UN hospital is "sophisti-

cated", but it now mostly treats "gunshot wounds and malaria". Sierra Leoneans, mostly from Freetown, a happy but busy port town, the malaria virus.

The Indian has been talking to his family "occasionally" over the phone. "We get to go outside the hospital and make international calls," he said. From the hospital, he can see the views of Sierra Leone's President. After ed Tejan Kabba, he said he had come to power after a civil war, ended eight years of civil war. But rebel leader Foday Sankoh revolted, igniting the new crisis. ■ Another report on Page 3



Freetown

Sierra Leone, is "well". "We are on guard and the situation is tense. But tell everyone at home

0 MAY 2000

THE TELEGRAPH

0 MAY 2000

Unions send strong message to Mbeki Govt.

By M.S. Prabhakara
CAPE TOWN, MAY 10. South Africa's organised working class, in particular the 1.8 million strong membership of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) and its affiliates, responded massively today to the one-day stay away call by the trade union federation.

Contrary to expectations, the workers turned out in huge numbers. About 50,000 members marched to the Johannesburg Stock Exchange in the heart of the city where Cosatu leaders handed over a memorandum protesting against job losses — the principal focus of these protests. As it is, only about a third of the population is defined as 'economically active'. But this part of the working class is facing the prospect of increasing job losses. Unemployment now stands at between 25.5 per cent (strict definition) and over 37 per cent (expanded definition).

Indeed, the focus of the protests too has essentially been business rather than the Government. According to a radio report, the rally was addressed both by the President of the Cosatu, Mr. Willie Madisha, and the CEO of the South African Chamber of Business, Mr. Kevin Wakeford, though their perspectives on the protests and the more fundamental issues of job creation were dif-

ferent. The protests were peaceful and orderly. Thousands of workers marched in Cape Town to the offices of SACOB and the Cape Town Chamber of Commerce. Later today, coinciding with the beginning of the sitting of Parliament in the afternoon, workers will be march-

ing to Parliament where they will be handing over a memorandum. Workers also stayed away from the industrial establishments in the Eastern Cape, where the automobile industry is located. Reports from various parts of the country around noon indicated that the strike call had evoked a massive response countrywide, in contrast to the relatively poor response that the earlier phases.

The strike is the culminating action of a four-month long 'mass action' campaign against job losses that began on January 31 this year. Despite the advance notice given about today's stayaway, and despite the placing of these issues nearly a

year ago formally before the National Economic, Development and Labour Council (Nedlac, the statutory body to facilitate, coordinate and integrate economic, labour and social policies), these issues remained neglected all these months — a fact acknowledged by the Nedlac yesterday.

The stayaway also is an explicit acknowledgement and defiance of the Government's warning that it would strictly apply its 'no work no pay rule' to all members of the public service who participated in the action.

An interesting aspect of the government's attitude towards such mass action by Cosatu, supported both by the SACP as well as the ANC as a political party, is that the key persons tasked with the very processes which the unions are protesting against are both members of the SACP, as well as of course of the ANC.

It is however unlikely that the stayaway will influence the policies of the Government which, in co-ordination with the policies of business and industry, have led to massive job losses.

As against this is the conviction of the industry and key government leaders articulated most openly by the Finance Minister, Mr. Trevor Manuel, that there was no way in which this situation could be tackled without structural changes. In the main, insofar as the Government is concerned, this has meant a massive programme of restructuring of state assets and privatisation. The Government admits that this has necessarily entailed job losses though in the long run, by ensuring foreign investors eager to take advantage of these programmes, more jobs will be created.



A trade unionist shows his solidarity with thousands of other striking workers who gathered in downtown Cape Town, South Africa, on Wednesday. — AP

11 MAY 200

SIERRA LEONE / CLINTON SENDS JESSE JACKSON AS ENVOY

U.S. for global efforts to end crisis

By Sridhar Krishnaswami HD-16
WASHINGTON, MAY 12. In the face of rapidly deteriorating conditions in Sierra Leone, the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, is sending the veteran civil rights leader, Rev. Jesse Jackson, to that country and the administration is saying that there is determination to intensify international efforts to end the crisis. Mr. Clinton also had a telephone talk with the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan.

"I have asked Rev. Jesse Jackson, my special envoy for Democracy in Africa, to return to the region to work with leaders there for a peaceful resolution of this crisis", Mr. Clinton remarked. The President also said that he and Mr. Annan agreed that "... the international community must intensify international efforts to restore peace in Sierra Leone and to prevent a return to an all-out civil war. The situation there has been grave".

The White House is saying that the U.S. was working on ways to see how best the United Nations Peacekeeping force could be shored up in Sierra Leone at the same time working on plans for the deployment of the remainder of the force allocated to that country. But be-

16
yond words of intent by the President and senior officials of the administration, there has been no substantive change in the manner Washington is going about the crisis.

The U.S.'s role is still confined to logistics — for instance in preparing the transportation of the Jordanian special forces and a possible deployment of troops from Nigeria. "It should send them (the rebels) an unmistakable signal that the international community is committed to reinforce this mission, to stabilise the situation and to see if we can't turn back towards progress on the ground", a White House spokesman, Mr. P. J. Crowley, has said.

"Let us not fail Africa" seems to be the bottomline message that Mr. Annan has been sending to member nations as he urged the Security Council to ensure that the present mission in Sierra Leone does its job. "I plead with you. Let us not fail Sierra Leone. Let us not fail Africa. This time, in this crisis, let us back words with deeds and mandates with the resources that work", Mr. Annan told the Security Council members in New York. Mr. Annan is making the point that unless the developed nations came up with funding, West African troops cannot play a meaningful

role in Sierra Leone. With reports from Freetown indicating that the rebel forces of Foday Sankoh may have been held back from overrunning the Capital and the Government forces, there is disagreement at the U.N. on how the world body must respond to the situation.

Some are against a stronger role for the U.N. in Sierra Leone on the grounds that such a move would endanger the troops who are now being held hostage. Others are saying that the focus ought to be on getting the force levels in Sierra Leone to the full authorised limit.

Split in RUF

AFP reports:

In a significant development, a report from Freetown said a split had emerged in the RUF with a top figure in the movement denouncing the leader Foday Sankoh "for perpetuating the killing in Sierra Leone."

Peter Vandy, who holds a ministerial post under a July 1999 peace accord, read a nine-point memorandum on Thursday evening, withdrawing support to Sankoh on state radio and television along with a number of other figures in the RUF's political wing.

J 3 MAY 2000

Ethiopia, Eritrea to go to war again

ROBIN LODGE
THE TIMES, LONDON

NAIROBI, May 12. — Heavy fighting between Ethiopian and Eritrean forces broke out on three fronts today after the breakdown of efforts by a UN delegation to bring about an end to the two-year border war which has cost thousands of lives.

The latest clashes on the Badme, Zalambessa and Burre fronts follow a ceasefire, which has more or less held, apart from minor skirmishes for nearly a year after major battles early in 1999.

In the Eritrean capital, Asmara, Mr Yemane Gebremeskel, a senior government spokesman, accused the Ethiopians of starting the latest fighting with heavy bombardments of Eritrean positions. "This is large-scale fighting. It is the biggest battle since the fighting last year, and is continuing."

Mr Gebremeskel said Eritrea had shown great restraint militarily and diplomatically, but the resumption of hostilities

showed that Ethiopia did not want peace. "They went to war to abort the peace process."

Mr Selome Tadesse, the Ethiopian spokesman, didn't say which side had fired first, but confirmed that fighting was continuing on three fronts.

Clashes come only a day after the UN envoy, Mr Richard Holbrooke, urged the two countries' leaders not to return to a "senseless war". Indirect talks between the two sides in Algiers broke down last week.

Ethiopia is appealing for massive international food aid as a result of severe drought in the east and north-east of the country. Donors have expressed alarm that Addis Ababa is prepared to spend millions of pounds on its military effort when the money could be used to feed the people.

The fighting is over a few square-miles of rocky, barren territory the subject of a dispute dating back to Eritrea's independence in 1993.

The two countries' leaders, President Isayas Afewerki of Eritrea and Prime Minister

Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia, were formerly close allies in the struggle to overthrow the former Ethiopian regime of the dictator, Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam. But the relationship soured over the border issue and various economic disputes.

War broke out in May 1998, with Eritrean forces advancing into Ethiopia and seizing large tracts of territory. In February last year, Ethiopia counter-attacked and after sustaining heavy casualties — the Eritreans said they had killed more than 15,000 Ethiopian troops in the first three days of fighting — succeeded in winning back control of Badme and regaining some land around Zalambessa.

Both sides are dug into trenches along the mountainous 620-mile border, creating conditions for battle similar to those of the World War I, with the attacking side exposed to withering fire from an enemy hidden behind sandbags and earth fortifications. An estimated 600,000 troops have been deployed by the two sides.

THE STRAITS TIMES

13 MAY 2000

13 MAY 2000

U.K. to coordinate offensive in Sierra Leone?

By Thomas Abraham

LONDON, MAY 13. The British chief of defence staff, Gen. Sir Charles Guthrie, is flying to Sierra Leone this weekend in what appears to be a sign that Britain is assuming command of the U.N. military operation and pro-government troops there for an offensive against the rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF).

Officially, the visit has been dubbed routine and Britain has maintained that the 1,000 paratroopers it has landed in Sierra Leone have a limited mission to evacuate British and other foreign nationals and provide logistical support to the beleaguered U.N. forces. But reports from Sierra Leone indicate that the commander of the British force, Brig. David Richards is, playing a major role in coordinating and directing a counter-attack by the pro-government forces. According to media reports, the British forces plan to use the U.N. forces to hold territory while the Sierra Leone army will launch attacks against rebel positions.

Officially, the British Foreign Secretary, Mr. Robin Cook, has said that British forces were in Sierra Leone for a limited period

of time and that they had no intention of getting involved either in peace-keeping or taking a combat role. He indicated that the security and safety of British troops would be a prime consideration and said the presence of the troops would be evaluated on a "day-to-day basis". Media reports here, however, indicate that the commander of the British force was taking effective charge of the U.N. forces and coordinating the efforts of the Sierra Leone army. The U.N. British paratroopers are also in control of the main airport in the capital Freetown and have been transporting U.N. troops around.

Reinforcements from India, Bangladesh and Jordan are expected to arrive over the weekend. The British role may be reduced once the reinforcements arrive. There are, at present, a battalion of paratroopers around the capital Freetown with another 500 marines stationed off-shore on board a helicopter carrier.

The U.N. Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, while welcoming the arrival of British troops, lamented the lack of interest shown by the rest of the international community.

F10-12
4/5

14 MAY 2000

14 MAY 2000

THE HINDU

Panel to oversee land transfer

By M. S. Prabhakara

CAPE TOWN, MAY 13. A Land Commission is being set up in Zimbabwe to oversee the transfer of white-owned farmland to the state for its eventual redistribution to the landless blacks.

This was agreed to during a meeting in Harare between the President, Mr. Robert Mugabe, and representatives of the Commercial Farmers' Union (CFU) and the Zimbabwe Liberation War Veterans' Association (ZLWVA).

It is not clear how the proposed commission will work, or in what matter it will fit into the existing structures dealing with the land question. Talks are to be resumed next week between the CFU and the Government to discuss further details.

The agreement was arrived at over three days of negotiations between the CFU and the ZLWVA, even as clashes over the forcible occupation of white-owned land by the war veterans continues. Eighteen people, including three white farmers, have been killed in these clashes over the last 10 weeks. However, such attempts by the landless blacks to take over white-owned land are not a recent phenomenon. They have occurred periodically over the past decade, provoking every time dire prophecies in the media about Zimbabwe "going over the brink".

The agreement on the setting up of the commission is likely to shift the focus in Zimbabwe from the land occupations to the electoral contest. These have to be held before October 10 this year, Parliament having been dissolved on April 11. The so-called Lancaster House Constitution provides for a "window period" of six months after the dissolution of Parliament before which fresh elections have to be



Mr. Nick Swanepoel (foreground centre), an official with the Commercial Farmers' Union, talks with Mr. Chenjerai Hunzvi, leader of the Zimbabwe War Veterans' Association as the President, Mr. Robert Mugabe (background left), greets people attending the meeting at the State House in Harare on Friday. — AP

held. Zimbabwe's home-grown Constitution, which was rejected in the referendum in February this year, had reduced this period to four months.

The Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), the main Opposition party, which three days ago had threatened to boycott the elections on the ground that they would not be free, has now backed out from that threat.

However, the demand that they should be held under "international supervision", voiced as much by MDC as (strangely enough) by Britain, may yet prove contentious. The MDC has also held out the threat of a general strike to protest against the violence on the farms and attacks on its supporters allegedly by supporters of the ruling ZANU-PF.

AP Wire

4 MAY 2000

Africa
HD-18

Ethiopia rejects U.N. ultimatum

15/5

ADDIS ABABA, MAY 14. The Government in Addis Ababa has rejected a U.N. Security Council ultimatum that Ethiopia and Eritrea should cease fighting.

The Security Council late on Friday gave Ethiopia and Eritrea 72 hours to stop their war or face the immediate, but unspecified, threat of a U.N. arms embargo.

"When because of Eritrea's intransigence, the fighting has again flared up, we learn...the Security Council has decided to trigger a process designed, in effect, to punish the victim of aggression, Ethiopia," a statement from the Prime Minister's office said yesterday.

"The people and the Government of Ethiopia reject this move by some countries in the Security Council which is blatantly in contravention of the U.N. Charter ... and of international law.

"In particular, the people of Ethiopia vehemently oppose and reject in unison the attempt by the United States and Great Britain — two of the permanent members of the Security Council which are leading the effort — to deny them their lawful right of self-defence when their sovereignty is trampled upon and their dignity violated."

Meanwhile, Ethiopia claimed

dramatic battlefield victories against Eritrea as fighting raged along their disputed border for a second day despite international appeals for peace.

The Government said yesterday Ethiopian troops, backed by helicopter gunships and fighter jets, had destroyed eight Eritrean army divisions in sweeping across lines of enemy trenches near the Badme region of their disputed border.

"The Eritrean army is retreating in disarray as the Ethiopian ground forces pursue them and destroy them," it said in a statement, adding that thousands of Eritrean soldiers had been killed or wounded in two days of heavy fighting.

Ethiopian forces launched the offensive on Friday morning, breaking a year's lull in the war.

The U.N. Security Council quickly demanded an end to the fighting and the resumption of peace talks. It is expected to meet tomorrow, with Britain and the United States calling for an arms embargo against both Ethiopia and Eritrea.

The war began in May 1998 and Eritrea seized pockets of territory along the length of the 1,000-km border in the first weeks of fighting.— Reuters

15 MAY 1998

15 MAY 1998

15 MAY 1998

'Sankoh may be dead'

LONDON, MAY 14. Britain's military commander in Sierra Leone today said the West African nation's capital Freetown was now secure from rebel forces, and speculated that the rebel leader, Foday Sankoh, could be dead.

In another sign of growing optimism that the crisis in war-torn Sierra Leone was near an end, the British Foreign Secretary, Mr. Robin Cook, forecast violence would be over "within a month."

Mr. Cook pledged that British troops who have played a role in stabilising the situation would be pulled out as soon as U.N. troops were at full strength.

"The situation is much more stable now," the British commander, Brigadier David Richards, told BBC's 'Breakfast with Frost.' "I believe that Freetown is now secure by the U.N. and by the new government forces, he added.

"We do not believe that (rebel leader Foday) Sankoh has yet reasserted his authority over the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). He could be dead," he added.



Foday Sankoh photographed on May 8 just before his disappearance from his Freetown residence.

Sankoh, whose rebels are holding some 500 U.N. peacekeepers captive, disappeared from his Freetown home after fighting earlier this week and has not been since or heard of since.

Brig. Richards said that aside from securing Freetown's Lungi airport to evacuate British and Foreign nationals, his forces had mainly provided logistical help to U.N. forces.

At the United Nations, the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan's spokesman said Freetown was "gradually returning to relative calm" and that the arrival of British troops had had a positive effect.

"Freetown is gradually returning to a relative calm," Mr. Annan's spokesman, Mr. Fred Eckhard, said in a statement yesterday. — Reuters, AFP

THE HINDU

15 MAY 2001

Turmoil in Sierra Leone

1915 R.C. 13 Africa
THE UNFOLDING tragedy in Sierra Leone is yet another example of how a peace formula which is not prepared and implemented diligently runs the risk of only exacerbating a complex situation. With hundreds of UN peacekeepers held hostage by the Revolutionary United Front rebels, the 8,700-odd blue helmets are in the danger of sinking in the quagmire of local politics. At the heart of the gathering storm in the west African nation is the flawed accord of July last year between the democratically elected President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah and RUF leader Foday Sankoh. Instead of trying the warlord for his many crimes, the accord provided not merely Cabinet berths but also amnesty for the rebels. However, when the lightly-armed UN peacekeepers began to disarm the 45,000-strong rebel force they showed their real colour.

The UN peacekeeping missions have failed in Somalia, Angola and Rwanda, and in Congo only a fragile peace has been secured. If immediate steps are not taken to open a line of communication with the rebel forces, Sierra Leone will add to the growing list of the UN's failures in Africa. Traditionally, peacekeeping efforts have only been successful in areas where the warring parties have favoured the UN presence. Peacekeepers cannot succeed if there is no peace to keep. With Somalia etched in the memory of the Americans, the Clinton administration has refused to commit its soldiers. Even France has been unwilling. The British soldiers went to Sierra Leone only to evacuate their own nationals.

There has been a demand from certain quarters that the mandate of the peacekeepers be changed to peace enforcers which India has done well to reject. The Indian army constitutes a sizable section of the UN peace force. Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana, Guinea, Jordan and Zambia too have contributed to the force. Sierra Leone has no strategic significance for the West which seems keen only to defend its interest in its own backyard. A regional peace initiative is the only answer. It is the African nations which will have a better understanding of the scene than the outsiders. India has a special interest in the situation because our troops are there.

5 MAY 2000

Rebels free 139 U.N. personnel

HD-16 1675 Africa

FREETOWN, MAY 15. Sierra Leonean rebels holding 500 U.N. peacekeepers have released 139 of their captives into Liberian custody, a day after setting free 18 peacekeepers, including 11 Indian troops.

Fifteen of the freed captives were flown by a government-chartered helicopter to Liberia's capital, Monrovia, while the remaining 124 were waiting to be evacuated from the town of Foya on Liberia's border with Sierra Leone, said the U.N. spokesman, Mr. David Wimbhurst.

The rebels yesterday freed 18 U.N. peacekeepers and military observers had been allowed to return to an Indian U.N. contingent in Kailahun town, the regional capital of the district with the same name.

The commander of the U.N. force, Mr. Vijay Jetley, said the captives — 11 Indian troops and seven unarmed military observers of various nationalities — were in good physical condition and had not been harmed by the rebels. However, their safety was far from assured as Kailahun remained surrounded by rebels.

In Monrovia, the Liberian President, Mr. Charles Taylor, said the 139 captives had been held in Sierra Leone's eastern Kailahun district. But did not specify exactly where.

Mr. Taylor, the Revolutionary United Front rebels' closest ally

in the region, had been asked by West African leaders to mediate for the U.N. captives' release.

The freed peacekeepers were among an estimated 500-members of a U.N. force who were disarmed and taken into custody by the Revolutionary United Front rebels when they ended a 10-month peace and reignited Sierra Leone's civil war earlier this month. — AP

Telegraph reports:

The Sierra Leone rebel leader, Foday Sankoh, who has been missing for a week, was plotting to overthrow the President, Mr. Ahmed Kabbah, and sell diamonds illegally, the Government has claimed.

It cited documents said to have been found at his abandoned home in Freetown.

The Justice Minister, Mr. Solomon Berewa, said the evidence was conclusive that last week Sankoh's Revolutionary United Front was on the verge of launching a bloody coup. "By the grace of God it did not happen," he said. He declined to produce written evidence of the plot for "national security reasons".

Sankoh has not been seen since a mob of several thousand people looted and destroyed his home. He is believed to have returned to the bush, joining thousands of rebel soldiers still holding about 500 United Nations peacekeepers hostage.

16 MAY 2000

16 MAY 2000

THE HINDU

Zimbabwe polls to be held on June 24, 25

By M. S. Prabhakara

CAPE TOWN, MAY 16. Zimbabwe is to have a two-day poll, on June 24 and 25 June, to elect a new Parliament (House of Assembly). This was announced in a gazette notification in Harare.

Under the Constitution, the House of Assembly has 150 members, of whom 120 are elected; and the remaining 30 are nominated. In the dissolved Parliament, the ruling ZANU-PF held all but three of the seats. Of the nominated members, 10 are traditional chiefs, eight are provincial Governors and the remaining 12 are appointed by the President. The Council of Chiefs is meeting on June 14 to elect from among them the 10 traditional leaders who will then be nominated to the House of Assembly. The deadline for filing nominations for the elective seats is May 29. Two weeks are provided for the inspection of electoral rolls which have over 5 million registered voters.

The dates of the general election are well ahead of the "window period" of six months that is available under the Constitution to Government from April 11, the date on which Parliament was dissolved. It also sets at rest the "apprehensions", freely given rein to by the leaders of the Opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and its supporters inside and outside Zimbabwe, that the President, Mr. Robert Mugabe, and the ZANU-PF were manipulating the ongoing "land invasions" to create an intolerable law and order situation, thus justifying the imposition of a state of emergency and an indefinite postponement of elections.

Veterans of the Zimbabwe's liberation war have occupied hundreds of white-owned farms in the last two months; and 20 persons, four of them white, only

whose names have figured in the media, have been killed in the clashes that have accompanied these "land invasions".

The MDC has welcomed the announcement of the election date. The MDC Secretary General, Mr. Welshman Ncube, has however, expressed his fears that the polls may not be free and fair. Last week, the MDC had threatened that it would boycott the elections on the ground that they would not be free and fair, though three days later it backed down.

The MDC, however, insists that these elections should be held under "international supervision" to ensure that they are conducted fairly. This is also the stand of the British Government. The European Union is to set up an "election monitoring operation". It is not clear if this is what the Opposition and its backers demand when they insist that the elections should be held under "international supervision", or whether the "monitoring" process amounts to less than this demand.

The announcement of the dates for elections comes in the context of renewed initiatives to seek a solution to the land question in Zimbabwe. The Secretary General of the Commonwealth, Mr. Don McKinnon, is currently in Harare and is expected to meet Mr. Mugabe.

The South African President, Mr. Thabo Mbeki, who begins a two-day visit to Britain later this week, is expected to discuss the Zimbabwe issue with the British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair. Mr. Mbeki has maintained, much to the anger of his critics that the land problem in Zimbabwe is related to its colonial heritage as well as, more immediately, to Britain's failure to make good its commitment to release funds for the Government's land reform and land restitution programme.

MAY 2000

MAY 2000

7 MAY

More of the same

The United Nations is on the mat once again. And, writes SRIDHAR KRISHNASWAMI, it's not just a question of being caught napping in Sierra Leone but more about whether past lessons have been learnt.

Africa

THE UNITED Nations is on the mat once again. And if there are people in and outside the world body asking searching questions, it is not without good reason. In fact, it can even be argued that for those even marginally familiar with U.N. peace-keeping operations, the questions are not new either. It's not just a question of the U.N. being caught napping in Sierra Leone but more about whether past lessons have been learnt.

The costly peace-keeping operations in Cambodia taught the world body several lessons, some of which will have relevance to Sierra Leone especially as it pertains to what it is that the Blue Helmets hope to achieve in that West African country. What is happening in Sierra Leone now is that the same questions asked in Cambodia about a decade ago are being posed all over again — where is the “peace” to “keep”? And in the absence of peace, what business has the U.N. force in Sierra Leone?

The euphoria over the end of the cold war meant that “something” tangible had to come out of it; and the Paris peace accord was one of them in 1991. But when the U.N. started implementing its mandate, it soon became clear that none of the Cambodian factions was too eager to abide by the terms. But each faction was told in blunt terms by its benefactor that the time was up. Hence each signed on to the accord reluctantly.

Perhaps the reasons leading up to the Lome Accord of 1999 as far as Sierra Leone is concerned were different; but the bottomline is that the leader of the Revolutionary United Front, Mr. Foday Sankoh, was told that his time was up. And some even believe that he should be tried as a war criminal for the terror unleashed during the eight-year civil war. But Mr. Sankoh is around today, apparently still calling the shots and worried that the world body may be trying to put a dent into his diamond mining fortunes. Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge too held on to the gem mining riches of Pailin in Western Cambodia for as long as they could.

What is coming out of Sierra

Leone now is something that has also been heard before — U.N. forces too meekly giving away weapons. Or worse, the U.N. force component is not up to battle expectations. To say that the countries involved in the force structure of the U.N. put together a rag-tag coalition would be unfair; but what will be investigated is the circumstances in which weapons had been surrendered or how such a large contingent of U.N. troops became to be taken hostage.

In Cambodia, for instance, there were allegations that some troops were too obliging to the Khmer Rouge or were giving away weapons just for the asking.

In Sierra Leone and in the context of the U.N. and the United States, the focus is very much going to be on the short run. Given the mess that is unfolding not many are going to be worried about answers to the hypothetical or the esoteric. Clearly the U.N. has a lot of damage-control to do given that its image has taken a bruising.

And major nations such as the U.S. — where politically anything to do with international organisations such as the U.N. gives rise to suspicion or contempt in conservative circles — have made it known that there is literally no stomach for inducting ground troops.

The U.N. Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, keeps talking about a rapid reaction force, but unless this is wholeheartedly endorsed by the major powers, nothing will materialise. Right now Washington is giving soft responses to a rapidly deteriorating situation and that too confined to the logistics point of view.

But the big question that the world body has to answer is whether it is prudent to send in forces without a clearcut idea about what must be achieved. The short term fire-fighting techniques will have to be replaced by some hard decisions: the first being that forces are not committed until there is actual “peace” on the ground; and the second that, if hell breaks loose, the U.N. troops have the authority to “enforce” the peace.

17 MAY 2000

HEART OF DARKNESS

Sierra Leone Can Sierra Leone run itself? 18/5

SIERRA Leone is a lost cause, it may not even be worthwhile talking about it. The civil strife has been going on since 1991 and no civilian government can survive in Freetown without the Nigerian-run intervention force Ecomog or British and South African mercenaries fighting Foday Sankoh's Revolutionary United Front. The latest batch of UN peacekeepers came in after a peace deal between Sankoh and President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah was signed last year. The agreement gave the RUF four Cabinet positions, all smelling of lucre, and an important say in the commission which manages the country's mineral resources, including the diamond mines in the east which Sankoh and his men have been exploiting for a number of years with the help of the Liberian, Charles Taylor. Sankoh apparently was not satisfied, he had meanwhile set his sights even higher and wanted things like finance, foreign affairs or justice. He had begun taking himself seriously, instead of being satisfied with his diamond racket.

The UN peacekeeping force has not been able to carry out the principal duty assigned to it by the Lome accord, which is disarming all rebel factions. As a result, maybe as many as 500 of them, including some Indians, are now said to be in custody of Sankoh's rebel troops. Frederick Chiluba of Zambia, which has sent a contingent, may have a point when he says that UN troops were sent in without a proper mandate, a clear understanding of the situation and equipment to control it. This is another version of the usual complaint about UN peacekeeping: how much they keep and how much they enforce. The Security Council has decided to raise the contingent from around nine to eleven thousand to secure Freetown against rebels. As for Sankoh and his men who have gone on an arm-chopping spree punctuated by occasional cannibalistic dinners, there is nothing much to be done, except, perhaps, apply to Nigeria and other West African states, to take the military risks the UN will not. Bottomline is: civil war conditions prevail because nobody can run the country. Maybe the UN should try running Sierra Leone for a while, set up a High Commission for Governing Sick Countries, the UNHCGSC.

THE SECRETARIAT

MAY 2001

18 MAY 2001

Joy in Sierra Leone as rebel leader is nabbed

Process of freeing the last of 500 UN peacekeepers set in motion Released hostages taken for debriefing

Freetown, May 17

CHEERING CROWDS filled the streets of Freetown on Wednesday as rebel leader Foday Sankoh was captured and his rebels began freeing the last of 500 UN peacekeepers taken hostage two weeks ago.

Sankoh was taken to army headquarters in the capital, where he is in British hands, a British army officer said.

The wily rebel leader, whose forces have broken a fragile 10-month peace accord, had been missing since May 8.

Shortly after Sankoh's capture, the United Nations announced that rebels had begun releasing some 350 hostages held in eastern and northern Sierra Leone.

Sankoh, who launched a brutal guerrilla war in 1991 and won vice presidential powers as part of the Lome peace accord last July, was being held by British troops, said a British officer who refused to be identified.

As news broke of Sankoh's arrest, crowds massed outside the heavily guarded army building shouting anti-Sankoh slogans,

while other Sierra Leoneans drove through the streets to voice their joy over the arrest of the man behind systematic mutilation of civilians in an eight-year campaign of terror.

"Sankoh is in the hands of the British army for the moment. We will hand him over later to the Sierra Leone government," the officer said.

He gave no further details and did not explain why Sankoh was under British guard inside a Sierra Leone army compound.

Authorities accuse Sankoh, who escaped death row after striking the July power-sharing agreement, of masterminding another coup and illicitly selling diamonds.

The United Nations also holds Sankoh personally responsible for his rebels having taken 500 peacekeepers hostage earlier this month. After an initial batch of 140 were freed on Sunday, the remainder were being released on Wednesday, the UN force commander said.

The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) leader went missing last week Monday following a massive anti-RUF demonstration outside his house that turned violent.

Nineteen people were killed in the incident. In Rome, the Misna missionary group said Sankoh had been hiding in a shelter under his Freetown house.

But government soldiers here told AFP that he had been arrested early today in the seaside area of Lumley after being spotted by residents there.

His fate had been the prime subject of talk in Freetown, with rumours circulating in the press and on the streets that he had died of a heart attack, fled into the bush, left the country to sell his diamonds, or was being held secretly by the UN force UNAMSIL.

The United Nations was lambasted by human rights groups last year for granting the RUF amnesty after rebels raped, killed and mutilated tens of thousands of civilians.

But Sankoh, who wields considerable power in rural Sierra Leone, still has a chance at redemption, the United States has said. "He does still have a chance and the ability to prove himself by making sure the hostages get released and getting back into line with the accords," the State Department said. (AFP)

Freetown, May 17

NINETY-THREE exhausted Zambian and Kenyan United Nations peacekeepers, held hostage for two weeks in the bush by RUF rebels in Sierra Leone, flew back to the government-controlled capital late yesterday, eyewitnesses said.

Wearing a ragged array of uniforms and some shod in flip-flop sandals, they landed at Freetown's Lungi airport aboard a Russian transport plane after the short flight from neighbouring Liberia.

Another 46 UN peacekeepers, also released into Liberian custody on Sunday, remained stuck at the border town of Foya waiting to be evacuated today, UN officials in the Liberian capital Monrovia said.

The ex-hostages at Lungi looked in reasonable shape although a few were limping and one was on crutches.

They were taken to a secure area at the airport for medical checks and

debriefings.

UN spokesman David Wimhurst told reporters there were 79 Zambians and 14 Kenyans, all members of their national contingents in the 9,000-strong Unamsil peacekeeping force in Sierra Leone.

Some of the released peacekeepers had no boots, apparently confirming reports that the rebels seized the kit of the UN soldiers whom they captured in early May in a series of clashes about disarmament.

The special United Nations representative for the West African country, Mr Oluyemi Adeniji, preceded the freed hostages into Lungi after spending the day organising the delayed airlift from Monrovia, the Liberian capital.

"The delay was caused by bureaucratic bungling by lower-ranking UN staff in Liberia," Mr Adeniji said, adding that he had rapidly unblocked the problems concerning the evacuation of the former hostages.

(Agencies)

78 MAY
MAY 2000

Africa

Vote to decide political system in Uganda

HO-17
25/5

By M. S. Prabhakara

CAPE TOWN, MAY 24. The long-awaited referendum in Uganda to enable the people to decide on the political system is to be held on June 29. The choice before the voters is formulated in the seemingly simple question posed to them: Which political system do you wish to adopt, "movement" or multi-party?

The referendum is being held in terms of the provisions of the Ugandan Constitution (Articles 69-75, covering the subject 'Political Systems'). The Constitution, adopted in September 1995, allows for three kinds of "political system": (a) movement political system; (b) multi-party political system; and (c) any other democratic and representative political system, any one of which the people of Uganda can adopt in a future referendum.

However, only the first two are "defined" in terms which seem disarmingly simple. The choice before the voters on June 29 too is limited to these two.

While the "multi-party" system does not need any explanation, the "movement system" perhaps does. This, the political system that prevails at present in Uganda, and stands for the Government led by the National Resistance Movement (NRM) under the President, Mr. Yoweri Museveni.

The NRM came to power in January 1986, in the wake of its triumph in the war of liberation against "dictatorship and misrule" — the summary way in which Mr. Museveni refers to the years of Obote First phase, Idi Amin, Obote Second Phase, and the coalitions that followed.

The Ugandan peoples' historic experience of such "dictatorship and misrule" has enabled the NRM to legitimise a vision of politics which excludes and indeed prohibits what in other societies would be considered normally free political activity, while allowing it to function for all practical purposes exactly like a political party.

However, the NRM is a rather more sophisticated entity than a crude expression of one-party rule. Uganda has a Parliament and a President elected under universal adult franchise.

Parliament functions with vigour and freedom; media and civil society too function freely.

In theory, Members of Parliament do not belong to any political party, though, again in theory, they are all, by virtue of being adult citizens, also members of the NRM, even those politically opposed to the NRM. The fact is that political parties are not permitted to function freely, like holding meetings or opening branches or openly campaigning for public office, though they do retain their offices and constitution.

Of course, the NRM, which is not a political party but a "movement", naturally functions freely. That feisty member of Parliament, Ms. Winnie Byanyima, hit the nail on the head when she described the NRM as a "non-party political party".

The two main Opposition parties, Uganda Peoples' Congress and the Democratic Party, which have from the beginning opposed the whole process of referendum, are likely to boycott it. Their view is that participating in the referendum would invest the exercise, loaded heavily in favour of the NRM, with legitimacy.

However, their stand is weakened by the fact that known leaders of these parties have already legitimised the movement system by taking part in the presidential and parliamentary polls; and by being part of the present Parliament, though not formally in the name of their parties.

The referendum clears the decks for the election of a new Parliament and President next year, both with a term of five years. The present Parliament was elected in June 1996, following the Presidential poll in May 1996.

7 5 MAY 2000

Rebels will free U.N. hostages, says Annan

UNITED NATIONS: U.N. secretary-general Kofi Annan on Thursday expressed hope that most of the 250 U.N. peace-keepers still being held by rebels in Sierra Leone will be freed by the time West African



Kofi Annan

leaders meet in Nigeria on Saturday.

He said he had spoken to Liberian president Charles Taylor, who is trying to negotiate the release of the hostages seized about three weeks ago by forces supporting rebel leader Foday Sankoh.

He expects to be able to see some more of the detainees released before the end of the week," Mr Annan told reporters as he arrived at U.N. headquarters.

West African heads of state are meeting in the Nigerian capital, Abuja, on Saturday, he said, "and of course I would hope by the time they meet most of the peace keepers will be in freedom."

The rebels have released about 250 of the 500 peace keepers they originally captured. Taylor, a friend of the rebels, has sent delegation to camps in the bush run by rebels from Sankoh's Revolutionary United Front (RUF), and his envoys have helped negotiate the freedom of the released captives.

On Monday, six to eight bodies in uniforms with U.N. insignias were discovered outside the town of Rogberi junction, the front-line position in the battle against RUF rebels.

U.N. spokesman Fred Eckhard said an eight-member team, which

went to the site could not confirm that the bodies were those of U.N. soldiers. "Further investigations will need to be conducted and the U.N. is actively seeking forensic experts for this purpose," he said.

The secretary-general's optimistic comments on the hostages came as the security council met to consider his report on Monday, which recommended that another 3,500 troops be added to the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Sierra Leone. He also asked the council to consider imposing a ban on diamond exports by rebels there.

Mr Annan recommended the force size be increased from the present 13,000 to 16,500.

In the report, Mr Annan said the events of the past few weeks raised "serious questions" about the peace process since there was evidence Sankoh himself "may well have encouraged, if not planned, some of the incidents."

Mr Annan said Sankoh, who is now in government custody, should be held accountable for his actions, but made no specific recommendations. Human Rights organisations and many in Sierra Leone have suggested Sankoh be prosecuted for crimes against humanity.

In the report, Mr Annan said lessons needed to be learned from the operation of the U.N. mission in Sierra Leone and the capture of the peace keepers.

Eckhard announced on Thursday that Mr Annan is sending a high level team led by former assistant secretary-general for peacekeeping Manfred Eisele to assess the problems and make recommendations to improve the mission. The team is tentatively scheduled to begin work next week, he said." (AP)

More troops head for Sierra Leone

REUTERS

ABUJA, May 29. — A West African summit today agreed to send troops to Sierra Leone and to send Foday Sankoh to a foreign country.

"It has been agreed that 3,000 soldiers will be sent to Sierra Leone to work under UN command," said Ms Adriane Diop, spokeswoman for the 16-nation Economic Community of West African States.

The summit in Abuja also agreed that "Sankoh would be taken out of Sierra Leone to be kept in a safer place" while international efforts continue to put the 1999 peace accord back on track, Ms Diop said.

Sankoh's Revolutionary United Front signed a deal with the President, Mr Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, to end the devastating that started in 1991.

But the pact came close to collapse four weeks ago when the rebels seized some 500 UN peacekeepers trying to disarm combatants under the agreement.

The UN said it believes the last of the hostages had been freed yesterday.

A Ecowas meeting of defence ministers and military chiefs agreed earlier this month to provide 3,000 troops to bolster the UN mission which took over from the Ecomog intervention force sent by Ecowas.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh has sent over 150 soldiers and equipment to Sierra Leone to join the UN peace-keeping force in Sierra Leone, an army spokesman said today.

"The first batch of 152 soldiers headed by Colonel Mohammed Anisur Rahman left Dhaka on a UN-chartered flight last night," he said, a separate cargo aircraft carried their "equipment, firearms and 24 armoured personnel carriers."

Bangladesh will contribute 780 troops to the UN Assistance Mission in Sierra Leone and the entire battalion will be dispatched in a week's time, the spokesman said.

THE STATESMAN

30 MAY 2000

Qadhafi harangues West at summit

CAIRO, APRIL 4. The Libyan leader, Col. Muammar Qadhafi, has upset the first European Union-African summit here with an anti-Western tirade that defied European calls for a fresh start with their former colonies.

In the last speech of the first day of the summit, Col. Qadhafi yesterday denounced capitalism, accused Europeans of hypocrisy towards Africa and urged them to expel the U.S. Navy from the Mediterranean, according to diplomatic sources.

The European Commission President, Mr. Romano Prodi, said he was "strongly disappointed" with Col. Qadhafi's speech after he had taken what he called a bold step to meet personally Col. Qadhafi, long branded the head of a terrorist state.

Mr. Prodi's spokesman, Mr. Ricardo Levi, said the private talks earlier in the day between Col. Qadhafi and Mr. Prodi as well as other European leaders had been seen as a chance to assess Libya's "new ideas" after it began to rebuild bridges with Europe.

But Col. Qadhafi resorted to his trademark fiery rhetoric, blaming capitalism for aggravating Africa's woes, and accusing Europeans of a "hypocrisy". He said Europe was now colonising the U.S. but could redeem itself by expelling the Sixth Fleet from the Mediterranean sea.

African leaders, who have gathered here, are likely to give a lukewarm hearing to Europe's recipe for conflict prevention through good governance and human rights.

A communique thrashed out on Sunday and due to be issued at the close of the conference contains compromise language on the importance of democratic principles and civil society, with African demands for a watered-down version prevailing.

Many African leaders, who can remember the days of European colonial power on their continent, say they will not be lectured by the affluent E.U., whose 15 members are embarking on a long-term strategy that embraces Africa as a whole. Instead, virtually all 52 African states represented at the summit stressed the need for radical measures to relieve their external debt burden.



The Egyptian President, Mr. Hosni Mubarak, shakes hands with the Portuguese Prime Minister, Mr. Antonio Guterres, as the Algerian President, Mr. Abdel Aziz Bouteflika (left) looks on, during the opening session of the first E.U.-African summit in Cairo on Tuesday. Spain's Prime Minister, Mr. Jose Maria Aznar (right), and his Italian counterpart, Mr. Massimo d'Alema, are in the second row behind them. — Reuters

The Europeans resisted African calls for a general conference on the subject, saying there was no universal solution for all cases. The E.U. has agreed to draft a joint report on debt, but expects that process to be tortuous.

The Egyptian President, Mr. Hosni Mubarak, opened the landmark dialogue between the E.U. and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) with a call for a radical solution to debt.

The OAU's President, the Algerian President, Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika, said Africa was "sagging under the weight of a debt which prevents all possibility of improvement", and the OAU Secretary-General, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, appealed for "faster, quicker and broader" debt relief.

The embattled Zimbabwean President, Mr. Robert Mugabe, came to Cairo ready to defy European critics of his authoritarian rule and appeared to concede little to the British Foreign Secretary, Mr. Robin Cook, in frosty talks aimed at defusing his heated row with that country.

Mr. Mugabe sought to defuse British anger over the seizure of white-owned farms and the use of force against peaceful demonstrators by assuring Mr. Cook that a general election would go ahead in May as planned.

But he gave no promise to reverse the land grab or order his police to protect citizens impartially. — AFP, Reuters

APR 2000

5 APR 2000

5 APR 2000

Mugabe's tone gets shriller

BINDURA (ZIMBABWE), APRIL 8. The Zimbabwean President, Mr. Robert Mugabe heaped further pressure on the country's embattled white farmers on Friday by renewing his support for thousands of squatters and broadening his attack to cover the entire white community.

His remarks came after a violent attack on an elderly white farmer and his wife left them both in hospital and coincided with the invasion of five more properties, which brought the total seized to 975. Addressing a rally of his ruling Zanu-PF Party in Bindura, 50 miles north of Harare, Mr. Mugabe dashed hopes that he might defuse the crisis on white farms by ordering the squatters home, following Thursday's vote in Parliament to remove the right to compensation for land seizures.

Mr. Mugabe told about 1,500 supporters: "Those who have invaded the farms, they are going to stay. I support them. We will not remove them." He was noticeably more aggressive when he spoke in the Shona language than when he spoke later in English. In a furious attack on white farmers, he referred to them as *mabhuru*, a derogatory term for whites. "If you cannot accept rule by blacks, you can just leave," he said. "No one will stop you from leaving. All the doors are open." He listed all the border crossings through which whites could flee Zimbabwe and added: "If you want to have a plane, we can accompany you to Harare airport."

Mr. Mugabe placed the onus on white farmers to avoid any violent clashes with squatters. "Let farmers not create unnecessary circumstances that might lead to them being hurt," he said, conceding that "violent incidents" had occurred but saying these had been caused by "farmers resisting" squatters.

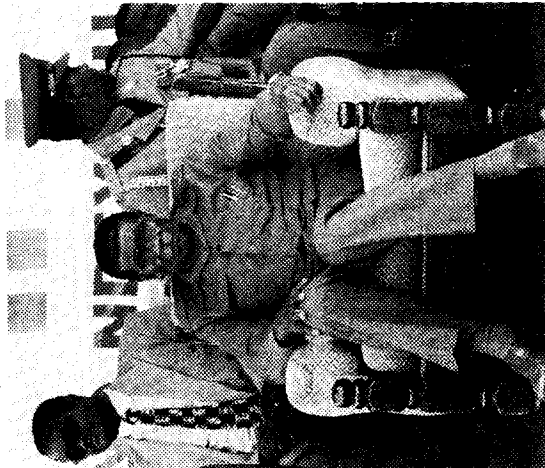
Mr. Mugabe's remarks drew a furious re-

Instead, they pistol-whipped him before breaking into his home where they set upon Mrs. Island-Jones, leaving her severely injured. The couple were later taken to hospital where Mrs. Island-Jones was in a "very serious" condition. Michelle Conner, a farmer near Caroi, said: "Mugabe is so unstable that it really worries me. He could just wake up in the morning and decide to ethnically cleanse us. I'm not leaving — we just have to remain determined and see this through — but this man is just so frightening."

Another farmer, Rob Brown, from Arcturus, said: "We stayed to build Zimbabwe and make it into a success. We care about this country, but look what he says about us." He urged the British Government to reconsider any talks with Mr. Mugabe because "it may not be worth the bother".

Commentators see the farm invasions and the intensified attacks on whites as a central part of Mr. Mugabe's strategy to win next month's parliamentary election. Dr. Iden Wetherell, a commentator from *Zimbabwe Independent*, said: "He is trying to position himself as the scourge of the whites... but he is totally misjudging the public mood. Mugabe has actually managed to create sympathy for white farmers. Zimbabweans are repelled by his crass racism and no one likes a bully."

Meanwhile, the British Foreign Office called the vote allowing Zimbabwe's Government to seize land from white farmers without compensation a "serious step backwards". The statement came a day after it had resolutely refused to issue any comment on the issue. The reversal of its policy of silence hinted at considerable confusion within Whitehall over how to react to Mr. Mugabe's latest provocation. — ©Telegraph Group Limited, London, 2000.



The Zimbabwean President, Mr. Robert Mugabe, at the launch of his party's Zanu PF (Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front) election campaign at a rally in Bindura, 80 km north from Harare on Friday. — AP

sponse and came hours after a brutal attack on Mr. and Mrs. Island-Jones in the early hours of Friday morning. The white couple, in their seventies, were awoken by intruders on their smallholding near Marondera, 60 miles east of Harare. Fearing that his cattle were about to be slaughtered, Mr. Island-Jones ventured outside with a handgun. He was ambushed and would have been shot with his own gun if his attackers had been able to remove the safety catch.

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Mugabe warning against opposition to land grab

MICHAEL DYNES
THE TIMES, LONDON

25-11 9/4

Africa

ed their black workers to vote against him. Britain had a moral responsibility to compensate white farmers for any land acquired by the Government of Zimbabwe, Mr Mugabe said. "Compensation can only be paid if funds are made available by the former colonial power."

Mr Mugabe said that he wanted to assure the country's white farmers that his government "will not proceed arbitrarily". But he also made clear: "There will be no negotiation about it."

Any pretence that the government was not behind the invasion of some 900 commercial farms by thousands of "war veterans" dissolved when a phalanx of former fighters from the 1970s war of liberation marched on to the parade ground to be welcomed by Mr Mugabe's clenched fist. He thanked the veterans for their "fighting spirit" and for setting an example on how to solve the land issue. Mr Mugabe warned the white community that their support for the Movement for Democratic Change, the Opposition coalition of labour, church and student groups, would be seen as "a demonstration that the white man has not changed". "Have they come to the point where they want to fight Mugabe and his government? Then I will declare the fight. And it will be a fight to the finish."

BINDURA, April 8. — Amid an aura of calculated menace, President Robert Mugabe announced yesterday his intention to press ahead with plans to seize half of Zimbabwe's white-owned commercial farms, warning that he would tolerate no more opposition from "troublesome Boers".

Emboldened by parliament's approval of the Land Acquisition Bill, which gives him the power to take any land he chooses without compensation. Mr Mugabe said he would seek an urgent meeting with the white Commercial Farmers' Union to spell out how the land acquisitions would take place.

"This is an historic day," Mr Mugabe told supporters attending his Zanu party's first election rally in Mashonaland. "It is a victory over imperialism and colonialism."

The Land Acquisition Bill effectively overturns the result of February's constitutional referendum, which denied Mr Mugabe the authority to take white land without compensation. Mr Mugabe refused to accept the earlier result on the alleged ground that white farmers intimidated

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Indian envoy denies he was summoned by S.A. Govt.

By M. S. Prabhakara (12-1)

CAPE TOWN, APRIL 9. The Indian High Commission in Pretoria has not been contacted, officially or unofficially, by the South African Government on the recent reports from New Delhi charging the South African cricket team captain, Hansie Cronje, and four colleagues, of match-fixing, the High Commissioner said today.

The official, Mr. Harsh Bhasin, was reacting to a report in the *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg) according to which "yesterday, the South African Government summoned the Indian High Commissioner to South Africa to the Union Buildings to demand an explanation as to why the South African players' cellphones and rooms had been bugged in the first place."

Mr. Bhasin told this correspondent that Saturday being a holiday, he was at home throughout except for a short period in the afternoon when he went to the High Commission. He was not contacted by any person from the Department of Foreign Affairs, not did he go to the Union Buildings, he clarified.

The indignation, and the desire and determination to stand the representative of the Indian Government in Pretoria in a corner and "demand explanations" for the actions of the Delhi police, even if only expressed in the report (attributed to four authors with by-lines) is typical of the near universal reaction here to the match-fixing allegations.

Indeed, Sunday's newspapers almost without exception claim that the South African Government is taking up (or as in the case of the *Sunday Times* report,

BCCI panel will discuss case, says Muthiah

CHENNAI, APRIL 9. The president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), the president, Mr. A. C. Muthiah, said he would react to the charges of match-fixing against five South African players only after the particulars were made available by the authorities. All details would be placed before the BCCI working committee on April 28, he added. He also said that the United Cricket Board of South Africa (UCBSA) had not contacted the Indian board.

To a question, Mr. Muthiah said the BCCI was under no pressure as no Indian player has been named in the case.

Rubbish, says Lele

However, the BCCI secretary, Mr. Jaywant Lele, dismissed the charges made by the Delhi police saying "it is all rubbish. Such charges are baseless and cannot be proved."

Joshi defends police

In Calcutta, the Heavy Industries Minister and BCCI vice-president, Mr. Manohar Joshi, defended the Delhi police for tapping the mobile phones and telephones of the South African cricketers during their India tour.

"When there is an offence police has every right to tap the phones," he told reporters. — PTI, UNI

has already taken up) the matter of match fixing at an official level with India. Given the way "news" evolves over a day in media circles here, it is likely that this report may become the basis for further "analytical reports".

Media backs Cronje

Reuters reports from Durban:

The country's Sunday press predictably expressed disbelief over the match-fixing charges.

The Sunday Times, *Sunday Independent*, *Sunday Tribune* and the Afrikaans-language paper *Rapport* all led with the story.

"SA Government demands tapes," the *Sunday Times* reported in a banner headline. It said the South High Commissioner to India, Mr. Maite Nkoane-Ra-

mashada, heard police tape recordings of mobile telephone conversations alleged to be between Hansie Cronje and a book-maker. The paper said the Commissioner "was convinced the accents were not South African".

Indian officials turned down Mr. Nkoane-Ramashada's request for a copy of the tapes and the deputy commissioner of crime prevention in New Delhi told the paper that the tapes "had been sealed and locked away in a safe in New Delhi and would be produced only when the matter came to court". *The Sunday Tribune* was indignant. "It's not our Hansie," its headline screamed, with a sub-head saying "both voices on tape Asian".

APR 10

The power to help himself

AFS Co.

IT was yet another struggle against "colonialism". And yet again, there was a lot of bloodshed. Zimbabwe's parliament recently amended the constitution to allow the government to seize white-owned farmland without compensation for redistribution to poor blacks. But that wasn't enough. The new provision, which will take effect as soon as President Robert Mugabe puts his signature to it, says it is Britain's responsibility as the former colonial power to pay dispossessed white farmers for their losses. Was this claim justified? Or was it just another Mugabe political gimmick to garner votes in the impending elections?

London rejected any obligation. A country ruled by a "dictator" like Mugabe, when taking a plunge in elections, is all set to imbibe the issues of racism and nationalism in political propaganda. Whether Mugabe is successful or not will be revealed in the months to come, but this modern propaganda still falls far short of Goebbels's techniques against Jews during the Nazi period in Germany.

Mugabe's Zanu-PF party hailed the constitutional amendment (passed by 100 party members only) as the culmination of Zimbabwe's long struggle against British colonialism. A few thousand white farmers control more than 80 per cent of the country's best land. The preamble further states how, under colonial domination, the people of Zimbabwe were unjustifiably dispossessed of their land and other resources without compensation. It explains, as a national daily quotes, why the "Zimbabweans took up arms in order to regain their land and political sovereignty" and that the people must now "be enabled to reassert their rights and regain ownership of their land". The key passage states: "The former colonial power has an obligation to pay compensation for agricultural land compulsorily acquired for resettlement, through a fund established for the purpose."

Zimbabwe minister for industry and commerce Nathan Shamuyarira believed this new bill would help to ease political tensions, particularly since British foreign secretary Robin Cook had earlier expressed a willingness to help finance land reform as long as the government helped the rural poor and this was carried out in accordance with the rule of law. But the department for international development had read its lessons on modern diplomacy well enough. Its statement carried no comment from minister Clare Short when the bill was passed in Zimbabwe.

The department reacted with extreme caution. It only stated that one sovereign and independent state could not use its constitution on another. For Zimbabwe, however, this bill is a stupendous step to end the turmoil on the farms which has tarnished the country's international standing and damaged its agriculture-based economy.

Harare claimed that former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher agreed to provide the compensation as a condition for Mr Mugabe signing the Lancaster House agreement which finalised Zimbabwe's inde-

Amending the constitution to allow for seizure of white-owned farmland without compensation isn't enough for Robert Mugabe. He wants Britain, as a former colonial power, to make the loss good for dispossessed whites, says AYANJIT SEN

pendence 20 years ago. The agreement was abruptly abandoned when the Blair government came to power.

President Mugabe's comment on "going back to trenches" made the British foreign office admit that his war-like declarations were "worrying" but it would not respond directly to his threats. Incidentally, Britain has spent £48 million on land resettlement since Zimbabwe's independence, but payments stopped after the UK claimed President Mugabe was allocating land to his cronies and not the peasants who needed it.

In fact, the wording of the amendment appears far-reaching — its passage through Zimbabwe's parliament is widely perceived as a pre-election gimmick. It is understood the country's land acquisition act would need to be changed before any land grabs could go ahead. Actually, the land row, fuelled by Mugabe himself, as many British diplomats believe, to whip up public support, has soured relations with Britain to their worst level since independence in 1980.

But what happens to the beleaguered white farmers? This bill is going to give Mugabe the power to help himself. But Mugabe's party believes that this constitutional amendment might bring an end to the land invasions and siege of white farms by armed men, evidently encouraged by the government.

Mugabe has played the cards close to his chest in this amendment. With less than a month to go to elections, the government sees its new power as a valuable populist weapon to fend off the stiffest challenge yet to its power. Faced with the worst political and economic crisis since black majority rule began in 1980, the government of Zimbabwe has

STATESMAN

been beating the nationalist drum and trying to stoke hatred against the whites. And the recent bloodshed points to this rude reality. Peter Hain, Britain's foreign office minister responsible for Africa, described the violence as "anti-racist, anti-white attacks" and accused the authorities of "thuggery" as recent issues of London's newspapers point out. More to the point, the British foreign office travel advisory was updated to include a warning to white Britons to avoid future demonstrations, taking into account that there are more than 20,000 British nationals in Zimbabwe.

Even the first EU-Africa summit in Cairo was not bereft of this discussion, though in a subtle way. A fish rots from the head — so goes a favourite Zimbabwean saying. With the chief fishmonger away — President Mugabe is frying fish in Cairo — the stench of decay has become powerful. But Mugabe is no political fool. He reportedly told Robin Cook that though the elections were postponed, it would be held next month. A statement indeed. Even as Zimbabwe's new opposition party welcomed this statement, there are good chances that this statement gets altered once again. The lust for power, as the political historians interpret, is hard to ignore.



Robert Mugabe: overpowering lust for power

Another argument provided by British political analysts is the sustenance of international pressure against Mugabe. The parliamentary elections initially scheduled for this weekend and then deferred to next month are a potential watershed for Zimbabwe. Ever since Mr Mugabe's attempts to overhaul his country's constitution were rejected by the electorate earlier this year, all political momentum was with his political enemies. And what a way indeed to get back into the driver's seat!

Despite the game around the constitution of Zimbabwe being played up well by the ruling authority, international pressure must be maintained to make sure that free and fair elections take place in the country. Even the British media has voiced that Zimbabwe should be expelled from the Commonwealth for the breaching of the Harare Declaration of Rights (ironically named) nine years ago.

What will be particularly problematic for white landowners in Zimbabwe is if Mugabe either calls a state of emergency and abandons this election, or indulges in open electoral fraud on a massive scale. Another racist regime might start off. This situation is quite possible with certain defeat staring him in his face. In that case, Mugabe's political isolation will be the only solution.

(The author is on the staff of The Statesman, currently in Wales on a scholarship.)

THE STATESMAN

11 APR 2000

IN two weeks, Edward and Anne Oliver will flee Zimbabwe to start a new life in England. "We're getting out of here before the elections," says the 33-year-old Oliver who runs a retail business. He's too frightened to meet at home where his life is now packed away in cardboard boxes waiting for the removal man. Instead, he sits drinking Zimbabwe lager at a roadside motel, watching black and white children swim together in a pool.

"If we wait until after, it will be too late. There's no future for my kids. Day by day the prices soar. And there is absolutely no protection."

Oliver decided to flee the country several weeks ago when "things here suddenly turned very nasty for white people". It started in the Kwe Kwe area, a pro-Mugabe Zanu-PF stronghold immediately after the referendum, when a local farmer's land was confiscated by Zanu-PF war veterans and they were driven from their homes without even being allowed to take a suitcase.

"The squatters even rang them up on their cellphone and asked them how to use the video, that's how bad it's gotten here," Oliver says. Then another farmer and his wife were abducted and beaten up. Then more farms were occupied, two white tourists were attacked, and



Zimbabwean farmer Adrian Herud is comforted by his wife Marion after allegedly being assaulted by a crowd of war veterans and villagers in front of his Ardingly farm house in Karoi, 200 km north of Harare last Saturday. — API/PTI

Poised to flee

Mugabe's increasingly threatening tone has convinced Zimbabwean whites with the means that the only way to go is out, writes JANINE DI GIOVANNI

Oliver began receiving intimidating threats from Zanu-PF activists. His decision to take his wife and two daughters, aged two and four, out of the country came after the 1 April demonstration in Harare which erupted in violence.

"After that I went out and bought four plane tickets for England," he says. He sold his BMW and his 18-ft fishing boat, quit his job, and called an auctioneer to sell all his furniture. "We're only taking what we can carry on the plane," he says. "We're leaving everything else behind, even our wedding presents."

Michael Davidson, an Harare entrepreneur, is sending his wife Anellia and their two children back to her family in Bulgaria this week. He says the events of last week — the violent demonstrations, the beating of white farmer Ian Kay, the siege of JJ Hammond's farm by squatters, and President Mugabe's increasingly threatening tone to whites has forced him to move his family. "There is only so much you can take," he says.

Those who can get out are the lucky ones. Others are trying to prepare for the inevitable. Barbie and Bruce Brown, farmers in the Victory Block region which has been targeted by Zanu-PF squatters, have prepared a bag which they keep near their front door. "It's got our qualifications, passports, birth certificates and extra medication in case we have to run in the middle of the night," Mrs Brown says. — *The Times, London.*

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The tragedy in Zimbabwe

MEMORIES are short, too conveniently so. The life and death drama now being played out in Zimbabwe in southern Africa is a tragic illustration of this human weakness that knows no colour line.

Thirty-five years ago, a British colony called Rhodesia, ruled by a white minority, made its unilateral declaration of independence. The break with the mother country had come after an acrimonious period of resisting pressure from London to modestly widen the franchise. For 14 years Rhodesia was a pariah state, boycotted by order of the UN Security Council, yet finding ways to circumvent the embargo and prosper in a way that, if it had happened today, would make Saddam Hussein green with envy.

Even the big British oil companies, Shell and BP, connived in the sanctions busting with, if not a nod, at least a wink from Britain's Labour government.

That was Britain's mistake number one: forcing the Africans to fight their cause by guerrilla warfare for want of pressures on other fronts. Led by Robert Mugabe, now Zimbabwe's

Prime Minister, the guerrillas weakened the white government to the point where it was persuaded to sue for terms. Both London and Washington favoured a compromise with a less militant black leadership than Mugabe, the avowed Marxist. Yet, as is usually the case, the lack of British and US commitment in the early days of the struggle meant that the militants held most of the cards, not only on the battlefield but in electoral appeal as well.

The stepping stone to black rule had been the constitutional conference held at Lancaster House in London. One of the sticking points had been the question of land reform. I interviewed Mugabe at the time and when I asked him what the main issue for his party was, he replied, "Land, land, land, land, land." The British, however, were constrained by public opinion at home — the government could not be seen to be giving the whole of Rhodesia, lock, stock and barrel (and that meant the highly productive white-owned farms) — to the insurgent blacks. So the British mumbled their way through the conference, saying that while they favoured a sensible land reform they couldn't be explicit about how much money they would set aside to buy out the white farmers.

The Americans who, under Jimmy Carter, had been active partners with Britain in seeking a solution to the conflict, were even more reticent. "We would never get an appropriation for land reform through Congress if it means giving white farmers a tough deal," Andrew Young, US ambassador to the UN told me.

Yet from Mugabe's new government there was a deafen-

ing lack of initiative. Mugabe appeared to lose interest in the issue. A few months after independence I met an old acquaintance on a London street, Bernard Chidzero, Zimbabwe's minister of finance. "What's going on about land reform? What are you planning to do?" I asked. "Nothing for now," he replied. "It's not on our list of priorities."

I couldn't believe my ears, even though I knew it had a superficial rationale. The white farmers, with their exports of tobacco and fruit, kept the country's trade balance in the black. With the grain and vegetables, they kept the urban population fed. Moreover, and this seemed the sensible part, there was much to be done in upgrading the productivity of those millions of peasants who did at least have land.

The arrival of black power in South Africa, which should have been liberating for Zimbabwe, seemed to pose a

personal challenge to Mugabe. He made it abundantly clear in more ways than one that he didn't like the limelight of liberation moving from him to Nelson Mandela. Mugabe seemed to take a person-

al delight in going in an opposite direction to South Africa.

That became clear with his nonsensical military escapade in the Congolese war. This has only worked to help bankrupt Zimbabwe while unnecessarily complicating an already fraught situation — all, it seems, so that members of Mugabe's inner circle can pad their bank accounts with diamond and other financial deals in the Congo.

The land reform issue being brought to the rapid boil in Zimbabwe today is more of the same. Until now, what little land reform there has been has taken productive white land and put it into the hands of Mugabe's rich friends and cronies. But, desperate to find a winning issue at the polls in May, Mugabe is using his land reform crusade as a vote-getter. Defying the courts, he has encouraged old warriors to invade 700 white-owned farms while he promises to expropriate them without compensation if Britain doesn't give him the money. For once, very belatedly, the British government is trying to occupy the high ground. If the election is honest, says British foreign secretary Robin Cook, then London will help finance an orderly and honest land redistribution programme.

But it could well be the promise has come too late. Britain — in its second grave mistake — made its own contribution to the present day imbroglio by not putting serious money on the table for land reform 20 years ago. Now nobody can be sure whether Mugabe, if he got his money, would spend it on the people who really deserve it. That is the tragedy of modern day Zimbabwe.

WORLD
VIEW
By JONATHAN POOLE

14 APR 2000

Injustice in Zimbabwe

PT-13 Africa
WITH THE passing of an old order come efforts to correct old imbalances. This is part and parcel of the post-colonial experience. In the case of Zimbabwe, however, such efforts have jumped rails and manifested in a free-for-all campaign of retribution. Blacks, especially among the rural poor, have invaded the farms owned by whites in a bid to snatch back what is "rightfully" theirs. The most distressing aspect of the ongoing situation in Zimbabwe is that the Government sees it fit to fold its arms and watch while rowdy mobs go about looting in the name of historical vengeance.

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In fact, with President Robert Mugabe's political appeal having taken a beating in the last few years, the government is having no qualms about encouraging anti-socials to take over private property owned by whites. Mr Mugabe, in the hope of garnering some much needed popular support, has even gone to the extent of cocking a snook at the justice system by refusing a high court order to take action against the invaders and squatters. Correcting socio-economic and cultural imbalances — in Zimbabwe's context, a legacy of the country's colonial past — is the duty of government, not that of violent mobs seeking instant justice. Changes must be made through laws and those flouting them must be punished. It is true that British colonial rule was based strictly along racial lines. But the current chaos in Zimbabwe is as much an example of destructive anarchy as of redressing old wrongs.

Political analysts have seen Mr Mugabe's open approval of the continuing mayhem as a quick way to muster support for his party. With Parliament dissolved, it becomes rather obvious that he is now biding his time about announcing an election date. The President will do this only after he senses a groundswell of support for his act of stoking what is really a state-sanctioned breakdown of law and order. The international community must take serious note of Mr Mugabe's unfortunate tactics and urge him to restore order. It is only after tackling the present spate of injustice that the nation can address those committed in the past.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

14 APR 2000

Upheaval in Zimbabwe

THE DISSOLUTION of Zimbabwe's Parliament (House of Assembly) on April 11 sets in motion the process for the election of a new Parliament. The dissolved House with a strength of 150 (120 elected and 30 nominated) was elected in the general elections in April 1995, for five years. Thus, fresh elections should have been held by now. However, the existing Constitution provides for a six-month 'window period'. The actual date of the poll is yet to be notified.

The now rejected Draft Constitution which, had it been accepted, would have replaced the existing Constitution that Zimbabwe inherited at the time of independence 20 years ago, the so-called Lancaster House Constitution, would have reduced this 'window' period to four months.

As almost every action of the Government even before the current intensification of long-existing problems affecting the very being of the country, the dissolution of Parliament too has been greeted with highly critical scepticism by much of the local and most of the foreign media as yet another manifestation of the fundamentally undemocratic character of the ZANU-PF Government, and in particular, of the President, Mr. Robert Mugabe. Whatever be the failings of Mr. Mugabe, he has (all now) given no indication that he would impede the democratic process this even after the setback suffered when the Draft Constitution was narrowly rejected in the referendum three months ago. Thus, the view of the constituencies delimitation committee that it would require at least three months to draw up the boundaries is being interpreted as a devious device to further put off elections, perhaps even indefinitely, and declare a state of emergency.

Three recent developments — the steep fall in the value of the Zimbabwe dollar towards the end of 1997 because of holding back of promised IMF credits, the decision to award large pensions to former veterans of the liberation war despite the strains in the economy, and the decision to extend military assistance to the beleaguered Democratic Republic of the Congo in August 1998 — cumulatively contributed to the further intensification of the long-festering problems, in the main those revolving round the question of land.

Mr. Mugabe has much to answer for. On the crucial issue of redistribution of arable farmland to the landless, in respect of which the restrictions in the Lancaster House Constitution ceased to apply ten years after independence, the Government has been able to do much less than its target —

Any comment on the situation in Zimbabwe has to consider the role of the foreign media, especially South African, which has been hostile to Zanu PF and Mr. Robert Mugabe, says
M. S. PRABHAKARA.

Mr. Mugabe has always maintained, though this is being projected as part of his present 'rhetoric', that there is no question of paying the market price for land which he maintains was simply 'stolen' by the first colonial settlers or was 'sold' to later settlers, by the colonial administration keen to encourage settlements, for absurd prices. Any compensation would not cover the soil of Zimbabwe, which after all belonged to the people, but only any additions and improvements done on the farms.

The Draft Constitution, rejected three months ago, included a pro-

role of the local and foreign media, in particular the powerful and influential South African media, still largely controlled by the white minority. During the last six years of following the South African media, this correspondent cannot recall a single item of news or analysis which has not been uncompromisingly hostile to the ZANU-PF Government and in particular to Mr. Mugabe.

If one believed these reports, Zimbabwe, "going down the tubes" and "on the brink" for months and years, should have disappeared from the maps long ago.



Zimbabwe's President, Mr. Robert Mugabe, greets supporters... assertive stance.

about 52,000 families resettled on 2.7 million hectares about a third of the Government's target in terms of the resettlement of people and land required for this purpose.

A key issue impeding the process is compensation. Zimbabwe maintains that Britain, as the former colonial power has not fulfilled its commitment to help. Britain, under the New Labour, maintains that the land distribution as implemented till now has only benefited ZANU-PF supporters. Indeed, central to any genuine and implementable land redistribution programme is the issue of compensation. The Constitution and the laws as they stand require the compensation to be at the market price of the land. This has been repeatedly endorsed by the judiciary. The fact is that Zimbabwe by itself does not have the resources to pay this price.

vision which situated the land issue in the context of the country's history of colonial settlements, its armed struggle and a set of guidelines to assess "compensation for compulsory acquisition of agricultural land", which included "the price paid for the land when it was last acquired".

But that is history. The current reality is the phenomenon of what is projected in much of the media as "land invasion" but which in reality is more akin to "illegal squatting". Indeed, unlike the media, the organisation which has the greatest vested interest in some kind of a via media between maintaining the status quo and seeking an accommodation with the majority of the landless, the Commercial Farmers' Union, has been far more circumspect in its reactions. Any comment on the present situation in Zimbabwe has, necessarily, to consider the

No less a person than Mr. Nelson Mandela had this to say in his recent interview to *The Guardian* of London (April 5): "The South African press unfortunately are so hostile to Mugabe that they are prepared to say things which we know are not true about him. Simply because he lost the referendum, they think he is going to lose the election. The fact that he has lost the referendum may be a blessing in disguise for him. Mugabe is a strategic thinker, he is a very capable man. If I have to express an opinion, he is likely to retain power".

Though the interview was widely reported in the press, with extensive quotes dealing with matters British and American, no newspaper reproduced these sentences dealing with South Africa's close neighbour, going through a deep political crisis.

Mugabe tells whites not to resist land-grab

Africa 57-5 ✓ 1979

REUTERS

HARARE, April 16. — Zimbabwe's President, Mr Robert Mugabe, arrived home to a mounting political crisis today and told white farmers not to resist an illegal land-grab by war veterans.

The two-month-old occupation of at least 500 white-owned farms by 1970s Liberation War veterans threatened to spiral out of control late yesterday when a crowd abducted and killed a white farmer.

Another two white farmers were reported missing today and the Opposition Movement for Democratic Change said two of its members had been killed overnight.

"I know there is an expectation that I will say to the war veterans get off the land. I will not say or do that," Mr Mugabe told about 1,000 supporters who welcomed him home.

The President went to Cuba to attend the G-77 economic summit.

The comments dashed hopes that Mr Mugabe would back the vice-president, Mr Joseph Msika's call to war veterans to leave the farms and await a formal land distribution

process.

The occupations have twice been ruled illegal by the Zimbabwe High Court.

Some of the occupiers left the farms after being persuaded by three Cabinet ministers. Farmers in the Marondera district, however, said they had been told to pack and leave by tonight.

Mr Mugabe said he would meet the war veterans and white commercial farmers to "map the way forward". But he said the occupations would continue till a formal land redistribution strategy had been negotiated and implemented.

Meanwhile, Mr Mugabe has accused Britain, the former colonial power and the harshest of his western critics, of trying to organise international sanctions against his government, which must face parliamentary elections by August.

"If they want to help us, they will have to help us on our terms."

The British foreign secretary, Mr Robin Cook, said in India that he would summon Zimbabwe's high commissioner to London to explain yester-

day's murder and to urge the restoration of law and order.

"We will be demanding that the government stops the occupation of the farms before there are any more deaths."

Mr Mugabe did not make any direct comment on yesterday's murder in Marondera of white farmer Dave Stevens, a known MDC supporter who resisted the occupation of his farm on Saturday.

He, however, reiterated his earlier advice to the 4,500 whites who own or control an estimated 75 per cent of the nation's best farmlands to accept the occupations.

"We have warned the white farmers not to be provocative, not to take up arms, not to resist. If they do that, they will suffer the consequences. You must accept the consequences of your actions because we have warned you," he said.

He termed as "impractical and impossible" last week's second court order for the eviction of at least 7,000 war veterans from at least 500 white-owned farms.

"The legal processes will not work...For us in government we see this as a political issue."

1 APR 20 1979

THE STANGEMAN

1 APR 20 1979

Zimbabwe whites queue up to reclaim British citizenship

Africa 51-11 18/3

REUTERS

HARARE, April 17. — Anxious white Zimbabweans queued to reclaim their British citizenship today after President Robert Mugabe declined to condemn the weekend killing of three Opposition members including a white farmer.

An official at the British High Commission in Harare said the office had been swamped by whites registering to reclaim British citizenship. Witnesses said there was a long queue outside the consulate during the three hours the office was open.

Mr Mugabe returned from an economic summit in Cuba yesterday to a deepening political crisis driven by the occupation of at least 500 white-owned farms by supporters of his Zanu-pf party.

He did not criticise the violence against white farmers and the Opposition Movement for Democratic Change and said he would not make any effort to end the land-grab campaign by veterans of former Rhodesia's 1970s guerrilla Struggle for Independence from Britain.

"I know there is an expectation that I will say to the war veterans get off the land. I will not say or do that," he told chanting supporters at the airport.

Last month, the British foreign office minister for Africa, Mr Peter Hain, said London would take in up to 20,000

white Zimbabweans if the situation deteriorated further.

Yesterday, Mr Hain summoned the Zimbabwe High Commissioner to demand an explanation for the violence and to urge action to restore law and order.

British and Zimbabwean officials say they have no exact count of the number of people entitled to reclaim British citizenship they gave up under a Zimbabwean law banning dual nationality. They estimate the figure at around 25,000.

Today, the Commercial Farmers' Union, grouping 4,500 mostly white farmers targeted in the invasions, said it was still assessing the situation after the weekend violence.

A CFU official said the union was reluctant to comment further, but might hold a news conference.

In Marondera district, where 50-year-old David Stevens was murdered, local CFU chairman, Mr Guy Watson-Smith said 46 farms in the area had been evacuated.

"It could be that the guys decide to go back onto their farms tonight, but right now nothing is happening," he said.

Several more farms were occupied overnight, including one owned by an elderly couple about 150 km north of the capital.

The farmer, who asked not to be identified, said the invaders demanded food and gave them three days to quit the farm.

"We are terribly terrified. They have been singing and dancing all night and chanting slogans praising the government and denouncing the opposition," he said.

In neighbouring South Africa, former President Nelson Mandela declined to comment in depth about the crisis, but said it could best be addressed through diplomatic channels. "South Africa will be more effective if they do it quietly," he told reporters.

Mr Mandela's successor, Mr Thabo Mbeki, met Mr Mugabe earlier this year and offered conditional financial assistance to Zimbabwe's cash-strapped government.

But he has not made any comment on the land-grab or the weekend violence.

A British official said Foreign Secretary Robin Cook had asked Nigeria's President, Mr Olusegun Obasanjo, to put pressure on Zimbabwe to halt the land invasions.

The official said Mr Cook would also speak to South African foreign minister, Mr Nkosazana Zuma.

The official Herald newspaper has slammed the opposition MDC, saying it was a front for white farmers.

"MDC is a Trojan horse bringing together those opposed to the government's plans to acquire land from white commercial farmers and distribute it to land-hungry peasants," the paper said in an editorial today.

THE STATESMAN

18 APR 2000

18 APR 2000

White farmers flee as Mugabe ignores spiralling violence

AT LEAST 50 White Zimbabwean families have pulled out of their farms in the Marondera district in recent days in the face of increasing violence from squatters occupying farms there, farmers said on Sunday.

However, President Robert Mugabe has only increased the stakes in Zimbabwe's land battle, refusing to condemn the violence which has led to the deaths of three political opponents even as the crisis threatens the unity of his own party.

Two Black officials and a White farmer, all members of the Opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), died in a weekend of violence, to which Mugabe turned a blind eye on his return on Sunday from a Third World economic summit in Cuba.

The President also refused to tell the veterans he once led in the 1970s independence war against White rule to leave around a thousand White farms they have occupied in recent weeks to force redistribution of land they say

was stolen under British rule. "I know there is an expectation that I will say to the war veterans get off the land. I will not say or do that," he told chanting supporters at the airport.

On Monday, the Commercial Farmers' Union (CFU), grouping 4,500 mostly White farmers targeted in the invasions, said it was still assessing the situation. However, a farmer who wished to remain anonymous told AFP that some 50 farmers had abandoned their properties to move in with friends and relatives in towns and cities. He was speaking from a private clinic in Marondera, where a number of farmers wounded in beatings are being treated.

The Marondera farming area became the flashpoint in the ongoing invasions by war veterans with the murder on late Saturday of one White farmer and the abduction of five others. "The situation is very frightening," said one farmer's wife, who asked not to be named. "Almost all the farmers want to leave to Marondera town or Harare."

David Stevens was shot dead late on Satur-

day. His neighbours, Stuart Demill and Ian Hardy, missing for several hours after being taken prisoner by a mob claiming to be war veterans, were found on Sunday afternoon by the police in the Bush and taken to hospital. The two were among six White farmers abducted after clashes at a farm belonging to Stevens near the central town of Marondera. The other three farmers, Steve Krynanaw, Gary Luke and John Osborne, were also beaten up and were being treated at Marondera on Sunday. Another local farmer, Ian Kay, was wounded last week by invaders at his farm.

Farmers have complained at the attitude of the police. Demill said he and Hardy had been abducted while the police looked on. "The police did not do a thing," he said. Head of CFU Tim Henwood too claimed the police did not help the farmers as they were abducted. "The police were either unable or unwilling to do anything about it," he said.

Political scientist Masipula Sithole told Reuters in Harare that Mugabe was allowing a



crisis to develop in the hope that it would bolster the flagging fortunes of his ruling ZANU-PF party in the general election expected in May. "It's a very high-risk and divisive strategy

and I think we are going to see Mugabe being challenged on this strategy within his own party in the coming days," Sithole said.

Mugabe, who accuses the White farmers of bankrolling the MDC, has bluntly told them to back him or quit the country. His popularity at an all-time low as he prepares to celebrate 20 years in power with ZANU-PF on Tuesday, he flew into the country from Havana on Sunday and refused to order thousands of veterans and supporters off more than 500 occupied White-owned farms.

On Monday, the official *Herald* newspaper slammed the MDC, saying it was a front for White commercial farmers. "MDC is a Trojan horse bringing together those opposed to the Government's plans to acquire land from White commercial farmers and distribute it to land-hungry peasants," the paper said in an editorial.

The invasions, openly supported by Mugabe but, recently, not by his senior ministers have crippled the 4,500, mostly White-owned commercial farms that form the backbone of the

country's disintegrating economy. Whites, about 1 per cent of the 12.5 million population, own most of the productive land. So far, they have kept a low profile and avoided provocative statements in the knowledge that any reaction could trigger a bloodbath and allow Mugabe to declare a state of emergency.

But tempers are fraying. "Black people and White people are being crushed back into... the dark ages," Bruce Gemmill, whose son was among the abducted and beaten farmers, told Reuters on his farm 100 km north of Harare. "There is no future for this country with subsistence agriculture," he said. "It is the hallmark of a totally derelict and bankrupt society."

Worried, the British Foreign Office in London summoned Zimbabwean High Commissioner Simbarashe Mumbengewi to complain about the farm murder and the general violence. Britain has also called on Zimbabwe's neighbours to put pressure on the increasingly isolated country and the President to back away from the abyss and bring a return to normality.

—Agencies

APR 2000

ZIMBABWE / MUGABE STILL UNRESPONSIVE

Another white farmer shot dead

HARARE, APRIL 18. A second white farmer has been killed in Zimbabwe's deepening crisis, the man's mother said on Tuesday, the 20th anniversary of independence in the former Rhodesia. "They killed my son. They beat him to a pulp," said Ms Gloria Olbs in a telephone call from the farm called Silverstreams near Zimbabwe's second biggest city, Bulawayo.

Mr. Martin Olbs (42), who was married with two teenage children, is the second white farmer to have been killed in Zimbabwe since the supporters of the President, Mr. Robert Mugabe, began a landgrab two months ago. Ms Olbs said her son was alone on the farm when scores of veterans of Zimbabwe's 1970's War of Independence arrived to take it over at 5.15 a.m. local time. Mr. Olbs telephoned a neighbour for help, saying he had been shot, but neighbours said the house was burned down while the attackers prevented an ambulance from getting to him.

A farmer, Mr. Robin Greeves, said he had received two calls from Mr. Olbs, the first saying his farm house had been surrounded by 30 to 40 veterans and it "looked pretty serious". "He (Olbs) phoned later to say he had been shot and could we call an ambulance," Mr. Greeves said. There was no further word on his condition. Mr. Greeves' and Mr. Olbs' farms are in Nyamandhlovu, about 500 km south of Harare.

A white farmer and two members of Zimbabwe's fledgling Movement for Democratic Change were killed over the weekend.

Zimbabwe marked two decades

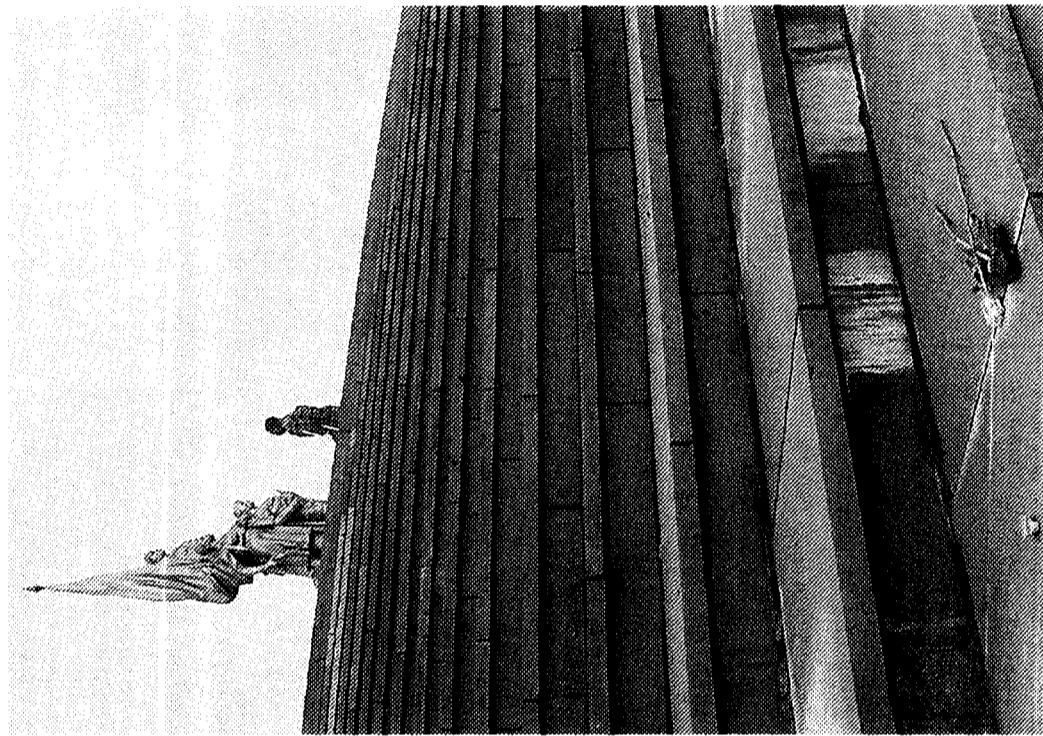
of independence from Britain on Tuesday mirrored in the bloody crisis over land.

Spokesmen for the country's 4,500 predominantly white commercial farmers were called to meet Mr. Mugabe on Monday and came away cautiously optimistic. "I just get the feeling that he was feeling fairly determined to get the situation back to normal as soon as possible," Mr. Tim Henwood, president of the Commercial Farmers Union, said.

But, Mr. Mugabe, whose popularity has ebbed after 20 years in power, refused once more to order veterans off the farms, which they say British colonisers stole a century ago. Mr. Mugabe is due to meet the leader of the War Veterans Association, Mr. Chenjerai Hunzvi, and the outcome will be keenly watched by all Zimbabweans.

Mr. Hunzvi, who uses the alias "Hitler", claims that his veterans are the real power behind Mr. Mugabe. Farmers fear that tempers have frayed to the extent that even if the squatters are promised speedy land reforms, many may refuse to leave the farms. White Zimbabweans queued at the British High Commission in Harare on Monday to reclaim their citizenship.

Britain, its relations with Mr. Mugabe at an all-time low, urged African nations to persuade him to restore law and order. The invasions, openly supported by Mr. Mugabe, but not by his senior Ministers, have crippled the farm sector that forms the backbone of the country's disintegrating economy. — Reuters



Two roses lay at the base of the National Heroes Acre monument on the 20th anniversary of Independence in Harare, Zimbabwe, on Tuesday. With the country suffering from farm occupation by squatters and its worst economic crisis, military parades, tribal dances, sports displays and other anniversary celebrations have been cancelled. — AP

THE HINDU

19 APR 2000

President's rhetoric ploy to delay May elections, says Opposition

Whites enemies of state: Mugabe

FROM RAVINNESSMAN

Harare, April 19 (AP) — With President Robert Mugabe calling White farmers "enemies of Zimbabwe" and violence against Opposition supporters increasing, government critics are worried the crisis could worsen ahead of parliamentary elections.

Opposition politicians say Mugabe organised the violent occupation of White-owned farms and other political attacks after an electoral loss in a constitutional referendum in February convinced him his party could lose the elections, expected in May.

"He's been trying to create the conditions necessary for a state of emergency because that's the only way he can postpone this election," said David Coltart, an official with the Opposition Movement for Democratic Change, or MDC.

In a TV interview yesterday, which was Zimbabwe's 20th anniversary of independence from White rule, Mugabe said White farmers' Opposition to the proposed Constitution "exposed them as our enemies, not just political enemies, but definite enemies in wanting to reverse our revolution and our independence."

Mugabe's proposed Constitution would have allowed the government to seize White-owned farms for distribution to landless Blacks without paying compensation.

About 4,000 White farmers own one-third of Zimbabwe's productive agricultural land. Government plans to resettle landless Blacks on some of that land have fundered under corruption and government mismanagement.

Immediately after the February referendum, landless Blacks began occupying White-owned farms across the country in what Mugabe called a justified protest.

The occupations have become



'HITLER' OF HARARE: Zimbabwean war veteran leader Chenjerai Hunzvi leaves the Harare High Court after being ordered to assist in peaceful vacation of occupied farms. (AFP)

increasingly violent.

Yesterday, a White farmer was shot and killed in an attack by assailants toting assault rifles, another farmer was abducted, beaten and released at a ruling party office, and a third farmer had many of the buildings on his land torched, Opposition leaders and farm union officials said.

On Saturday, two MDC members were killed in a firebombing and farmer David Stevens, a known MDC supporter, was slain by ruling party supporters. Five of Stevens' neighbours were severely beaten by attackers demanding they confess to ties with the Opposition.

Also today, a leader of the occupations was found in contempt of court for disobeying a High Court order that he tell his followers to

leave the farms.

Judge David Bartlett ordered Chenjerai Hunzvi, the militant leader of a group of veterans of Zimbabwe's independence war, to "actively strive to assist in the peaceful vacation by veterans of occupied farms". Hunzvi, whose group claims to have led the occupations to complete the "unfinished business" of the independence war, was to return to court May 5 for sentencing.

Mugabe's verbal assault on White farmers during an interview with state-run Zimbabwe Broadcast Corp. was a marked hardening of his stance, even from the televised anniversary speech he had made just minutes before.

During that speech, he said he would work to broker a compromise between farmers and the

Bangkok, April 19 (AP) — Zimbabwe's descent into chaos threatens the stability of southern Africa, British foreign secretary Robin Cook warned today, but he rejected calls for sanctions against the regime of President Robert Mugabe.

"Unless there was a return to the rule of law in Zimbabwe, the situation would continue to get worse and there would continue to be a descent into mob rule," Cook, in Thailand on an official visit, said he told UN secretary-general Kofi Annan yesterday.

Cook rejected calls by the opposition Conservative party to tighten the screws on Mugabe by cutting aid. He said he had spoken to the White farmers' leader in Zimbabwe and that it was not what they wanted.

"If we beat Mugabe about the head, then he will beat them about the head," Cook said.

Since Annan urged Mugabe to defuse the violence over land reform, Cook said, it appears that the government is willing to stick to the dialogue it already agreed to.

Zimbabwe has agreed to send a delegation to London in eight days' time to discuss the crisis. At a news conference, Cook said he would speak with Annan again later, as well as to Nigeria's foreign minister, who he said was in Zimbabwe as the envoy of Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo to try to ease the troubled situation. Cook told the BBC that other African countries must become involved if the crisis is to be re-

solved.

THE TELEGRAPH

20 APR 2000

Crisis in Zimbabwe

Time of reckoning for Robert Mugabe

IS Zimbabwe on the road to becoming the developing world's latest tragedy? Or will its leaders still manage to pull it back from chaos and violence? It would seem many of the 20th century's big battles are being refought in this southern African country. Race, class, colonialism, land rights, democracy and violence have all been thrown into a bubbling cauldron making it hard to distinguish what is what. On the face of it there is a raging dispute over land owned by white commercial farmers and claimed by black veterans of Zimbabwe's struggle for freedom from the British colonial power. The hunger for land, the lasting injustice of unfinished land reforms which, despite decades-old promises of political leaders, leave vast quantities of the best arable land in the hands of a small number of farmers and the rest landless, are things millions of Indians in Bihar and elsewhere understand only too well. The colonial overhang sharpens the sense of injustice.

That said, however, the situation in Zimbabwe is not so straightforward. Several factors complicate the picture. The outbreak of the dispute coincides with a time of political reckoning for the ruling Zanu-PF party and President Robert Mugabe who has been in power for 20 years. During the last decade Mugabe has presided over a severe economic decline. He is thought to be vulnerable to the challenge mounted by the opposition Movement for Democracy when general elections due shortly are held. Zanu supporters are in the forefront of the agitation by the black veterans who have forceably oc-

cupied white farms. Although the courts have ordered them off the land, the police backed by President Mugabe claim helplessness saying it will cause a bloodbath. As tensions rise, opposition politicians and white farmers have fallen victim to violent assaults by Zanu supporters while the police stood by passively. India has seen similar sequences of events in which politicians fan popular resentments in order to make political gains and then lose control of the monster they have created. When enraged mobs take the law into their own hands and violence ensues, no one can predict what havoc will be caused and when and how it will end.

Mugabe has said he will restore order but has not unequivocally told the squatters they must go or ordered the police to evict them. It may be he is unable to uphold the law or is unwilling. The upshot is that in the prevailing atmosphere of fear, whites are rushing to reclaim their British citizenship, an act which will result in the loss of Zimbabwean citizenship and land rights. It is impossible to say whether that outcome is Zanu-PF's end-game or whether the intention is to force the commercial farmers to buy peace by surrendering some portion of the land they own. Either course would be wrong and dangerous. Historical wrongs cannot be corrected by more wrongs and by governments acting irresponsibly. Zimbabwe's friends must hope Mugabe will act sensibly, maintain law and order and call elections soon. The country's troubles will deepen if he uses the present violence as an excuse to postpone the polls.

21 APR 2 1980

African leaders to meet Mugabe today

By M. S. Prabhakara
CAPE TOWN, APRIL 20. The South African President, Mr. Thabo Mbeki, is to travel to Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe on Friday for a meeting with the President, Mr. Robert Mugabe.
 The scheduled meeting, described as a "discreet regional initiative" to resolve the current situation that has arisen in Zimbabwe because of illegal squatting by war veterans on white-owned farms, is to be attended by the President of Namibia, Mr. Sam Nujoma, and his counterpart from Mozambique, Mr. Joaquim Chissano.

Mozambique is the current Chair of the Southern African Development Community while South Africa, the most powerful country in the region, is the Chair of both the Non-Aligned Movement and the Commonwealth.
 The three leaders are also likely to discuss the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Both Zimbabwe and Namibia, along with Angola, are assisting the Government of Mr. Laurent Kabila, President of Congo, in the war against rebels who in turn are assisted by Rwanda and Uganda.

The initiative comes in the wake of increas-

ing criticism by Opposition political parties as well as the media in this country of the Government's "silence" on the developments in Zimbabwe.

A leading South African weekly newspaper, *Mail & Guardian*, which is not exactly in the best of relationship with the Government, in its issue today editorially summoned up the ghost of Teddy Roosevelt and called upon Mr. Mbeki to "talk softly, but carry a big stick" in his meeting with Mr. Mugabe.

However, there is a point beyond which neither Mr. Mbeki nor any other African leader can influence Mr. Mugabe. The fact is, despite the "illegality" of the squatters' actions and the orders of the courts in Zimbabwe that these actions should cease and the squatters should be removed, such a task is near-impossible without provoking further violence.

More relevantly, while it is easy enough for the Democratic Party, the National Party and its new-found allies such as Renamo of Mozambique and the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance of Namibia (both notorious collaborators of the apartheid regime) to grandstand on the developments in Zimbabwe, and the media to

noisily demand that South Africa should denounce the "land invasions", the Government is all too aware that the developments have caused different resonances among the majority of South Africans, with clear racial nuances.

This is evident in the reaction of those who call into radio talk shows and in the correspondence columns of the newspapers. Indeed, there have been reports of attempts by the landless to occupy some white-owned farm land in areas bordering Zimbabwe — apart from some incidents of violence in these farms in the past few days.

Indeed, this racial dimension is most glaring even in the reporting of the "land invasions". For instance, a report in *The Guardian* (London) this morning pointedly mentioned that "two white women" had been assaulted and raped in their farm home near Harare airport on Tuesday night.

In the new sensitivities about reporting on gender violence scrupulously observed by liberal newspapers like *The Guardian*, such race-specific reporting of a rape would never have been done — except apparently when the victims are British "kith and kin" in Zimbabwe.

Further, as a leading black commentator in South Africa noted, of the eight people that have been killed in the ongoing violence in Zimbabwe, only two, both white farmers, have been identified in the media reports by their names. Others, all of them black, including loyal farm workers who resisted the squatters and in the ensuing attacks were killed, still do not have any names.

This is an extremely sensitive issue with black people. One of the points made during the recent hearings before the South African Human Rights Commission on racism in the media was precisely this — that the media rarely put a name to a black victim in incidents of violence.

On the other hand, the fact that several other critics of the initiative "comes in the wake of the report provided."

The IT Ministry has refused access to international news agencies. The former Finance Secretary, Ashok Soota of Wipro at Pavar.

10-16

21 APR 2000

21 APR 2000

Violence escalates in Zimbabwe

HARARE, APRIL 21. Mobs of independence war veterans kept up their campaign of violence against white-owned farms in Zimbabwe overnight as regional leaders prepared to hold talks on the escalating crisis.

Sources in the besieged farming community said pro-government forces went around Marondera and Wedza areas east of Harare harassing and intimidating farm workers.

They reported a similar campaign around Arcturus, 35 km north of the capital Harare, where two farm compounds were reported to have been burnt on Thursday. Farm workers from the area were said to have fled to the bush.

"They slept in the bush last night, and I think a lot of them are not going to return," said one farmer.

Hundreds of white-owned farms have been occupied by self-styled veterans of Zimbabwe's liberation war, obstructing crop production and further devastating the economy as well as plunging the country into a deep political crisis.

In Nyamapanda, in the northeast, a farming source said hundreds of civil servants had been hounded out of the area after they were accused of supporting the opposition.

The violence has continued despite a call on Thursday by War Veterans Association leader, Mr. Chenjerai Hunzvi, for a cessation of hostilities. He said the occupations would continue without hampering the work of the farmers.

At least four people — two white farmers, a policeman and a pregnant woman — have died as a result of the land invasions.

In Victoria Falls, the Namibian President, Mr. Sam Nujoma, arrived for a summit meeting on Zimbabwe's crisis and the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo with Zimbabwe's Mr. Robert Mugabe, South Africa's Mr. Thabo Mbeki and Mozambique's Mr. Joaquim Chissano.

"Zimbabwe is a sovereign state

and the Zimbabweans have the capacity to deal with their internal problems and we are supporting them," Mr. Nujoma said.

Mr. Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), which poses the biggest challenge to Mugabe's ruling Zanu-PF in parliamentary elections due in May, called on the Presidents to put pressure on Mr. Mugabe to resolve the crisis.

"I hope that they will utilise the...meeting in Victoria Falls to put pressure on President Mugabe, (and tell him) that he is pursuing a suicidal path," Mr. Tsvangirai said.

The increasingly violent land invasions have drawn international condemnation and have forced farmers off their lands when they should be harvesting tobacco, a crucial foreign exchange earner for the embattled economy.

The leaders will also be discussing the war in the Congo, where Zimbabwean and Namibian troops are involved on the side of the Congolese leader, Mr. Laurent Kabila, who has been fighting rebels backed by Rwanda and Uganda since August 1998.

The war is unpopular and has cost the government millions of dollars it can ill afford.

Hunzvi and the 4,500-strong Commercial Farmers Union (CFU) are also expected to attend the meeting.

Mugabe's assurance

In Marondera, Mr. Hunzvi told representatives of the white farmers that Mr. Mugabe was guaranteeing their security.

"Security has been guaranteed by the President," Mr. Hunzvi said in response to questioning by one of the farmers in this region southeast of Harare, where many farms have been illegally occupied by war veterans.

"We have committed ourselves to an agreement for the end of hostilities," he said referring to the outcome of Mr. Mugabe's meetings on Wednesday with veterans' and farmers' leaders. Reuters, AFP

THE STATESMAN

22 APR 2000

X19-12 2374
U.K. offers to fund land reforms

LONDON, APRIL 22. Britain is ready to help fund land redistribution in Zimbabwe, but only once the "murder and mayhem" perpetrated against the country's white farmers has stopped, the Foreign Office said today.

"A genuine land reform programme...is what we have always been prepared to help fund, provided it is within the rule of law," the Foreign Office Minister, Mr. Peter Hain, said in a statement. "We can't engage in a proper discussion about land reform when that kind of murder and mayhem is going on," he added. Mr. Hain's comments came after South Africa, Namibia and Mozambique rallied behind the Zimbabwean President, Mr. Robert Mugabe, calling for international funding for a land redistribution programme to end the country's escalating crisis.

Squatters and veterans of Zimbabwe's 1970's war of liberation have occupied dozens of white-owned farms in a drive for land they say was stolen under British colonial rule.

Mr. Hain said Britain, which ruled Zimbabwe until independence in 1980, had been ready to help fund the land redistribution programme since 1998, but that Mr. Mugabe had not taken up the offer. "This has been on the table since 1998," Mr. Hain said. "We have been waiting since then for President Mugabe to pick it up. The violence should never have got in the way of progress of the 1998 programme." — Reuters

Leaders back Mugabe

M. S. Prabhakara reports from Cape Town: Southern African leaders meeting in Victoria Falls yesterday came out strongly in support for Mr. Mugabe.

They also called upon Britain to honour the pledges it had made during the constitutional negotiations two decades ago and provide the necessary funds to enable the Government of Zimbabwe to acquire land for distribution to

the landless majority. An agency report from Victoria Falls quoted the South African President, Mr. Thabo Mbeki, as saying, "The central issue in this dispute is the provision of resources which could enable the resettlement process, agreed by everybody, to start." According to President Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique, "the donors, including Great Britain, have to deliver".

Mr. Mugabe has consistently held that Britain, as the former colonial power, has renegeged on its commitment it had made during the Lancaster House negotiations to provide a financial support (£2 billions) to implement a land redistribution programme. The programme has been derailed due to various facts, including the inclusion of the "willing seller-willing buyer" condition. The New Labour Government in London maintains that land distribution till now has benefited supporters of ZANU-PF and has "suspended" its donor aid for land reform.

The Victoria Falls meeting hosted by Mr. Mugabe and chaired by Mr. Chissano in his capacity as Chairman of the Southern African Development Community, was attended by Mr. Mbeki and the President of Namibia, Mr. Sam Nujoma.

The stand of the Southern African leaders differs sharply from the prescriptions for "strong action" against Mr. Mugabe that they were urged to take by the British and South African media which seem to have special "kith and kin" links to the community of white commercial farmers of Zimbabwe.

The Mail & Guardian (Johannesburg), the weekly newspaper associated with *The Guardian* of London, appropriately summoning the spirit of that arch American imperialist, Teddy Roosevelt, in its current editorial entitled, "Talk softly, but carry a big stick", urged Mr. Mbeki to use South Africa's "power and prestige" to "change the situation decisively" in

Zimbabwe. South Africa, it said, not merely had an "obvious moral leverage" but also "physical leverage" to put pressure on Zimbabwe. "We supply most of Zimbabwe's electricity and fuel. We have the means to close Zimbabwe down in a month. With the co-operation of Mozambique and Botswana, with whom we are at on most issues in the region, we can close Zimbabwe down even more quickly."

Such stirring calls for "closing down Zimbabwe" however, have not found any resonance among the Southern African leaders. This is natural, for the Southern African leaders know well that the majority of people in their countries have responded to the developments in Zimbabwe rather differently than the outrage of the editorial writes in London and Johannesburg.

It is not accidental, perhaps, that *The Guardian* carried an analytical piece three days ago arguing that the developments in Zimbabwe were unlikely to be replicated in South Africa. The most interesting passage in that analysis reads thus: "Crucially, Nelson Mandela, unlike Robert Mugabe, instituted a programme of land reform as soon as he came to power. In fact, the land minister responsible for carrying it out was a former white activist, Derek Hanekom." This identification of Mr. Hanekom as a "white activist" rather than as a loyal and committed member of the African National Congress, is not accidental, and underscores the racial dimensions of the view from Britain (and its friends in this country) on the land question in Southern Africa, and who best is equipped to tackle it.

Equally predictably, while the Democratic Party and the New National Party, both with a predominantly white support base, have criticised the stance of the African leaders at the Victoria Falls meeting, the Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania has supported it.

23 APR 2001

Regional leaders back Mugabe's land policy

SAM KILEY
THE TIMES, LONDON

VICTORIA FALLS, April 22. — South Africa, Mozambique and Namibia yesterday issued a ringing endorsement of President Robert Mugabe's land policies and demanded that Britain make good on previous commitments to pay for the redistribution of white-owned farms to impoverished black Zimbabweans.

The Presidents of the three countries rallied around Mr Mugabe after a summit here and insisted that British calls for a "return to law and order" were unnecessary. They dashed British hopes that they would intercede with Mr Mugabe to persuade him to end illegal farm occupations.

(The British government today said it was still willing to

HARARE, April 22. — About 100 war veterans invaded what they thought was a white-owned farm this week, only to realise later that they had settled into a wild life conservancy park. The panicky veterans ran for their lives after hearing the roar of lions at the privately-owned Malilangwe conservancy in Chiredzi district in Zimbabwe's inhospitable Lowveld. — DPA

VETERANS MISTAKE LION PARK FOR FARM

Britain should make good on commitments given during the Lancaster House negotiations that led to independence in 1980 to fund, with other donors, land redistribution.

"Those commitments were made again (by Blair) to me personally and in 1998," he insisted. "Decisions were arrived at and pledges made. But the funds never came. The matter of inequality in land ownership had been recognised for decades yet nothing has moved forward on an issue

Mr Thabo Mbeki, the South African President, said that

which is recognized as central to ensure the future of Zimbabwe," he stormed.

Police free farmers: Police today moved into an occupied farm to free two abducted white farmers, in the first sign of a possible turnaround in Zimbabwe's escalating land and political crisis, adds Reuters from Harare.

Farmers in the Bindura area, 100 km north-east of Harare, told Reuters by telephone that two farmers, whom they named as Ian Miller and Chris McGraw, had been abducted by self-styled liberation war veterans early today.

But shortly afterwards, they said police had moved in to release them in what was seen as the first successful police action since the state-sanctioned land-grab began nine weeks ago.

10-12

MR. MUGABE'S DANGEROUS GAMBLE

AFRICA'S TRAGEDY IS that its leaders, with a few honourable exceptions like the Nobel laureate, Mr. Nelson Mandela, have proved unworthy of the trust of their desperately poor, gullible people. A terrible famine threatens the Horn of Africa and humiliating poverty stalks large areas of the rest of the continent. In Zimbabwe, the richly endowed former British colony of Rhodesia in southern Africa, a ruler who has enjoyed power for an unbroken, unchallenged twenty years, has been kindling racial hatred in a cynical attempt to remain in office. Mr. Robert Mugabe, a Nehru award winner, had used the support of the wealthy and powerful white minority to stay in the Presidency. When the whites, owning more than 70 per cent of the arable land in the country, decided it was time they asked their black farm labourers to back another leader, Mr. Mugabe pulled out the last card in his armoury: the race card. What the world is witnessing in Zimbabwe is the power game that the new, native ruling class and its erstwhile white supporters are playing. The two may yet patch up and continue their old tango at the cost of the impoverished majority. But there will be no winners in this game.

Racial harmony on which economic progress and the ultimate wellbeing of the continent depend may become the grievous loser. When Mr. Mugabe realised that the whites might back his political opponents to safeguard their own interests during promised elections next month, he let loose his army of supporters and hit them where it hurt the most. The armed men, many of whom are veterans of the war that forced Britain to leave and ended white minority rule, forcibly occupied the farms, killing a few and maiming more in the bargain. Mr. Mugabe, whose party has funded and organised

the operation, has refused to call back the squatters. His policemen stand by, ignoring judicial orders to evict the land grabbers. The farm invasions began within a week of Mr. Mugabe's defeat in a referendum on a new constitution that would have allowed the Government to take white-owned land without compensation. In two months, the country has been reduced to a state of lawlessness as Mr. Mugabe seems determined to sacrifice anything to retain his hold on power. The two sides have begun to talk and may yet reach some compromise, as the whites and the former colonial power realise that their selfishness and lack of foresight are partly to blame for the current crisis. Land reforms are the answer but neither Mr. Mugabe nor his white supporters have felt the need to implement them so as long as they share the fruits of power. *After*

The international community must be genuinely concerned over the development since echoes of the racial tensions in Zimbabwe can be heard far and wide on the continent. One worried neighbour is South Africa where the magic touch of Mr. Mandela has performed the near-miracle of keeping the racial peace when there was enough provocation from the scars left by the wounds of apartheid. On his successor, Mr. Thabo Mbeki, has fallen the responsibility of safeguarding the Mandela legacy. In concert with the Presidents of Namibia and Mozambique, Mr. Mbeki has responded with urgency to douse the fire through a regional initiative. Among those taking heart from this will be Mr. Kofi Annan, the U.N. Secretary-General, who recently issued a heart-felt appeal to the African leaders to use their power to the good of their countries. For them and their continent, time is really running out.

THE HINDU

24 APR 2000

Summit on Zimbabwe disappoints many

By M.S. Prabhakara

CAPE TOWN, APRIL 24. The reaction to Good Friday's mini summit of four southern African leaders in Victoria Falls on the situation in Zimbabwe, in particular the call to Britain to honour its pledges to provide funds to enable Zimbabwe to implement a land acquisition and redistribution programme, highlights some of the eternal verities about the land question in southern Africa and the inescapable racial dimension.

A Reuters report, carried in *Cape Times* this morning, perhaps puts it in the most unvarnished way: "Whites in South Africa and Zimbabwe are aghast at (South African President) Mr. Thabo Mbeki's refusal to criticise (Zimbabwean) President, Mr. Robert Mugabe's sponsorship of an illegal and sometimes violent land-grab campaign by veterans of the

former Rhodesia's war for independence from Britain". In limiting the outrage over the "land-grab campaign" in Zimbabwe only to the "whites in South Africa and Zimbabwe", the agency report simply reflects the reality. Indeed, this divide comes through even more harshly, indeed abusively, in the responses to the numerous newspaper websites in this country inviting comments from readers on the situation in Zimbabwe.

New Zealand has now joined Australia in offering to consider accommodating any potential refugees from Zimbabwe. The British Minister for Africa, Mr. Peter Hain, announced nearly a month ago that the British Government had prepared plans to receive several thousand farmers and their families from Zimbabwe. There have been reports that up to 20,000 Zimbabweans could seek refuge in Britain, a figure that seems to have been arrived

by simply multiplying 4,000, approximately the number of commercial farmers by five, the average number of their families and dependants.

Such concern on the part of Britain and the "old Commonwealth" for "kith and kin" contrasts with the perception of the commercial farmers themselves. The overwhelming majority of them, despite the problems some are currently facing, do not view themselves as anything but Zimbabweans. Indeed, many of them actively support the opposition Movement for Democratic Change, one of the factors that has brought upon their heads the wrath of ZANU-PF.

A Ministerial delegation led by Mr. John Nkomo, Zimbabwe's Minister for Local Government, is leaving for London later this week for talks with the British Government on securing the promised British assistance for acquisition and redistribution of land. Britain has, however, reiterated its stand that it would make funds available only if the land distribution is carried out "within the law" and only after there is an end to "illegal occupations and violence". This, in particular "illegal occupations", appears unlikely, though violence seems to have been brought under control. Tensions are likely to continue because of the strong passions that the question of land evoke as well as the elections which have to be held shortly. While some farmers are reported to have returned to their farms, squatters continue to target other farms.

Another farm torched

Reuters reports from Harare:

Zimbabwean war veterans torched another farm overnight, abducted a black foreman and beat up his labourers as violence flared again today in a bitter land dispute.

"The tobacco barns are burning on Dean farm," a farm support group spokesman told Reuters by telephone from the Wedze area, 120 km east of the capital. "I just flew over the place. You can see they have killed cattle and sheep as well," he said. "We have also been told they beat up several workers on the next door farm and took the foreman away in handcuffs saying they would kill him."



Zimbabwean farmers stand outside Lynton cattle farm, trying to make contact with the owner whose farm was invaded by war veterans in Marondera, 80 km east of Harare, on Sunday. The veterans blocked the farmers from entering the farm. — AP

25 APR 2000

Church bid to end crisis

Harare, April 26

CHURCH LEADERS will host a breakfast meeting of Zimbabwe's political parties today in a new attempt to resolve the country's damaging political and economic crisis, organisers said.

The meeting follows a statement by the leader of the gangs that have occupied hundreds of white-owned farms and beaten farm labourers and political opponents, urging his followers to end the violence so that farm work can resume.

The Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) has organised the talks in Harare in the hope of ending the spiral of violence sweeping Zimbabwe in the run-up to elections that may end the ruling Zanu-PF party's 20-year grip on power.

"The ZCC reaffirms its mandate to advocate for justice, peace and reconciliation. The council looks forward to this meeting with all political leaders to seek an immediate solution," ZCC secretary general Dennison Mafinyane told local media.

The churches have come out strongly against the wave of violence, the Catholic bishops saying threats, insults, racist language or plain violence as a way of resolving issues must not be tolerated.

Chenjerai Hunzvi's Zimbabwe National Liberation Veteran's Association, grouping war veterans and



A mourner (R) weeps behind Maria Stevens, wife of murdered Zimbabwean farmer David Stevens, at a memorial service for Stevens in Harare. Photo: AP

young followers, have invaded hundreds of white-owned farms, saying they are enforcing an equitable redistribution of land in the former British colony.

After meeting white farmers' representatives late today, Hunzvi declared victory for the veterans in the battle for land, and urged his allies to "desist from violence so that farming activities are not disrupted", a local radio reported.

(Reuters)

27 APR 2000

CLOSER TO CHAOS

51-6 2714 Mugabe divides Zimbabwe Africa

HISTORICALLY, elites of foreign origin haven't stood much of a chance in Africa, but things may evolve slightly differently in Zimbabwe. Early this month, Robert Mugabe got Parliament to pass the Land Acquisition Bill which allows his government to take over any White farm after paying a derisory compensation that must lead to the ruin of the White farming community in the country. Mugabe is catering to powerful local sentiments in a country where most good farming land is in White hands, while seven million Blacks live in poverty in the communal areas. His cynicism is exposed by the fact that he did nothing for 20 years and woke up only when faced with the prospect of defeat in the elections due in August. The little land that was acquired under the Commercial Farm Resettlement Scheme was given away to his friends. That may not matter in the immediate term. An issue has been found, an atmosphere has been created, emotions are on the boil and Mugabe has found a way to keep his political pot bubbling. The "land invasions" by gangs euphemistically called war veterans, have intensified since the passing of the Bill. Over a thousand farms have been occupied, two White farmers have been killed and several others badly beaten. The police are not interested. Far from enforcing the law, they have appealed against a recent high court order upholding an earlier Supreme Court ruling asking the squatters to vacate the lands. Police say they do not have the wherewithal to carry out the court order. The squatters know that the government is behind them and that this is now a political issue. This was plain when Mugabe returned from the G-77 summit and refused to order the "war veterans" off the land, even suggesting that it was their historical right to stay. He put the blame on White farmers, calling them "enemies of Zimbabwe".

Mugabe's adversaries will now have to ask themselves whether they have any hope of dislodging him in August. The movement for democratic change, floated by the Zimbabwe Congress of Trades Union in September last year, and the National Constitutional Assembly, another opposition formation, have shown strong support in urban areas. There are fuel shortages, low money supply and a 50 per cent rate of unemployment, besides which Mugabe's 20 years have been characterised by corruption, incompetence and military adventurism in Congo. The rural economy is in danger of imminent collapse. Mugabe is trying to fall back on pan-African sympathies and has got two other African states to support him. But the judiciary is clearly displeased and there is dissension within his own government on the issue. The expected fall-out would be calling out the army but Zimbabwe is heading for chaos and there is no telling which way things will go. The army had offered to evict the squatters, when the police pleaded their inability to do so. The situation is explosive.

27 APR 2000

Cook sets terms for release of aid to Zimbabwe

Violence must end, Mugabe told

Vijay Dutt
London, April 27

BRITISH Secretary Robin Cook delivered a blunt message to Zimbabwe as its ministerial delegation flew to London for negotiating a settlement on the release of funds for land reforms in the country. He said that although Britain is willing to release £36 million for land reforms it will do so only if violence and occupation of farm lands are stopped forthwith by the Mugabe Government.

Mr Cook has warned Mr Mugabe that "Britain is ready to help the Government of Zimbabwe but we are not ready to appease. There can be no help unless there is an end to the occupations and a start to elections. The choice is there for Zimbabwe. This could be the day (summit meet day) when they put behind them the chaos of the last three weeks."

If Mr Mugabe complies with Mr Cook's terms Britain has indicated that it will organise a donor conference to solicit support from other western countries for raising more funds for the voluntary purchase of land and its redistribution to the landless Zimbabweans.

President Mugabe has sent three senior ministers to London to attend the summit here for negotiating the release of funds. But, the ministerial delegation led by John Nkomo, Local Government Minister, can hardly take any decisions. They would convey to President Mugabe the terms negotiated with Mr Cook for release of funds.



Robin Cook

Foreign Office sources said that it was unlikely that Mr Mugabe would concede the pre-conditions stated by Mr Cook for the release of the money, that is an immediate stoppage of violence and vacation of seized farms. The Foreign Office fears that Mr Mugabe might step up the seizure of more white-owned farms. Mr Nkomo has recently said that Britain should not teach democracy to Zimbabwe.

The summit is thus not expected to produce any firm agreement. Britain will then ask the Commonwealth countries to build up diplomatic pressure on Mr Mugabe and take a tough line against his perceived policy of forcible and often violent manner of seizing farms. The Commonwealth Foreign Ministers Action Group is to meet next week where Mr Cook could make such a demand.

28 APR 2000

U.K., Zimbabwe begin talks

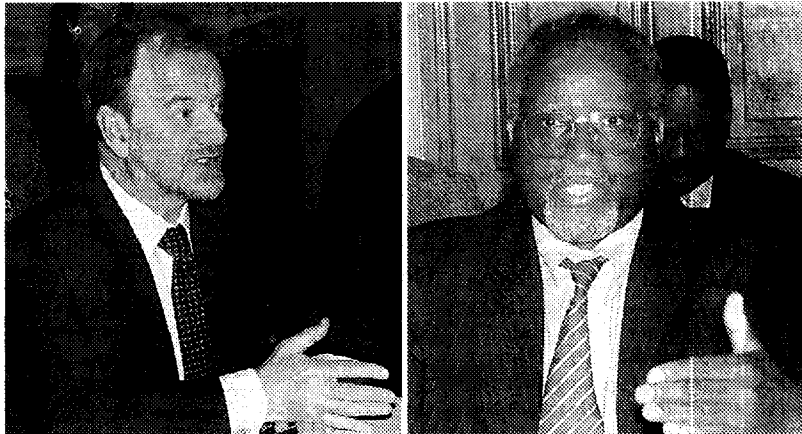
By Thomas Abraham

LONDON, APRIL 27. Britain and Zimbabwe began talks today on resolving the crisis emanating from the takeover of white-owned farms in the former British colony. Three senior Zimbabwe Ministers met the British Foreign Secretary, Mr. Robin Cook, to discuss a £36-million aid package that Britain has said it is willing to give Zimbabwe in order to finance an orderly land reform programme.

The meeting will also attempt to repair the frayed relations between the two countries. Despite the offer of funding, the two sides were expected to have difficulties agreeing on the conditions to be attached to British assistance. Mr. Cook has said that Britain will only provide aid to Zimbabwe if Mr. Mugabe ends the current occupation of white-owned lands, and holds elections as scheduled next month. "There can be no help unless there is an end to the occupations and a start to the elections."

The Zimbabwean delegation says that under the agreement that led to Zimbabwe's independence nearly 20 years ago, Britain has a duty to fund land reform, and that no conditions can be attached. Mr. John Nkomo, Zimbabwe's Minister for Local Elections, said they could not accept any pre-conditions. White farmers, who form less than one per cent of the population, own most of the best farming land in Zimbabwe, a legacy of colonial times, when white settlers forced blacks off their traditional lands. Since then, land redistribution has been a major issue in Zimbabwe, and has helped to fuel the current unrest.

Britain, which acknowledged that the colonial imbalances had to be redressed, gave Zimbabwe £4 millions for land reform from the time of independence till 1988, when it stopped funds on the grounds that the money was not being used effectively to tack-



Britain's Foreign Secretary, Mr. Robin Cook, makes his opening remarks at a meeting with representatives of the Zimbabwean Government at the Foreign Office in London on Thursday. At right is the leader of the Zimbabwean delegation, Mr. John Nkomo. — AP

le rural poverty. "It became increasingly obvious that the land reform programme was not achieving its objective which was to tackle rural poverty and redress the historic imbalance," the Foreign Office Minister, Mr. Peter Hain, explained before a parliamentary select committee. He added that in recent times, most of the land had been redistributed to senior Government officials rather than to the poor.

"In the last two years around half the properties distributed have gone to friends of the Government; some places to senior officials, retired officials. Very little of it, if any, is farmed; so the problem of rural poverty has not been addressed."

Other Western donors, including the United States, have until recently continued to fund land reform in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe feels that Britain has gone back on its commitments, and has no right to lay down pre-conditions for funding. "We would never have got to this point had the British lived up to their commitments. We would never have had any problem

with Tony Blair's Government had Tony Blair accepted the commitments of the previous Government," Mr. Nkomo said. British officials have hinted that the prospect of any agreement at these talks is slim, and have said that Britain will raise the matter at a meeting next week of Commonwealth Ministers.

AP reports:

Police have arrested an Associated Press photographer, alleging he matches the eyewitness description of a person involved in an attack on the offices of Zimbabwe's only independent newspaper. Mr. Obed Zilwa, a South African citizen based in Cape Town, was preparing to return home from covering the political crisis in Zimbabwe when police arrested him at Harare's airport.

Police questioned Mr. Zilwa for more than seven hours. Besides asking about the explosion at the offices of the *Daily News*, they asked for Zilwa's opinions on the land occupations and Zimbabwe's political parties.

THE HINDU

28 APR 2000

Killings came in reprisal for death of hundreds of people last week in riots sparked by introduction of Islamic law in some states, reports PETER CUNLIFFE-JONES from Laos

300 reported massacred in Nigeria

ALMOST 300 people have been massacred in a southeastern Nigerian town, in reprisals for the killing of hundreds of people in the north last week, a Nigerian reporter told AFP late on Tuesday. "I have never seen anything like it in my life. There were bodies everywhere. We saw, we counted, 292 bodies," said the reporter, who works for a Nigerian daily.

The victims in Aba appeared to be northern Hausas, who are almost all Muslim, killed by local Ibos from the southeast, who are mostly Christian, in reprisal for the killings of Ibos in the northern city of Kaduna last week, he said.

Hundreds of Hausas had taken refuge in the police station in Aba, said the reporter, contacted in the nearby city of Port Harcourt. The reports of the massacre came as the government announced that the governors of three northern Nigerian states had agreed to revoke legislation introducing Sharia law. Vice-President Atiku Abubakar told reporters that the decision to withdraw the legislation passed by three states came at an emergency meeting of the country's 36 state governors presided over by President Olusegun Obasanjo. "It was decided and agreed that, as far as the Sharia law is concerned, we will return to the status quo ante," he told reporters after the meeting.

"This has been agreed by the northern governors," he added.

The introduction of the law and demands for its extension to other states in northern Nigeria had sparked the riots last week in northern Nigeria which set off the latest wave of killings. The reporter in Port Harcourt described horrific scenes in Aba on Tuesday. "Around the town there were piles of bodies. We saw 16 bodies piled up in one area, 22 bodies on another corner," he said. The reporter, who said he had visited Aba earlier on Tuesday in the company of another Nigerian daily reporter and two Nigerian weekly magazine reporters, said Ibo youths were manning barricades Tuesday afternoon on roads around the

town. "They were searching any cars leaving the town for Hausas, and if they found them, dragging them out and killing them," he said.

Several truckloads of troops were seen driving to the town from Port Harcourt on Tuesday afternoon, the reporter said. Stalls and shops belonging to Hausa traders were still smouldering Tuesday after being set ablaze on Monday, he said.

The reported massacre in Aba came amid reports of other, lesser, killings in other towns in the southeast, including the towns of Umuahia and Owerri. Several people were reported to have been killed in fighting in Umuahia but details were sketchy. The whole area of the southeast is difficult to contact by

telephone and officials were difficult to reach on Tuesday. The news came as ethnic Ibos fled major towns in northern Nigeria. Thousands of Ibos, mainly Christians from southeast Nigeria, crowded into buses and cars in the northern cities of Kano and Kaduna to return to their homeland, fearing reprisals from Hausas in the North for violence in the southeast.

President Obasanjo, a Christian, was expected to address the nation in a broadcast to be made on Wednesday, his office said later. The Nigerian Senate pledged Tuesday to give "positive and accelerated consideration" to any request by Obasanjo to impose a state of emergency anywhere in the country.

2 Africa

UN report slams govt heads over Angola

5-5 1873
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA, REUTERS

WASHINGTON, March 12. — Mr Jonas Savimbi, to whom at one time CIA provided arms and funds and who was a hero in America because he was supposed to be fighting Communism in Angola, is charged in a UN report with smuggling diamonds to procure arms to continue the civil war.

The report, an advance copy of which has been leaked to press, accuses two African Presidents of fuelling Angola's civil war by enabling the country's rebels to circumvent international arms, oil, financial and diamond sanctions. The report by UN Security council's Angola Sanctions Committee will be tabled on Wednesday.

It accuses Presidents Gnassingbe Eyadema of Togo and Blaise Campaore of Burkina Faso of colluding with Mr Savimbi for trafficking

arms and fuel in return for diamonds.

Once compared with George Washington, the Unita rebel leader who is waging a bloody civil war in Angola is charged with using diamonds to procure arms to continue with his movement in the UN report.

The UN had banned sale of arms, military equipment and fuel to the Unita rebels in 1993 after Mr Savimbi refused to accept defeat by Angola's President Jose dos Santos in elections the previous year and refused to stop the civil war.

In mid-1998, the embargoes were tightened to include a freeze on bank accounts of Unita leaders and a ban on diamond exports, which have brought the rebels \$ 4 billion 1992.

Angola's high-quality gems have allowed the rebel Unita movement to buy weapons, mainly from Bulgaria. The

rough diamonds are shipped to Antwerp, Belgium, where the government has done little to stop gem trafficking, the UN report says.

It also names the governments of Ivory Coast, Rwanda and Gabon, besides a Lebanese arms dealer and Belgian diamond merchant as supporters of the Unita rebels. It says Mr Eyadema and deposed Ivory Coast President, Mr Henri Konan Bedie, acted as bankers for Mr Savimbi after the UN sanctions were extended on Unita's bank accounts and travel by rebel leaders abroad.

The UN report, drawn up by a panel of experts, was unusual in its boldness in fingering current and past government leaders among UN member countries. Several names of African government officials were dropped from the final version of the study because of lack of evidence.

THE STATESMAN
13 MAR 2000

African nations flouting U.N. ban on UNITA

By M.S. Prabhakara

CAPE TOWN, MARCH 16. Ten African countries have been named in a report on the violation of United Nations sanctions against the Angolan rebel movement, UNITA.

The report — prepared by the committee established by the United Nations to enforce sanctions against UNITA, and chaired by Mr. Robert Fowler, Canada's Permanent Representative to the U.N. — was given to the members of the Security Council last week. It is to be released later this week.

According to reports from the United Nations, the report specifically names three serving African Presidents (Mr. Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso, Mr. Gnassingbe Eyadema of Togo, and Mr. Omar Bongo of Gabon) as directly assisting UNITA, facilitating sanctions-busting, and indeed, profiting from these activities. Others implicated in helping UNITA to circumvent the sanctions are the former presidents of Congo (Brazzaville) and the Ivory Coast, and the late Mobutu Sese Seko of what was then Zaire. Other African countries named in the

report as involved in sanctions busting — either at the highest level of the political leadership, or through individual initiatives — are Morocco, Rwanda, Zambia, and South Africa.

Belgium and Bulgaria are among the European countries mentioned in the report. The most serious accusation is in respect of Bulgaria which, the report says, has provided both arms and training to UNITA personnel since 1997. Belgium, with its "lax controls" over the diamond trade in Antwerp (reputedly the world's largest market in rough diamonds), has enabled UNITA to sell its diamonds legally. Indeed, the ultimate impact of all these sanction-busting activities has been to enable UNITA to secure resources — estimated to be in the region of three to four billion U.S. dollars — through its illegal diamond trade.

Most of these countries have long been known to be involved in sanctions-busting. Indeed, the Government of Angola has accused these countries several times in formal statements of such activities. Burkina Faso and

Togo have been high on this list. In a statement issued on January 23 last year, the Government of Angola specifically accused "Burkina Faso, Togo, Rwanda, Uganda, Zambia, and circles from South Africa's former regime" of rearming the forces of Dr. Jonas Savimbi to enable him to resume the rebellion. In March of last year, taking advantage of the fact that Burkina Faso was Chair of the OAU, President Compaore tried to secure the attendance of UNITA at an "extraordinary summit" of the OAU he called at Ouagadougou. The summit was supposed to discuss five of the several conflicts on the continent, among them of course being the one in Angola. This move, a transparent device to provide a platform for Dr. Savimbi — who has never been allowed to attend or address an OAU meeting — fell through because Mr. Compaore simply could not get the required quorum for his "extraordinary summit."

The report mentions Rwanda in the context of the links between the forces of UNITA and Rwanda in the DRC, after Rwanda broke

with the President, Mr. Laurent Kabila, and the support that his Government has received from the Government of Angola in its fight against "rebels and invaders" from Rwanda and Uganda. Zambia, the report says, received a high-level UNITA delegation last year.

In respect to South Africa, the report says that "lax control" at airports, and the "selective application" of the ban on travel by UNITA officials on carriers affiliated to the IATA, has enabled UNITA to circumvent the travel ban.

According to the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Aziz Pahad, the report names ten South Africans of being involved in such activities. The Government here has more than once conceded that "private individuals" have been, or "may have been" involved in such sanction-busting activities, while strictly distancing the Government itself from such activities. The distinction has not always carried much weight in Luanda, one of whose ministers called for "international sanctions" against South Africa.

Support to UNITA: Pretoria promises action

By M. S. Prabhakara

CAPE TOWN, MARCH 16. Predictably, leaders of countries and others accused of breaching U.N. Security Council sanctions against the Angolan rebel movement, UNITA, have denounced the report prepared by an independent panel of experts for the Security Council Sanctions Committee.

The sanctions against UNITA, first imposed in 1993 following the rebel outfit's refusal to accept the results of the September 1992 elections and resuming the war, initially covered arms, military equipment and fuel. They were enlarged in 1997, following UNITA's failure to abide by the terms of the Lusaka Protocol (November 1994), to include freezing of UNITA bank accounts, ban on air travel by senior UNITA officials and closing of its offices abroad. In June 1998, they were further expanded to include a ban on purchase of diamonds from UNITA and those mined from areas under its control.

The report, substantial sections of which were carried over the weekend by news agencies from the United Nations, reveals that these sanctions have been systematically breached by several African countries. The report is available on the web site of the Government of Angola. The 40-page report deals with the sanction busting activities under five heads, in respect of every one of which the Security Council sanctions apply: These are arms and military equipment; petroleum and petroleum products; diamonds; UNITA finances and assets; and UNITA's representa-

tion and travel abroad. The report also points a finger at UNITA in the shooting down of two United Nations aircraft in December 1998 and January 1999. South Africa is one of the 10 countries named in the report. It names four South African citizens, as well as a Russian national based in this country, as being involved in sanction busting, mainly in respect of arms and equipment procurement and illegal diamond trade, often back-to-back activities, and transportation of such illegal cargo into and out of UNITA-controlled areas. The South African Deputy Foreign Minister, Mr. Aziz Pahad, added five more names to this list in a statement in the National Assembly.

However, unlike in the case of some other African countries (notably Burkina Faso, Togo, Congo-Brazzaville, Rwanda, and Zaire) the report does not name any high-ranking South African official or political figures, though it suggests that the Government was aware of the activities of its nationals.

Speaking in the National Assembly on Tuesday, the Foreign Minister, Ms Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, said the Government was aware that some South African citizens had been involved "in efforts aimed at undermining the sanctions"; and that the Government would take firm action "against all those involved". Her Deputy, Mr. Aziz Pahad, spoke in the same vein with the assurance that South Africa would prosecute its nationals named in the report, provided there was sufficient evidence. Both Ms Dlamini-Zuma and Mr. Pahad, however, maintained that South Africa continued to press for an "inclusive settlement" in Ango-

la—meaning a political role for UNITA and its leader, Dr. Jonas Savimbi.

It is this ambivalence, especially curious since Dr. Savimbi has broken several internationally mediated accords and protocols, that raises questions about South Africa's denials.

For instance, the report reveals that in August last year, a high level UNITA delegation led by its vice-president, General Antonio Dembo, had visited South Africa.

According to the report, the South African Government acknowledged on February 23 this year that Gen. Dembo had visited the country but had maintained that "this was not an official visit or as a guest of the Government" and that "in line with the Security Council sanctions, General Dembo and other senior UNITA officials and their families had been placed on its 'watchlist'".

The purpose of Gen. Dembo's visit was to purchase a 35 mm anti-aircraft battery. The weapon was to have been delivered directly from South Africa to Andulo (one of UNITA's three "strongholds", all of which have been taken by Government forces in the last few months) on October 20, 1999. The report is not clear if the deal went through.

It is not clear who these "friends of UNITA in South Africa" are. "The South African Government further informed the panel that its own investigations have produced no information about any such anti-aircraft weapon being sold to UNITA, and that the manufacture and transfer of all arms are tightly controlled in South Africa."

470 Ugandans die in cult suicide

FROM GAVIN PATTERSON

Mbarara (Uganda), March 19 (Reuters): More than 470 Christian cult members, some with their children, set themselves alight in a church in southwest Uganda in the belief that the end of the world is approaching, police said.

Men and women believers — mostly former Roman Catholics — sold their belongings, donned white, green and black robes and brought their children into the church of the obscure Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments of God in the remote little town of Kanungu. With doors locked and win-

dows boarded and nailed shut from breakfast time on Friday, they sang and chanted for several hours, doused themselves in fuel, then set the church on fire.

"People said they heard some screaming but it was all over very quickly," police spokesman Asuman Mugenyi, just back from the scene, told Reuters in Mbarara, the provincial capital.

Forensic experts and detectives began to sift through the remains, tallying what is believed to be the world's second biggest mass suicide of recent history.

Kanungu, 320 kms from the capital Kampala, is tucked down in the southwest corner of Uganda, a country dictator Idi Amin

once made a byword for African horrors.

Local papers said the extremist Christian sect, one of several doomsday cults to have sprung up in Uganda in recent years, was registered as a non-governmental organisation in 1997, but had been in operation since the early 1990s.

The police said all 235 registered members of the sect had probably perished in the fire, and probably many unregistered new arrivals as well. But they said the death toll remained uncertain as many of the corpses were burned beyond recognition.

Mugenyi said it would take at least a week to know the exact number of those killed. "We don't

know who was inside or outside," he said. "Relatives of people said to have burned, keep on telling us that their relatives are nowhere to be seen (in their homes) and yet we have not proved their identities."

The government-owned Sunday Vision reported that more than 600 may have died in the fire.

Cult leaders, who included former opposition political activist Joseph Kibwetere as well as two excommunicated priests, taught that the world would end in 2000.

"Prior to this incident their leader told believers to sell off their possessions and prepare to go to heaven," Mugenyi said, adding that the police were treat-

ing the incident as both suicide and murder because children were involved.

"Definitely it is both because there were a big number of children who were led there by their parents," he said.

Papers said the cult had been under investigation by local authorities since 1998 for mistreating and possibly kidnapping children, after a primary school they were running with 300 children was closed down. It was not clear if Kibwetere and other cult leaders had been present at the mass suicide, with the New Vision reporting the self-styled prophet was last seen in hospital in Kenya suffering from heart problems.

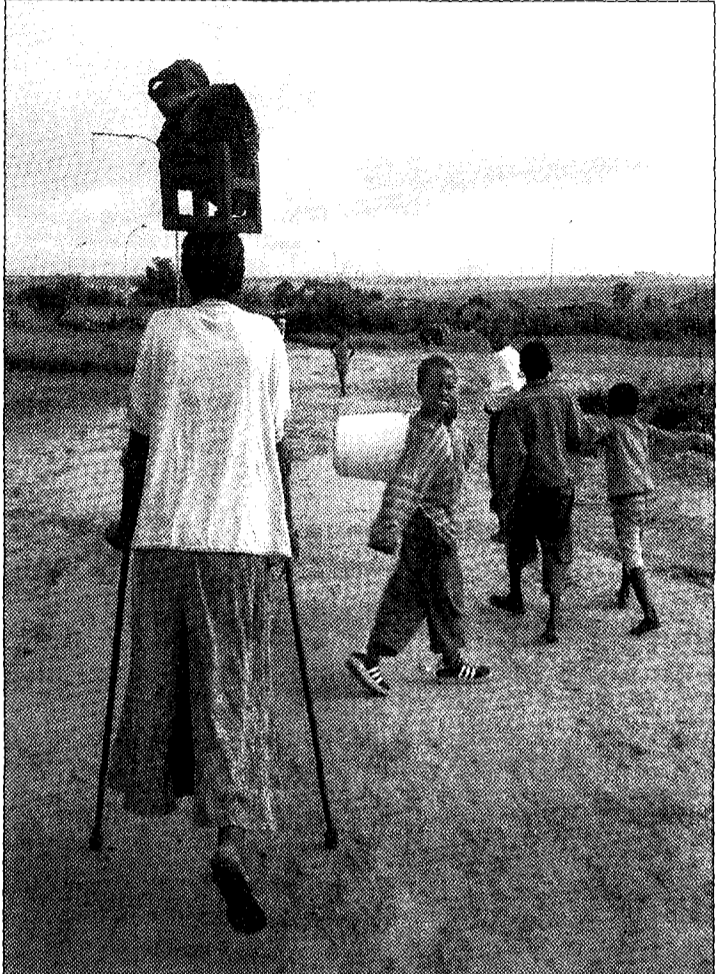
Unita's friends, U.N.'s foes

A U.N. report shows that sanctions have not worked in practice. It highlights the complicity in sanctions-busting of many highly-placed individuals in and outside many African Governments, reports
M. S. PRABHAKARA.

PERHAPS THE most striking feature of the report of the panel of experts of the U.N. Security Council Sanctions Committee on busting of U.N. sanctions against the Angolan rebel movement, Unita, released on March 15 — and predictably denied and denounced with a remarkable unanimity by almost all the countries indicted — is the extent of the network of patronage that Unita, under some sort of U.N. sanctions since September 1993, continues to maintain with so many countries and individual leaders on the African continent and outside.

Apart from Belgium (mainly facilitating Unita's illegal diamond trade) and some East European countries (Bulgaria possibly providing arms and training; and Ukraine, Belarus and Russia possibly flying supplies to Unita-controlled areas), the report mentions ten African countries as being involved in sanctions-busting activities. These are: Burkina Faso, Congo-Brazzaville, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Morocco, Rwanda, South Africa, Togo, Zambia and Zaire under the Mobutu regime. However, direct complicity of the Governments, or of well-known Government leaders, is alleged only in respect of Burkina Faso, Congo-Brazzaville, Ivory Coast, Rwanda, Togo and Zaire. In other cases, it is individuals who are alleged to be involved. In one case (Namibia), the report categorically denies even indirect knowledge of such involvement on the part of the Government.

The sanctions-busting over the years has covered supply of arms and military equipment; petroleum and petroleum products, the diamond trade, enabling Unita to circumvent financial sanctions which are supposed to have "frozen" its bank accounts; and travel to and maintenance of offices and representation in foreign countries by Unita officials. Two serving Presidents (of Burkina Faso



Angola has had to pay a heavy price for the fighting between the Government and Unita. A landmine victim makes her way back from the market in Cuito.

and Togo) are mentioned as personally benefiting from such sanctions-busting. The report's account of South African involvement is perhaps the most intriguing. It says that as late as in August last year, a high-level Unita delegation led by General Antonio Dembo, vice-president of Unita, travelled to South Africa on an arms-purchasing mission. According to the report, the South African Government acknowledged the visit of General Dembo but denied that he was its guest. "The South African Government informed the Panel that in line with Security Council sanctions, General Dembo and other senior Unita officials and their families had been placed on its 'watchlist'."

Sanctions against Unita were first imposed by the U.N. Security Council in September 1993, following its rejection of the outcome of the September 1992 elections and its decision to resume the rebellion. Those elections were held in terms of the first peace accord (Lisbon, May 31, 1991), strictly speaking "the basis for peace in Angola", which was supposed to have marked the end of the civil war in Angola, going on since days before the country's in-

dependence in November 1975. Thus, the first sanctions against Unita, prohibiting all sale or supply of arms and related materiel and military assistance.

These sanctions appeared to have worked, for, a little over a year later Unita agreed to sign the U.N.-mediated Lusaka Protocol (November 1994), spelling out in elaborate detail the terms of a political and military settlement between the Angolan Government and Unita.

The history of the Lusaka Protocol over the last five years provides an object lesson in stonewalling; and may well be instructive in following the future of another Lusaka Accord, this time supposedly resolving the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Initialed on October 31, 1994, in Lusaka, the Protocol was scheduled to be signed on November 15 in Lusaka by the Angolan President, Mr. Jose Eduardo dos Santos, and Dr. Jonas Savimbi, along with a U.N. representative, in the presence of Mr. Nelson Mandela and other leaders of the Southern African Development Community. In the event, the ceremony was held on November 20; and with

Dr. Savimbi choosing to stay away, it was signed by Angola's Foreign Minister and Unita's secretary-general.

The subsequent history of the "implementation" of the Protocol has been recounted in painful detail in several reports of the U.N. Secretary-General to the Security Council. On the ground, the tasks of demobilisation of Unita troops, the formation of a national army and the installation of a Government of National Unity and Reconciliation (GURN), with representatives of Unita at all levels of Government, the armed forces and administration, all provided for in the Lusaka Protocol, seemed to be making some headway. Indeed, the GURN was formally installed on April 11, 1997. However, in a scenario all too familiar, fresh fighting broke out towards the end of July 1997 in areas bordering (then) Zaire, in particular Lunda Norte which with its diamond fields has always been a contested terrain. It soon transpired that Unita had managed to keep out of the demobilisation process about 10,000 of its estimated 20,000 trained and armed troops; and even those supposed to have been demobilised continued to be under Unita command, armed and ready to strike.

Thus, barely four months after the formation of GURN, the Security Council imposed additional sanctions on Unita by its resolution dated August 28, 1997. The fresh sanctions, which were supposed to come into effect a month from that and which even then were dismissed by Unita as a 'joke', envisaged a ban on Unita leaders travelling outside Angola and closing of Unita's offices worldwide. In another resolution (June 12, 1998), the Security Council further enlarged the sanctions regime, this time including freezing of Unita bank accounts and prohibiting purchase of diamonds from Unita or from Unita-controlled areas. Unita's response, symbolically, was the massacre in Lunda Norte south thereafter (July 23-24), in which over 200 people were killed; an acknowledgement that an 'undeclared war' was going on in Angola; and a determined bid to extend the conflict to areas outside its control.

None of these sanctions, the report shows, has really worked in practice. Even more tellingly, the report highlights the complicity in sanctions-busting of many highly placed individuals in and outside Governments in many African countries, including current and incoming presidents of the OAU, Burkina Faso's leader, Mr. Blaise Compaore, and Togo's President, Mr. Gnassingbe Eyadema.

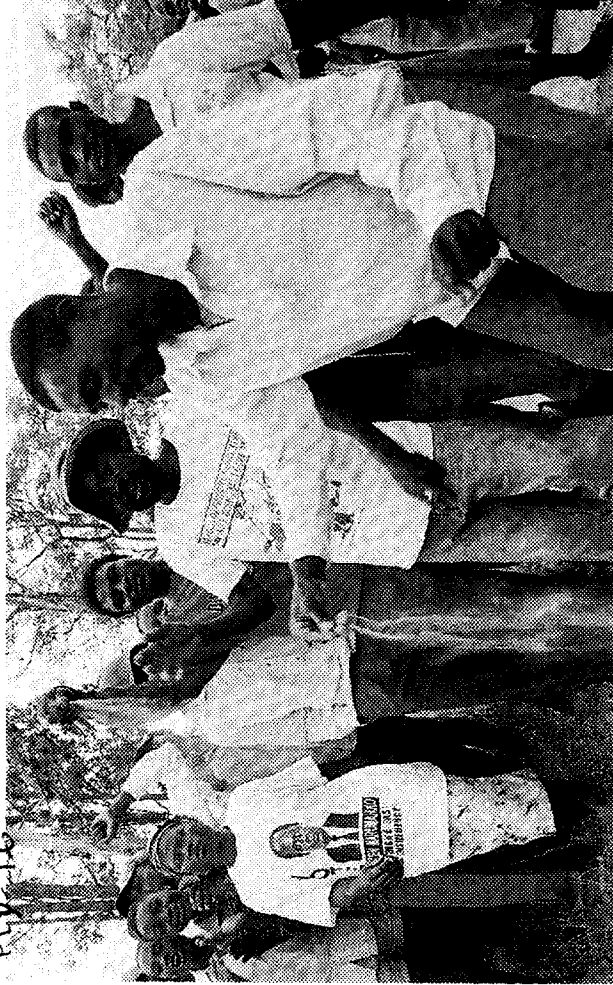
Mugabe redistributes land to friends

HARARE, MARCH. 29. More than one million acres of land compulsorily purchased from white farmers in Zimbabwe has been distributed to a group of well-connected Zimbabweans, many of them political allies of the President, Mr. Robert Mugabe, it was disclosed on Tuesday.

The most detailed list yet published in Zimbabwe showed that almost 1,120,000 acres from more than 270 farms formerly owned by whites were handed by the State to just 400 people. The information emerged in Harare from a written parliamentary answer to Ms. Margaret Dongo, leader of the opposition Zimbabwe Union of Democrats. She appealed to squatters to leave white farms and warned: "Do not let your suffering be used by selfish and greedy politicians."

To reverse the "monstrous injustice" of British colonial rule, Mr. Mugabe has promised to resettle land owned by whites for the benefit of the seven million people who scratch a living from barren communal areas. Another 750 white farms have been occupied by thousands of squatters during the past month with Mr. Mugabe's approval. They believe they are reclaiming what he calls "stolen property". Among the winners from the 270 farms already acquired under the Commercial Farm Resettlement Scheme are Mr. Patrick Chinamasa, the Attorney-General, Mr. Simon Moyo, the Mines and Tourism Minister, Mr. Cyril Ndebele, the Speaker of Parliament, and Mr. George Charamba, a Presidential spokesman.

Two high court judges, two Deputy Ministers and a retired general have also benefited. Other members of the elite have taken advantage of the Ordinary Tenant Farmer Scheme. Among the "ordinary tenants" are Mr. Charles Uteete, the Cabinet Secretary, Mr. Border Gezi, a provincial Governor, and Mr. Perence Shiri, a retired general who commanded the army's notorious Fifth Brigade when it massacred thousands of civilians in Matabeleland during



Liberation war veterans of Zimbabwe and their supporters sift soil and sing revolutionary songs on the white-owned commercial farms "Nyarenda" which they have invaded, in Karoi district, about 200 km north of Harare on Tuesday. — AP

the Eighties. In London, the opposition Conservatives called for Zimbabwe to be suspended from the Commonwealth but the Government rejected this step.

A spokesman for Mr. Peter Hain, the British Foreign Office Minister responsible for Africa, said: "This confirms what we have been saying all along, that this form of land reform is unacceptable. The land is going to the wrong people — not to the rural poor, but to officials. It is in danger of seriously damaging the economy." Mr. Hain has been outspoken in criticising Mr. Mugabe, but the Foreign Office view remains that Zimbabwe could only be suspended from the Commonwealth for a breach of human rights. Economic sanctions, it is argued, would only hurt the poorest peo-

ple in Zimbabwe.

Perhaps the starkest illustration of Mr. Mugabe's land policies can be found in Matabeleland, where 24 farms forming the Marula Block, covering 191,672 acres, were taken by the State and handed to 47 people. Meanwhile, 40,000 people live in poverty in the neighbouring Semukwe Communal area, which is the same size as the Marula farms. Mr. Charles Malaba, who lives in Semukwe, said: "This is the new colonialism. A few rich whites have been replaced by a few rich blacks. Only the colour has changed. There is no sense in people invading the white farms. I will go with anyone who wants to invade these VIP farms." — ©Telegraph Group Limited, London, 2000.

Don't provoke squatters: Mugabe

AP
HARARE, MARCH 30. Zimbabwe's embattled white farmers were preparing for the worst after the President, Mr. Robert Mugabe threatened them with "very, very, very severe" violence. His remarks raised the tension still further in the stand-off between farmers and thousands of squatters demanding land rights.

During a Reuters Television interview on Monday, Mr. Mugabe said the squatters could keep their gains and delivered a harsh warning to farmers. "There have been very few cases of violence, but if the farmers start to be angry and start to be violent, then, of course, they will get that medicine delivered to them. And it can be very, very, very severe, but we don't want to get there," he said. Mr. Mugabe added that any farmer who "provoked" the squatters would face violence.

The warning seemed designed to forestall action by white farmers against thousands of squatters who have invaded almost 20 per cent of all white-owned commercial farms in Zimbabwe. Encouraged by Mr. Mugabe's public support, at least 40 further properties were occupied this week, bringing the total affected to 793.

Zimbabwe's High Court has declared the invasions illegal and the police were given until last Monday to remove the squatters. But Mr. Mugabe has publicly refused to enforce the law. Despairing of any help from the authorities, some farmers are preparing to use their labourers to force the invaders off their land.

In a remarkable display of solidarity with white Zimbabweans, supporters of the main opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change, have rescued a few farmers and compelled the squatters to leave. Chris Brooker, who manages a farm in the Victoria district, was threatened by a mob on Tuesday after being accused of forcing his workers to vote for the MDC. Mr. Brooker said of Mr. Mugabe's comments: "We all know that these are the dying kicks of the donkey, but I've never heard him say anything like that before. It does make me feel even more threatened."



Mrs. Pippa van Rechteren, a farm manager's wife, with her two-year-old twins Catherine and Elisabeth, are held captive by Zimbabwe war veterans in their house on the white-owned commercial farm 'Chiripiro' in Centenary district, 150 km north of Harare on Wednesday. The veterans and their supporters (right), invaded the farm and barricaded the gate while her husband, Mr. Max, was away and refused to let her leave. — AP

The formation of vigilante groups to clear white farms is fraught with risk. Chris Shepherd, a farmer near Karoi, said: "I don't want to be responsible for getting my workers beaten up. It's a very high risk thing, but this may be what has to happen."

If farmers did take action, Mr. Mugabe's latest comments indicate that his reaction could be explosive. Observers believe that he started the crisis to boost his standing ahead of parliamentary elections and he is ready to maintain the pressure for as long as is needed. Robin

Wyrley-Birch, a farmer near Guruvi, said: "We are dealing with a caged beast here. He has nothing else to offer his people but land."

Drunken mobs of pro-Mugabe squatters have threatened to kill some farmers and, in other cases, stormed their houses.

Police have usually ignored pleas for help and the squatters' leaders candidly admit that they are following Mr. Mugabe's instructions.

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Ten years later, S. Africa looks back

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By M. S. Prabhakara

CAPE TOWN, FEB. 4 A standing legacy of the former apartheid regime in South Africa is the ceremonial opening of Parliament on the first Friday of February every year.

The President, formally designated as "State President" under apartheid — a title used even today — delivers a State of the Nation address, a broad retrospective and prospective survey of the state of the economy and society.

True, there have been some changes over the years in the events of the first Friday of each February.

Some have been superficial, as in the composition of the presidential honour guard and entourage as the group enters the premises, and indeed the makeup of the waiting throng in the visitors' galleries; some have been far more fundamental, as in the composition of the Parliament membership itself, and the governmental agenda addressed. But the essential features of the ritual itself have not changed.

Ten years ago on this day, when the South African Parliament — then a tricameral body comprising an all "white" House of Assembly, an all "coloured" House of Representatives, and the all "Indian" House of Delegates — assembled for the annual ritual, few could have anticipated the pathbreaking initiatives that were to be announced by the then President, Mr. F. W. de Klerk.

Almost at the end of his address, Mr. de Klerk announced, in one fell swoop as it were, the unbanning of the African National Congress, the South African Communist Party, the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, and 58 other banned organisations; the easing, though not the lifting, of the state of emergency regulations; and the decision to unconditionally release Mr. Nelson Mandela, the most potent symbol of liberation struggle and other political prisoners; and initiate political and constitutional negotiations with the opposition.

Many of the particulars of the address, such as the decision to release Mr. Mandela, were not unexpected, since his colleagues sentenced in the Rivonia Trial had all been released.

However, the comprehensiveness of the initiatives came as a shock to most observers, even those who had long been quietly working for a breakthrough to one day come.

The rest, as they say, is history. Whatever reservations one may have about the calculated or confused motives of the apartheid regime in the initiatives, and despite the many prevarications over the various stages of the ensuing negotiations of the next four years, F. W. de Klerk's own role in history is assured.

His speech marked the true crossing of the South African Rubicon as it were, in contrast to the abortive initiative of his predecessor, P. W. Botha, five years earlier, for which the same metaphor had been used.

With the advantage of hindsight, in the examination of de Klerk's own account of his role in the fall of apartheid in the nation (*The Last Trek - A New Beginning: The Autobiography*, Macmillan, London, 1998), one wonders if the leader holds a balanced perspective of the political history of the times. His own account is markedly pedestrian, rife with near-meaningless phrases like "quantum leap" and "paradigm shift" in describing the initiative, and presents the events following the speech as a "massive marketing exercise."

Not surprisingly, the leaders of the liberation movement may indeed have held a more telling appreciation of the initiative, both in terms of its historical role, and as a tactical concession by the regime, in the hopes of ensuring a longer life for itself by collaborating with a section of the black majority.

There is also the issue of a strong correlation between the drawn-out disintegration of the Soviet Union, and the concurrent realisation — by both the apartheid regime and the international forces backing it — that there was no Soviet expansionist menace of note to fight in southern Africa.

This is an important subtext of the speech that should be borne in mind in any thoughtful analysis of the de Klerk address of Feb. 2, 1990.

At a function in Parliament commemorating that address, Mr. de Klerk paid tribute to the "leadership of South Africa" for making possible the country's transition to democracy.

The only regret he had, he said, was that he had agreed during the negotiation process, "under pressure from outside, from the ANC, and from within my support base," to open amnesty to persons "convicted of pre-meditated murder and other dastardly crimes."

THE HINDU

5 FEB 2000

A MAN named Tharcisse Muvunyi appeared on Monday in Bow Street Magistrates' Court in Central London, standing behind the plain dark-green iron bars that pass for a dock there. He didn't look like anything special, just a middle-sized, middle-aged man wearing blue jeans and a dark blue quilted ski jacket buttoned up to his neck. He looked impassive, if not cold, but his voice was soft and rather high-pitched. He spoke only once, and that was in French. "Mon nom est Tharcisse Muvunyi," he said.

I could not help but stare. It was such a strange voice for a Rwandan war crimes suspect to own. I had waited a long time to hear that voice and to see that face and I should not have been surprised that it seemed so out of place. I had followed the trail of this man to Rwanda and back and had met people haunted, in the true sense of the word, by him. I had felt driven by this story and now, finally seeing Muvunyi, I did not feel much of anything except a niggling worry about his voice. But then everything about this case was strange. Why should his voice be any different?

Muvunyi has been living in Britain with his wife and three children for nearly two years. In Rwanda, during the 1994 genocide, he had been the army commander for the southern provinces of Butare and Gikongoro. Up to 100,000 people were slaughtered in Butare alone but, of course, no one knew anything about that in Lewisham, south London, where the Muvunysis lived in a first-floor flat, surviving on four kinds of benefit. He went to school to learn English one day a week, and spent a lot of time surfing the Internet in Lewisham library.

I first heard of him last year and could not believe that a war crimes suspect was living on benefit in Britain. The Foreign Office refused to comment. The Home Office refused to comment. It took the tiny human rights organisation, African Rights, to tell me something about this man who, in Rwanda at least, is famous. But if I wanted to find out more I would have to go there. And so, last October, I went and became obsessed with trying to piece together a story that seemed too strange to be real. But real it was, and I listened as dozens of people talked about Tharcisse Muvunyi and the terrible events of five years ago as if they had occurred only yesterday.

Among them were former soldiers, angry that they were in jail and their commander was not even on trial. But there were civil servants and survivors, too. I showed everyone his picture. One woman screamed and put her hands over her face but most were quiet as they stared at the photograph. "Yes," said a slip of a woman named Dalhia, "this man is no stranger to me." The former soldiers looked at it coolly. "Ah, yes, the commander," they said. Others commented on his appearance, on the fact that he had lost weight. "But the eyes are the same," they would say. Then they asked how he lived in Britain. I told them that he was on benefit. They asked how much. I guessed and they would gasp. They

Justice at last

Colonel Tharcisse Muvunyi was in charge of soldiers who helped slaughter 100,000 Rwandans in 1994. An investigation by ANN TRENEMAN in November last year took her from Rwanda to Lewisham in the UK where Muvunyi was living as a refugee on benefit. No one in British authority, it seemed, was prepared to take action against a man suspected of being one of the world's most wanted war criminals. Until Monday, when, in the company of petty hieves, the colonel stood in the dock as an application for his extradition was heard

said it was a very strange world we lived in.

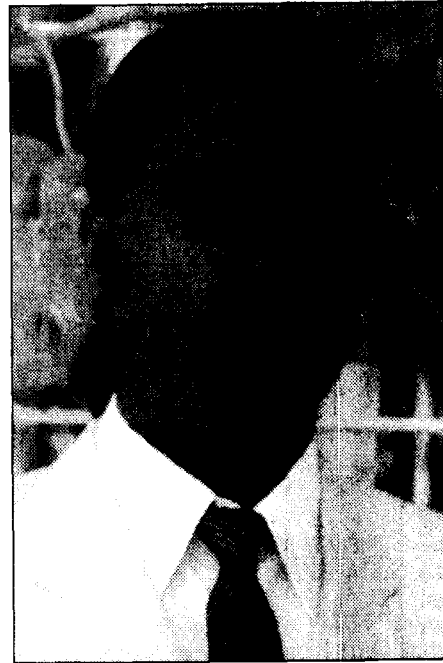
Few believed that he would be arrested. Britain is a long way away, they would comment, shaking their heads. "And justice is a long time coming," they would add. And yet, last weekend, it came for Tharcisse Muvunyi. The extradition request from the UN International Criminal Tribunal of Rwanda was served in Tanzania last Friday and flown to Britain immediately. The following day, Scotland Yard detectives knocked

on Muvunyi's door in Lewisham. He spent the rest of the weekend at Charing Cross police station.

The news of his arrest was broadcast on Rwandan radio on Sunday. People say they were excited but they must have been astonished, too.

Bow Street Magistrates' Court on a Monday morning is a flotsam and jetsam sort of place. The case was to be heard in Court One and, at 10.30 am, the doors duly opened. No one knew when Muvunyi or, as one court official referred to him, "that bloke from Lewisham" would appear. So we waited. And waited.

It was not boring, however. In fact, it was almost frenetic for the magistrate, Nicholas Evans. First came five men who may have been involved in some fracas at Piccadilly Circus Underground station. Then there was a Mr Ryan, of no fixed abode, who was accused of eating an £18 breakfast at the Hilton without paying. He had gone in to have a wash, decided to get



Tharcisse Muvunyi: judgment day

a cup of coffee and suddenly found himself with a breakfast. He pleaded guilty and agreed to pay the Hilton £10. The men came and went from the dock in quick order. One was said to have stolen a purse, another had been found with a joint of cannabis, yet another had spat on a police officer and there had been a fight with a taxi driver.

An hour and a half went by in this way and then, at noon, the side door opened and the man in the dark blue padded

jacket entered the room and stood in the dock. I stared at him, comparing the picture I had carried round Rwanda with that of the man standing there. He looked different: harder, older, thinner. To the side of the court an interpreter was being sworn in.

She was an older woman in a grey woolly coat and spectacles. She stood next to the Rwandan army commander, whose arms were folded over his coat, talking him through the proceedings in French.

This is the first time the International Criminal Tribunal of Rwanda has requested an extradition from Britain. The tribunal, set up in late 1994, has handed down just seven verdicts, and only 39 people are in custody. The list of top-level suspects, on which Lieutenant-Colonel Muvunyi has been for years, numbers at least 500. Only last October the deputy prosecutor in Rwanda's capital, Kigali, had told me that he had no idea when or if Muvunyi might be arrested. Rwanda,

✓
anxious about the case, was investigating the possibility of bringing a genocide case in the UK and bypassing the tribunal. But Britain wanted the tribunal to act, not least because it gave the ICTR £2.1 million last year. The pressure was on and, last weekend, the request came.

There were three lawyers in court for this case: one for the ICTR, one for the Home Office and Michael Fisher for Muvunyi. It should have been an historic moment but it was not to be because, all too quickly, we became bogged down in the issue of Muvunyi's birth date. Fisher said the date of birth given on the extradition warrant claimed Muvunyi was born on 19 August 1953 when, in fact, he was born on 15 August 1953.

The magistrate asked if it was the same man. Fisher pointed out the birthdate discrepancy. The magistrate asked if it was the same man. Fisher pointed out the discrepancy. This wrangling continued for some minutes. Here we were before a man charged with genocide and crimes against humanity and we were all trying to get to grips with a birth date. It was rather chilling. It reminded me of last year when, just as I was finishing my investigation, I was told by one British authority that, in fact, this could be a case of mistaken identity, that I had got the wrong Rwandan army commander living in Lewisham. It was a nasty moment. On Monday, in Court One, I don't think I was the only one who was relieved when the judge put a stop to all the date business and got on with it.

Fisher told the court why Muvunyi was innocent. He talked a bit about Butare and, as he did, I thought of Rwanda. What would all those people walking along the dirt roads of Butare think of the scene in Court One, where their war crime suspect had been wedged in among pickpockets, drunks and pot-smokers? But then, a Rwandan would have seen something else entirely in Court One. Rwanda is not a country that believes in fancy statues to the dead — there is only one, low-key memorial in all of Butare — but it wants to believe in justice. One survivor told me that this was because it was the only thing that would stop the cycle of killing. But he was pessimistic about it all. "When the genocidaires come back," he said, "at least I will know how to hide this time."

Rakiya Omaar's African Rights organisation has collected 160 testimonies on Muvunyi's role and they will be published this month as part of its *Witness to Genocide* series. She said Monday's events would encourage and inspire people, especially those survivors who had grown weary of how slow the wheels of justice turn. But turn they do. Now Muvunyi has 13 days to argue against his extradition. He will have his day in court. That may not sound much to a petty thief in Court One but it means a great deal for the survivors of Rwanda, many of whom thought that day would never come for Colonel Tharcisse Muvunyi.

— *The Times, London* ✓

THE STATESMAN

- 9 FEB 2000

Countdown to the crack of doom

ST-7 12/2

Zimbabwe was once a prosperous country. Today food and fuel are in short supply and hospitals and schools struggle to survive. The people blame the chaotic and corrupt regime of President Robert Mugabe. As a referendum and elections loom, JAN RAATH fears for the future of his adopted homeland

FIRST light aboard Air Zimbabwe flight UM724 from Harare to Gatwick, above the North African desert in late January. The aircraft has diverted from its course. The Boeing 767 descends. With rising anxiety the passengers watch the Libyan military airbase rushing past them as the aircraft touches down.

The door opens and President Mugabe alights, shortly to be driven into the desert to see Colonel Gaddafi to ask for a brotherly extension on credit for fuel (Gaddafi said no). The plane takes off and spends 20 minutes flying over the desert. It lands at Tripoli airport to offload Mugabe's luggage, then returns to its route. It arrives in London three hours late.

Air Zimbabwe is a friendly, willing little airline that should be doing nicely out of the country's tourist traffic. But its reputation is damaged by a history of cancelled flights, long delays and diversions of aircraft to unscheduled stopovers. Sometimes the pilot has to ask passengers to fork out for extra fuel or landing rights.

It is all the result of Mugabe's habit of commandeering flights at a few hours' notice. The airline's crisis is a microcosm for what is happening to the rest of the nation. Zimbabwe, a small, pretty country with friendly people who are among Africa's best educated, has the most robust and varied economy in Africa outside South Africa, and its infrastructure makes it seem like a First World country.

The 75-year-old Robert Mugabe was voted into power in 1980 after running a seven-year guerrilla war against white rule in Rhodesia. Under a British-drafted constitution, he swiftly shed his radical Marxist exterior and earned worldwide acclaim for adopting a policy of reconciliation between the country's blacks and whites, and for his acceptance of Zimbabwe's prosperous capitalist economic system. But after 20 years of unquestioned rule, bungled policy decisions and, more recently, rampant corruption, Zimbabwe can take no more.

In 1997, Mugabe made some bizarre decisions, the most egregious being the deployment of the army and air force into the Democratic Republic of Congo that sent the process of national dissolution surging ahead. Since then, the military has slipped almost unnoticed into a position of political influence. Peter Longworth, the British High Commissioner to Harare, warned in a leaked dispatch to Whitehall that the armed for-

ces' loyalty lay not with the government but with Mugabe and his ruling clique.

The military commanders are nearly all former guerrillas of the liberation war closely tied to Mugabe and his Zanu (PF) party. They are among the first in line in the Mugabe gravy train. With the deployment into Congo, professional soldiery was diverted to suspect business ventures in diamonds, minerals, transport, arms even parrot smuggling. Mugabe has consolidated the military's influence by appointing retired army officers as permanent secretaries and directors throughout the civil service.

Now Mugabe is in a race to win a referendum, set for 12 and 13 February, and parliamentary elections. With these secured, he can attempt a reconciliation with the International Monetary Fund for a quick fix. But it is far from clear that this will work. "All the pieces to produce one of the highest living standards in the world are here," says Saive Masiyiwa, one of Zimbabwe's most successful entrepreneurs and a survivor of a five-year campaign by members of Mugabe's politburo to close him down because he would not pay the bribes they demanded. "Mugabe has had the authority to make it all work. Something went wrong. Everything is paralysed."

The paralysis comes right into the privacy of my cottage in leafy Harare suburbia. The water that comes out of my tap is still clear, but a chemist told me last week that it is the result of a perfunctory purification of what is sucked out of a water hyacinth-choked lake that now has 10 million gallons of raw sewage pumped into it daily. Since November, every street sign in the road outside my gate has been sawn off at the base of its metal pole for use in backyard welding shops.

At the busy intersection on Lomagundi Road 100 yards away, the last of the yellow sodium street lights went out around new year. It is dangerously dark by night now, like most of once brightly lit Harare. The 15-foot steel lighting towers at the intersection that get mown down regularly by boone-blind motorists are abandoned by the somnolent power utility. They rust, buckled in forlorn asymmetry. I have less than half a tank of diesel in my old four-wheel drive. Last week commercial banks could not raise the \$10 million in foreign currency to buy the next shipload of fuel for the state-owned National Oil

Company of Zimbabwe (Noc-zim). We are warned of a "complete dry-out" of diesel, petrol, paraffin and cooking gas.

It's like the countdown to the crack of doom. The entire country is waiting for the crack. It has been almost impossible in the past few months to keep track of the sudden accumulation of collapse and breakdown of the systems that regulate and service society. It is not just fuel that oil company cannot pay for; last week Companhia do Pipeline do Mocambique-Zimbabwe shut down the 135-mile pipeline from the Mozambique coast to Zimbabwe's eastern border, the country's main fuel supply route for 24 hours. Noczim had missed the \$540,000 monthly rental. BP-Shell bailed it out.

Government doctors at Harare's Parirenyatwa Hospital, the country's biggest, are demanding permission from the authorities to put up signs advising patients that the institution can offer only a limited service, which may result in inadequate treatment. They say that, given erratic supplies of antiseptic, antibiotics, syringes, gloves and paracetamol, the public should be warned. They often have to do without lignocaine, a local anaesthetic.

"Suturing is often painful for the patient," says Dr Rangarirai Mashamhanda. Sometimes there is no blood for transfusions. If anyone is seriously hurt in a vehicle accident, he says, "here is nothing you can do".

An International Telecommunications Union survey shows that only Kazakhstan and Tonga have faultier telephone systems than Zimbabwe's state-owned Posts and Telecommunications Corporation. The Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority is behind on \$22 million it owes the power utilities of South Africa, Mozambique and Congo. It warned customers last week to expect twice-weekly peak-hour power cuts. Experience teaches that Zesa tumbles the country into darkness at any time, for a long time, and turns it on again with surges that may blow every appliance.

Government schools in Harare have been told they will be responsible for their water bills from this month. They have also learnt that the ministry of education has not paid since 1996 and municipal authorities will

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P. T. O.

cut the schools off if the debt is not settled now. The ministry has abandoned paying for books and maintenance and provisions for boarding establishments, and has sacked most non-teaching staff as well as 4,500 temporary teachers.

"The only policy left is that you get bums on seats, whatever they sit on, and teach them, inside or outside," says a headmaster who asked not to be named.

Much of this is paying for Mugabe's expensive politicking. Most Zimbabweans complain in the post-Christmas weeks of "January disease", but in the past week retailers saw a surge in consumer spending. Furiously buying votes for the referendum and for the elections to be held by mid-April, he has just increased civil servants' pay by between 70 to 90 per cent.

In December, chiefs and headmen had their pay rise fivefold. A month earlier, Mugabe, cabinet ministers and MPs gave themselves rises of between 160 and 300 per cent. There is no budgetary provision for any of this.

In addition to the new pay, the government faces an enormous credit crunch, with more than \$1 billion of domestic debt due this month. "They are just going to have to print money," says Tony Hawkins, an independent economist. "We are moving close to a hyper-inflation situation."

An evening meal with Bizeki Johnan, an elderly Malawian-born tailor and old friend in the Mufakose township in Harare, tells you who is bearing the cost of Mugabe's caprice. Eight people live in the three-bedroom shoebox of a house, two lodgers and six family members. Bizeki's sole source of income is from the lodgers. Peter, his only working child who lives half a mile away with his own family, makes up the large monthly shortfall.

Dinner — *sadza* (maize meal porridge) and a fresh, tasty relish of rape and tomato fried with a little oil — is served on the lap

in the threadbare lounge. The budget did not stretch to onions that night; never to meat. The *sadza* is bland, but filling.

Last week, Bizeki was visited by an uncle. "*Sadza* and rape are killing me," he said when a plate was offered. He left, and returned in 20 minutes with a chicken that was immediately slaughtered and cooked, joyously.

Here politics comes from the gut. Talk turns to the possibility of Mugabe being replaced by someone capable of rescuing the economy. "Ah, meat," sighs Bizeki.

Council services are appalling. For the past two weeks the vehicles that collect refuse have been grounded by the fuel shortage. In the cheek-by-jowl living of Mufakose, where dogs and children disperse the mountains of filth, endemic cholera waits to descend. Roadside grass is never cut, drains are blocked and mosquito spraying stopped 15 years ago. But the services must be paid for. The rates bill has arrived and is five times the normal charge because the council is correcting an error it made three months ago. The women go silent, adding it up, and stay silent for the rest of the evening. It is unpayable.

"The crunch is coming," says Hawkins. "The track record is awful. It's a lot of talk, 'Yes, we are going to do it right now'. They do two minor things, then it all collapses because they had no intention of doing the tough things."

Every day that the fuel crisis worsens, that the piles of rubbish swell and prices increase, the chances of Mugabe winning elections dwindle. The street markets have long been a source of Mugabe jokes. IMF stands for It's Mugabe's Fault. He has been renamed Tim That Idiot Mugabe. Zimbabweans have noted with admiration the retirement of South Africa's Nelson Mandela, Tanzania's Julius Nyerere and Botswana's Ketumile Masire. They have also seen Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda and

Malawi's Kamuzu Banda unseated in elections.

The past three years have been marked by strikes, anti-government demonstrations and rioting over the cost of living, which were brutally suppressed first by the police, then the army. But the rapid worsening of conditions in the past year has been borne in silence. The violence and dread that epitomises Mugabe's rule are foremost in people's minds.

Zimbabweans constantly look over their shoulders for Central Intelligence Organisation spies and informers. "Maybe things will change this time," says Bizeki's son. "People know who they are going to vote for. They have a secret in their hearts."

Mugabe's rhetoric about Tony Blair's "gay government" and the commercial banks which, he said, caused the fuel shortage so they could sabotage the party congress in December, make him sound like a buffoon. But there is a deep malevolence about him.

Should Zimbabweans cast their votes for Morgan Tsvangirai's popular Movement for Democratic Change, the first test will be whether their will can overcome what are expected to be broad attempts to rig the elections.

The next is whether a corrupt, politicised military leadership will take orders from Tsvangirai, who says the first thing he would do on gaining power will be to withdraw troops from Congo.

— *The Times, London.*

THE STATESMAN

12 FEB 2000

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Zimbabwe votes on Constitution ✓

HARARE, FEB. 12. People in Zimbabwe began voting today on a controversial draft Constitution which opponents say gives too much power to the President, Mr. Robert Mugabe.

The referendum, which will also decide whether Mr. Mugabe's Government can seize white-owned farms to resettle blacks, comes two months before general elections in which his ruling Zanu-PF is expected to face a strong opposition challenge.

Polling stations opened today morning in light rain for the southern African country's first referendum since it won independence from Britain 20 years ago.

In the first hour, officials at a dozen polling stations in Harare said the ballot had started slowly, with some stations only breaking the seals of ballot boxes after 30 minutes.

Just over five million people are eligible to vote in the two-day referendum. Recent parliamentary by-elections have drawn an average 20 per cent of voters.

Critics have cast doubt on the credibility of the poll — which many see as a test for Mr. Mugabe's embattled Government ahead of general elections in April. Electoral authorities say they have yet to decide whether to allow independent observers to witness the count.

The Government and its supporters say the draft Constitution is truly democratic and they deny charges that it is designed to entrench Mr. Mugabe and his Zanu-PF movement in power, which they have held since Zimbabwe's independence.

A coalition of opposition and civic groups is leading a campaign for a "no" vote, arguing that the Government-sponsored document ignores the public's demands.— Reuters

THE HINDU

13 FEB 2000

Referendum likely to go Mugabe's way

By M.S. Prabhakara

CAPE TOWN, FEB. 13. A crucial referendum is taking place in Zimbabwe on the draft of a new Constitution. Voting in the two-day referendum which began yesterday has come to an end this evening. The new Constitution, Zimbabwe's first home-grown one, if approved as it seems certain, will replace the independence Constitution of 1980, the so-called Lancaster House Constitution under which the country attained independence.

The last parliamentary elections held under this Constitution were in April 1995 when the ruling ZANU-PF, headed by the President, Mr. Robert Mugabe, won all but two of the 120 elective seats. Later, the Opposition gained another member when Ms. Margaret Dongo, the dissident ZANU-PF member, won a by-election after being expelled from the ruling party.

Zimbabwe's first Constitution has undergone several amendments, including the crucial one in October 1987, replacing the original "Westminster" type of

governing the Minister of Finance. South Africa is believed to have made available credit to the extent of about Rands 800 million, to enable Zimbabwe tide over the immediate crisis.

Zimbabwe is South Africa's biggest grading partner in Africa and South Africa simply cannot afford to let Zimbabwe "go under." However, this perception that Zimbabwe is on the verge of "going under," or has already "gone under," is one of the constants of the reading of the political and economic situation in that country. Indeed, if one were to go by the reports in the South African media, Zimbabwe as a nation state should have long ago disintegrated. In the past nearly six years one has been reporting on events in Southern Africa, one cannot recall even a single report not utterly hostile to Mr. Mugabe and generally totally negative about Zimbabwe. This contrasted strangely with the experience and perceptions of this correspondent during a three-week visit to the country in December last year, much of it spent outside the capital. The Opposition has called for



government with an Executive Prime Minister by an Executive Presidency — the system that prevails in several African countries, including South Africa.

The referendum is taking place against the backdrop of hard times for the economy of Zimbabwe. The most dramatic manifestation of this is the acute shortage of fuel, affecting all other sectors of the economy. In a gesture of support, the President, Mr. Thabo Mbeki, yesterday made a six-hour visit to Harare, accompanied by a team of Ministers, in-

a solid "No" vote in the referendum. In an unprecedented intervention, the Chairperson of the Constitutional Commission which prepared the Draft Constitution, recently accused Britain of financing the campaign to reject the Draft — a charge duly denied by the British High Commission in Harare.

The call for a rejection of the Draft seems unlikely to be heeded. The formal Opposition in Parliament comprises the splinter faction of ZANU represented by two members and Ms. Dongo's Zimbabwe Union of Democrats. Rather more politically significant is the Movement for Democratic Change, led by Mr. Morgan Tsvangirai, who is general secretary of both the MDC and the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions.

The oddly, indeed misleadingly, named National Constitutional Assembly, which neither drew up the Draft nor has any constitutional role to adopt or modify or reject the Draft Constitution but is in fact an apex body of NGOs, church organisations, academics, and journalists, also has called for a "No" vote.

Mugabe defeated in referendum

REUTERS

HARARE, Feb. 15. — The Zimbabwean President, Mr Robert Mugabe, today suffered a humiliating defeat in a referendum on a draft constitution his opponents said was designed to entrench his 20-year-old rule.

The referendum was a crucial test for Mr Mugabe's government before general elections due in April, in which it will be challenged by a new broad-based Opposition movement spurred on by the country's worst economic crisis in decades.

The Registrar-General, Mr Tobaiwa Mudede, said the Opposition's "no" campaign had won a 697,754 votes or 55 per cent of the total against 578,210 for the "yes" vote after counting was completed in all 120 constituencies.

There was no immediate reaction from the government. But official sources said earlier that the atmosphere in the corridors of power was grim as a defeat would be seen as a public vote of no confidence.

The Opposition had claimed it was heading for victory hours

before the final result, but the government side had predicted the new constitution would be narrowly approved.

Under the referendum Act Mr Mugabe is not obliged to respect the outcome of the vote, but he promised beforehand that he would do so, and Mr Jonathan Moyo, a spokesman for the government-sponsored constitutional commission that drew up the draft, said as far as he knew that remained the position.

"It's a political process and it would be suicidal for anyone to ignore the result," he said before the result was declared.

Opposition is rising in South Africa against President Thabo Mbeki's decision to offer Mr Mugabe a \$800 million cash lifeline in an attempt to save Zimbabwe from economic ruin, adds PTI from Johannesburg.

Reports indicate that Mr Mbeki made the offer during a brief visit to Zimbabwe two days ago.

Mr Mbeki's offer is especially aimed at helping Zimbabwe to pay for fuel imports that have been hit by its acute shortage of foreign reserves.

THE STATESMAN

16 FEB 2000

South Africa seeks to negotiate free trade pact with India

By M. S. Prabhakara

CAPE TOWN, FEB. 15. South Africa is seeking to negotiate a free trade agreement with India, said the Minister for Trade and Industry, Mr. Alec Erwin, in a press briefing recently. Mr. Erwin said South Africa would take two important initiatives this year — with Brazil and India.

Mr. Erwin, however, denied this initiative was related to the problems that South Africa was having in the implementation of the Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement, the so-called Free Trade accord, with the European Union.

He said the initiatives with Brazil and India were in no way meant to be a signal to the European Union to indicate that South Africa too had choices.

This was an independent initiative unrelated to the problems with the EU, part of a broader strategy in terms of the unfolding WTO system where South Africa was also striving for closer cooperation between the Southern African Development Community and other regional economic groupings, Mr. Erwin said.

India, which has arrangements of a similar kind with Nepal (preferential trade) and the other SAARC countries, is believed to be receptive to the idea of such an agreement with South Africa.

However, there is at least one South African industry, pharmaceuticals, which would be hostile to any such pact with India.

Since returning from a visit to India at the invitation of the Confederation of Indian Industry last month, during which he held discussions with his Indian counterpart, Mr. Murasoli Maran, Mr. Erwin, has spoken more than once of seeking special trade arrangements with some countries of the South, mentioning India, Brazil, Nigeria and Egypt.

According to sources, South Africa is to host a meeting of trade ministers of these countries in Pretoria soon.

South Africa is also keen for an organised and more structured grouping of seven or eight developing countries with corresponding economic strengths, a

middle-level group of developing countries of the South, which would secure more space and muscle in multilateral trade negotiations with developed countries.

Apart from these five countries, other countries which are envisaged in this grouping are Saudi Arabia and Argentina and, possibly China.

Despite the Minister's denial, it is difficult to believe that these initiatives are entirely unrelated to fresh problems in the SA-EU free trade agreement.

The accord was signed in Pretoria in October last year after negotiations lasting nearly four years, with some uncertainty persisting till the very last moment on whether the accord would indeed be signed. One of the points that held up the clinching, and later the signing of the accord, was the objection by Portugal and Spain to the use by South African vintners of the terms 'port' and 'sherry' to designate these fortified wines on the ground that these were products unique to their countries and no other country could use the names.

The implementation of the accord with the EU has run into rough weather, with Greece and Italy raising objections over the use by the South African wine industry of the terms 'grappa' (an Italian grape brandy) and 'ouzo' (a strong spirit with a flavour of aniseed and fennel from the Macedonian region, more commonly known as Raki) on the ground that these two 'traditional expressions' are uniquely the property of those who manufacture them in Greece and Italy - much like an international generic copyright enjoyed by those who manufacture champagne - the argument effectively used by Spain and Portugal earlier.

Greece and Italy have refused to ratify the accord unless South Africa agrees to stop using these terms - which in effect means that South Africa is yet to have free access to European markets so avidly sought by its manufacturers, especially for agricultural products.

HFD-16

Mugabe accepts outcome

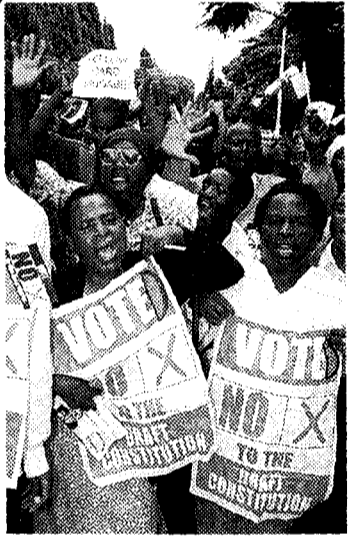
Africa

By M. S. Prabhakara 17/2

CAPE TOWN, FEB. 16. The Zimbabwean President, Mr. Robert Mugabe, has said his Government accepted the result of the referendum and respected the will of the people as expressed through the results. In a major setback to him, voters had rejected the new Draft Constitution. The voting was marked by low turnout - about five million in an estimated 12 million voters took part in the referendum.

Speaking over national radio and television yesterday night Mr. Mugabe said, "What this means in legal and practical terms is that government business and national processes will continue to be conducted under the Lancaster House Constitution as amended until such time as the country will have once again decided to have its own home grown constitutional homework."

In effect, the Government may take the more traditional route of further amending the existing Constitution as a short measure to attain some of its stated objec-



tives like compulsory acquisition of white-owned agricultural land for redistribution among the landless.

The ruling ZANU-PF, with 117 members in a House of 120, can easily secure passage of even major constitutional amendments. But such initiatives will be open to judicial challenge and scrutiny

- as has happened earlier. The vote does not pose any constitutional crisis as such. But it is likely to impact significantly on both the campaign and the outcome of the Parliamentary poll due in about two months. Presidential elections are however due only in March 2002.

The Opposition parties, including the recently-formed Movement for Democratic Change and some civil society groups, organised under the rather misleadingly called National Constitutional Assembly, had campaigned for a rejection of the Draft Constitution on the ground that it would further entrench the President's powers and enable Mr. Mugabe, who has been in office since 1980, to have two more terms. The organised lobby of commercial farmers was equally concerned about the provisions in the Draft (principally Article 57 dealing with 'agricultural land' acquired for settlement) which would have enabled the Government to compulsorily acquire white-owned land for redistribution among the landless blacks.

Pretoria buckles under E.U. pressure

By M.S. Prabhakara

CAPE TOWN, FEB. 19. South Africa has agreed to phase out over the next five years the names of five more alcoholic spirits, in a further gesture to the European Union with a view to securing the implementation of the 'free trade' agreement it signed with it in October last. "Saying that she would never consent, consented".

This about sums up the decision of South Africa to yield to yet another E.U. demand, now being presented as a set of new compromise proposals by the latter, on the use of certain 'protected' trade names to designate some of its own wines and spirits.

Since early this year, the Trade and Industry Minister, Mr. Alec Erwin, has on several occasions and forums denounced the 'bullying' by certain E.U. countries that insisted that South Africa should stop using names claimed to be the unique patrimony of these countries to designate wines and spirits manufactured in South Africa. South Africa, Mr. Erwin said, would never give in on this issue since any concession would only feed such protectionist appetites further. Mr. Erwin has also been speaking of initiating comprehensive trade negotiations with Brazil and India (among other countries) without however directly relating these initiatives to the frustrations over the problems with the E.U.

The so-called free trade agreement between South Africa and the E.U., over four years in the making, was finally clinched and signed in October last only after South Africa agreed to stop using the names, Port and Sherry, historically associated with products of Portugal and Spain, to designate fortified wines manufactured in South Africa. These terms, Portugal and Spain insisted, were uniquely their national patrimony which could be used only to products manufactured by them.

The agreement was to have come into effect from January 1. However, fresh objections, this time from Italy and Greece, over the use by South African manufactures of the terms, Grappa and Ouzo, held up the implementation of the accord.

Though Grappa and Ouzo for a while seemed to dominate the news (considerably augmenting their sales in the bottle stores), the problem actually involved the use of five names: Grappa (an Italian grape brandy), Ouzo (a distilled spirit of Macedonian origin), Korn (a distilled spirit from wheat made in Germany), Jagertee (a German herb liqueur) and Pacharan (another German product).

According to Mr. Erwin, however, the terms used to denote these five spirits that the E.U. is concerned with were merely their names for forms of generic spirit. "Having not done enough marketing or taken out trade names for these they want to get them protected by holding a whole strategic agreement hostage," Mr. Erwin said last week.

Just about a week later, the hostage takers seem to have won rather easily.

THE HINDU

20 FEB 2000

Churning in Zimbabwe

THOUGH ZIMBABWE attained independence nearly 20 years ago after a hard-fought armed struggle, it continues to be governed by the arrangement worked out during the prolonged negotiations in London that preceded independence, the so-called Lancaster House Constitution. This document, with several provisions limiting the powers of the Government, in particular to undertake any radical land redistribution, has been amended at least 14 times, mainly to strengthen the Executive.

The Government was restricted from initiating any land reform legislation for the first ten years of independence, under the Lancaster House settlement. Since 1990, though, the Government has initiated some land redistribution measures. The first of these was the Land Acquisition Act of 1992 under which the state could buy about 50 per cent of some eleven million hectares still held by "commercial farmers" — the standard euphemism in Zimbabwe for white settler farmers. However the implementation of this measure has been embroiled in legal disputes, angry exchanges with Britain which continues to cherish undefined responsibilities to settler communities in its erstwhile colonies in Africa (after all Britain even now has a "Minister in charge of Africa"), and charges of corruption in redistribution of land.

The reality is that land, the central issue in the liberation struggle, continues to be overwhelmingly held by the white settlers in Zimbabwe. This is hardly surprising since theft of native land by European settlers has, at all times and everywhere, been the central, indeed defining, feature of colonial settlements; and the issue that animated the anti-colonial struggles.

Zimbabwe's President, Mr Robert Mugabe, periodically issued threats and notices of intent to acquire white-owned land. But these have all floundered on the issue of compensation, which, under the Lancaster House Constitution, has to be fair and according to market value. Requests that Britain, as the former colonial power, provide financial aid to facilitate acquisition and redistribution of white-owned land has not evoked any favourable response.

It is in this context that two seemingly separate, but related and proximate, events, which marked the beginning of the undeniable acute economic problems that Zimbabwe has been facing since then, have to be viewed. The first was the announcement in August 1997 that the state would take over 4.5 million hectares of white-owned land, with the compensation being only for the 'improvements' on the farms and not the market value of the land as such. In the same month, the Government conceded the long-standing demand for pensions and compensations for injuries and disabilities from veterans of the liberation war and their dependants.

Things have never been the same in Zimbabwe since. Though these initiatives were by a Government which had won an overwhelming electoral victory in April 1995, with the Opposi-



The newspaper headlines say it all... a setback for Zimbabwe's President, Mr. Robert Mugabe.

The loss in Zimbabwe's referendum vote is a wake-up call for Mr. Robert Mugabe, writes
M. S. PRABHAKARA.

tion in the 150-member National Assembly (30 of whom are nominated) limited to just three, they faced strong extra-parliamentary opposition, much of it animated and articulated by genuinely democratic forces — including the powerful trade union movement led by the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions.

In short, the last three years have been marked by virtually ceaseless confrontation between the Government and a powerful and well-organised extra-parliamentary opposition. Though during this period others have jumped on the opposition bandwagon, not all of them animated by genuine democratic principles, in essence the opposition does articulate the disenchantment with the virtually single-party rule in Zimbabwe.

The decision to have Zimbabwe's own "home grown" Constitution (a very popular phrase in Zimbabwe) has to be seen against this background. The initiative in this regard was taken about two years ago by an alliance of civil society structures which came together as the National Constitutional Assembly and began the process of drafting a Constitution. However, the Government pre-empted these initiatives by constituting the Constitutional Commission in April last year, with a mandate to hold countrywide hearings and submit a report; and prepare a Draft Constitution.

The extra-parliamentary opposition dismissed both the process and the final product, the Draft Constitution presented to Mr. Mugabe last November, as illegitimate on the ground that these were "Government sponsored".

More materially, the opposition objected to the provisions in the Draft which, it said, would further entrench Mr. Mugabe and the ruling ZANU-PF in power — apart from enabling Mr. Mugabe to seek two more terms as President. Another objection was that the Draft Constitution enabled the Government to "seize white owned lands without compensation".

Both these objections are based on facts. However, while the further strengthening of the Executive President can be reasonably objected to, it is difficult to see anything iniquitous in Article 57 of the Draft, which could have undone the brazen theft of land perpetrated a century ago by Cecil Rhodes and others. Nevertheless, the electorate seems to have thought otherwise in the two-day referendum (February 12-13).

The defeat in the referendum is undoubtedly a political setback for Mr. Mugabe and ZANU-PF. But does this mean the beginning of the end of his political career? In particular, does the result portend a similar setback in the election to the National Assembly, due in April this year? As always, any speculation and forecast is fraught with risks. Nevertheless, two features of the referendum which are likely to operate rather differently in case of general elections deserve to be noted.

One, the low turnout. This is extremely unlikely in a general election, especially since (after the experience of the referendum) ZANU-PF will campaign rather more vigorously than was the case with the referendum. Second, the crucial difference between a national vote and a constituency-based vote. A constituency-based analysis of the vote in the referendum, prepared by the Inter Press Service in Harare, showed that voters in 73 of the 120 parliamentary constituencies of Zimbabwe approved the Draft, though in many cases by small margins.

The outcome is nevertheless a wake-up call for Mr. Mugabe and ZANU-PF, who have enjoyed virtually unchallenged dominance all these years.

Democracy devalued?

The putsch in Ivory Coast confirms that the West and international financial institutions have failed in their attempts to impose a democratic model on Africa, reports
VAIJU NARAVANE.

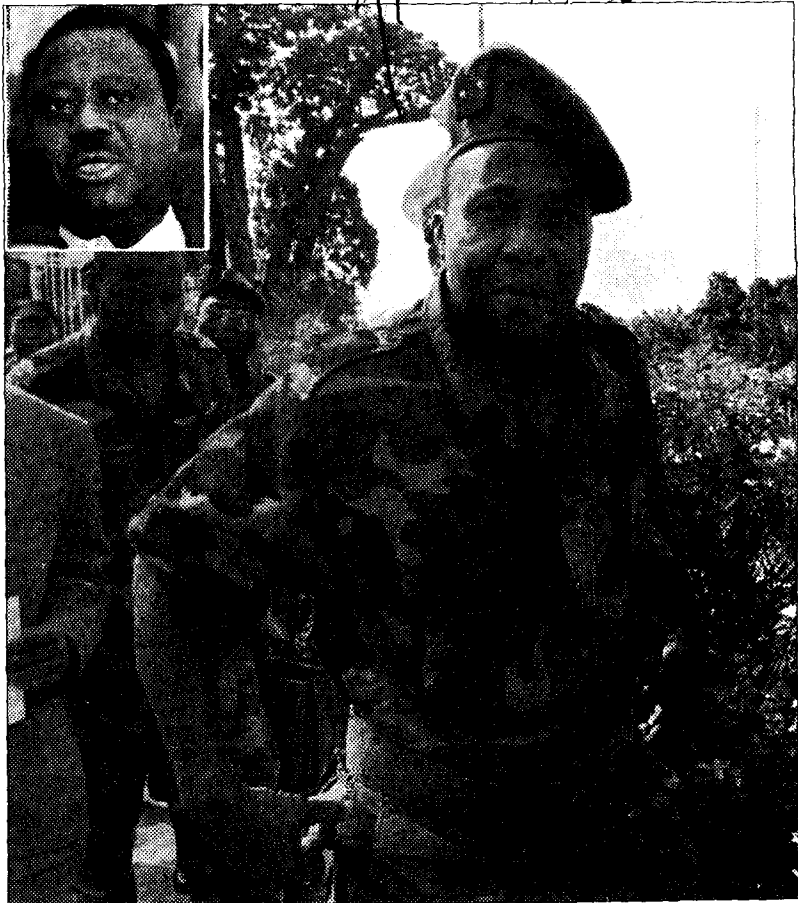
IT WAS a Christmas coup. Soldiers grumbling for back wages suddenly mutinied and pent up frustration over a worsening economic situation in what has been considered one of the most stable "democracies" in West Africa erupted.

Mr. Henri Konan Bedie, the French-educated President who lived like a monarch, throwing champagne parties in his huge low-slung presidential palace in Abidjan, first took refuge at a French military base and then, as French troops readied to go to Ivory Coast, averted a crisis by fleeing to neighbouring Togo. In Lome, the capital, he and his wife and four children were warmly received by Togo's President, Mr. Gnassingbe Eyadema, one of Africa's longest-serving rulers and a personal friend of Mr. Bedie.

On December 27, the Rue the Commerce, Abidjan's main shopping street, was littered with torn cardboard boxes which once contained television sets and other electronic and household goods. "The soldiers came here to loot. From 8 p.m., on Christmas Eve to 5 a.m. on Christmas Day they grabbed what they could, putting it on trucks and driving it away. Then came the ordinary thieves for the rest of the pickings," recalls a journalist, Ms. Rosa Zeguella.

Mamadou who works at *Fraternite Matin*, Abidjan's largest French language daily, said: "We knew something like this was on the way. Bedie was pretty much hated in this country. He was the darling of the World Bank and the IMF which held up Ivory Coast as an example of prosperity and stability in the region. But he made the population pay a huge price. We would not have minded if he had set an example and lived a simple life himself. But everyone knew how much his wife spent on her shopping trips in Paris, what his French chef cost the state. We now have to see how soon the new military regime re-establishes democracy."

The new Ivorian strongman, Gen. Robert Guei, first brought the situation under control by sending out military patrols with orders to shoot at sight. Abidjan returned to calm after two nights of rampaging and mayhem. He then received the oath of allegiance from the army, the chiefs of police and the customs. France prepared to send in 300 paratroopers ostensibly to "protect" the 20,000 French expatriates who live in Ivory Coast but in fact to rescue Mr. Bedie who had asked France for



CHANGE OF GUARD: Gen. Robert Guei took over from Mr. Henri Konan Bedie (inset).

protection. "If you do that," warned Gen. Guei, "there will be bloodshed." The French heeded the warning and Mr. Bedie, who was persuaded to accept the invitation from Togo, left under French protection after making a half-hearted appeal for national unity.

Gen. Guei has now announced that the State's coffers are empty. "They have pillaged the country. There is nothing left," he told a students union on Thursday. The National Salvation Committee set up by the new Ivorian strongman is expected to "create the necessary conditions for real democracy with the perspective of organising just and transparent elections". This confirms doubts that elections will be long in coming.

The putsch in Ivory Coast, which comes close on the heels of similar coups d'etat in Niger, Comores and Guinea-Bissau, confirms that the West and international financial institutions have failed in their attempts to impose a democratic model on Africa where power continues to change hands through guns rather than through the ballot box. Even in Ivory Coast, which was long held up as a model of democracy, stability and prosperity for the rest of the continent, true democracy never existed. Elections were rigged or were rendered ineffectual by an Opposition boycott and more often than not, the Opposition was bought off.

Mr. Konan Bedie was fighting to neutralise his opponent, Mr. Alassane Ouattara, who he said was of "doubtful

nationality", when troops stormed his presidential palace. Mr. Bedie's own partymen have now deserted him to become the acolytes of the new regime.

The Ivorian Opposition is waiting to see which way the wind blows before reacting. Mr. Alassane Ouattara, who sought refuge in France after Mr. Bedie declared him ineligible for office on the basis of a "constitutional legality" and issued a warrant for his arrest, has refused comment. Unfortunately, Opposition politicians in Africa have too often to choose between a nosebag offered by the strongman in power and a seizure of power by force. There are very few civic organisations and little dissent or political freedom. African democracies are for the most part semi-authoritarian regimes which have acquired a democratic patina without giving up any of the old dictatorial habits. The press remains muzzled, information strictly controlled.

The refusal of African leaders to allow their countries to move towards real democracy, their refusal to allow the emergence of civil society and a true opposition has set Africa on a slippery slope. Increasingly, the army is likely to step in, posing as the saviour of democracy. "If General Guei organises elections to give power to civil society, it would be a good thing. Bedie is quite likely to walk on gold for the rest of his life from what he has stolen from this country. He was not too democratic. Let us see what these people do," said a schoolteacher, Mr. Jean Tiemoko.

Shift in S. Africa's policy on Western Sahara?

By M.S. Prabhakara
CAPE TOWN, JAN. 2. Perhaps the most interesting point made by the South African President, Mr. Thabo Mbeki in his year-end address to the nation was his reference to the "unresolved matter of Western Sahara."

Describing the new century as "Africa's century of hope," Mr. Mbeki, in his nationwide broadcast over radio and T.V., said South Africans could take pride in the fact that the 20th century saw an end to the system of colonialism and white minority rule in the continent "except for the unresolved matter of Western Sahara."

Mr. Mbeki's speech was notable as much for the call for celebration of the victory over colonialism and racism as for its critical self-inspection on the failures of many post-colonial nation-states in Africa to set their houses in order. A crucial passage in the speech sums it up: "As Africans, we have seen too many military coups, too many wars, too many people massacred, maimed, displaced and turned into refugees. We have watched as millions of our people have sunk deeper and deeper into poverty and fallen victim to many diseases, including AIDS. We have had to live with corruption. We have seen our continent getting marginalised. As we enter the new century and millennium, we must, as Africans, say, 'Enough is enough.'"

The reference to Western Sahara has to be viewed in the context of the self-critical analysis of the larger political scenario on the continent. While Western Sahara is not the "only unresolved matter" on the continent, the reference places Western Sahara among the issues inherited and in some ways even related to the "system of colonialism." Indeed, the reference may well mark a shift in South Africa's policy on this tricky issue, facilitated by the apparent commitment to a more democratic governance by the new Moroccan monarch, King Mohammed VI. The new king is known to be keen on securing a settlement to the Western Sahara issue, a pre-requisite for a rapprochement with Algeria and the eventual return of Morocco to the Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

When Morocco attained independence in March 1956, the then Spanish protectorate of Western Sahara, itself a territory of contention between Morocco and Mauritania, did not automatically revert to either of these countries. While the continued Spanish occupation of the territory was condemned in several U.N. General Assembly resolutions, Western Sahara's own political future got entangled with the territorial ambitions of its neighbours in the north and the south. A tripartite agreement involving Spain, Morocco and Mauritania in November 1975 effectively partitioned the territory between

Morocco and Mauritania — leading to the setting of an in exile Government of the Saharawi Republic in Algeria by Polisario, the liberation movement founded in 1973 which has been fighting for self-determination. The conclusion of a separate peace treaty with Polisario by Mauritania and the withdrawal of Mauritania from its part of Western Sahara led to Morocco occupying the whole territory in 1979.

Morocco insists that Western Sahara is part of its territory though it is committed to a U.N. supervised referendum to determine the political future of Western Sahara. Such a referendum is provided in the ceasefire agreement of September 1991 between Morocco and Polisario, after nearly 15 years of fighting. However, disputes between Morocco and Polisario on who is qualified to vote in the envisaged referendum have hindered its holding. Central to the dispute is the settlement of many Moroccans in the territory since the last census held under Spanish supervision in 1974. Polisario insists that these post-1974 settlers should not be allowed to vote.

Indeed, despite its commitment to a referendum, Morocco has not returned to the OAU from which it walked out following the admission of a Western Saharan delegation to take part in the OAU summit at Addis Ababa in November 1984. Given this background, any initiative to tackle the "unresolved matter of Western Sahara"

can only be taken with the concurrence of Morocco, indeed a positive change in its stand.

Though the African National Congress (ANC) as a liberation movement supported Polisario and indeed recognised the Saharawi Republic, democratic South Africa as a nation-State has been rather more cautious on the issue. A joint statement issued in July 1988 by the late Oliver Tambo, then President of the ANC (with whom Mr. Mbeki worked closely during his years of exile), and Mr. Mohamed Abdel Aziz, secretary-general of the Polisario and President of the Saharawi Republic, "paid warm tributes to the freedom fighters of South Africa and the Saharawi Republic for their valiant and determined fight against the racist regime of South Africa and the expansionist Moroccans." The two leaders specifically called upon the international community "to force Morocco to respect and implement the decisions of the OAU, the UN and the Non-aligned Movement on Western Sahara".

These perceptions, however, failed to find a place in the actual policy of the new democratic Government in South Africa. Though Mr. Mandela personally appeared to be sympathetic to the Polisario, he was also close to King Hassan II, making both an official and "private" visit to Morocco during his term of office.

Setback to Mandela's role in peace move

By M. S. Prabhakara

CAPE TOWN, JAN. 5. A question mark hangs over Mr. Nelson Mandela's role as the mediator to drive the peace process in Burundi, following the refusal of the leader of the main rebel group in Burundi, Colonel Jean Bosco Ndayikengurukiye, who heads the National Council for the Defence of Democracy (CNDD) and its armed wing, the Forces for the Defence of Democracy (FDD), to accept Mr. Mandela's mediation.

The CNDD-FDD is a breakaway faction of the CNDD, one of the main political parties represented in the nominated Parliament (National Assembly). Predominantly Hutu, it has been leading the rebellion against the Tutsi-dominated military regime which seized power in a military coup in October 1993. The military regime was overthrown in another in-

ter coup led by Major Pierre Buyoya in July 1996 who became President.

Initially reluctant to assume this responsibility because of his involvement in the Israel-Palestine peace process, Mr. Mandela agreed early in December to succeed the late Julius Nyerere in that role. His appointment was welcomed both by the Government and the Opposition parties in Burundi. However, the CNDD-FDD leader has said that his group would not be taking part in the next round of peace talks, the sixth round, scheduled to be held in Arusha. He has, instead, demanded direct talks with the Government. According to an agency report from Nairobi, the CNDD-FDD leader was opposed to Mr. Mandela's mediatory role since South Africa had helped the "putschist Government of Burundi with arms and helped them bypass a regional arms embargo", thus raising questions about South Africa's, indeed Mr. Mandela's, impartiality.

South Africa is believed to have played a key

role in ensuring the suspension, for all practical purpose, the lifting, of the sanctions by the regional countries in January 1999.

In a related development, the Ugandan President, Mr. Yoweri Museveni, and the President of Rwanda, Mr. Pasteur Bizimungu, meeting in Kampala last week, have expressed their concern over the refusal of the CNDD-FDD to recognise the authority of Mr. Mandela as the new mediator in the Burundi peace talks. Peace, like rebellion, is indivisible in the countries of the Great Lakes region.

Over 150,000 persons have died in Burundi since the Hutu-dominated rebellion took to arms six years ago. As in the neighbouring Rwanda, the Government as its base, the military is dominated by the minority Tutsis. The rebel leader claims that his objective is to restore democracy in Burundi — which, given the demographic balance, will necessarily mean a Government dominated by the Hutus.

The deadlock in Burundi, as in Rwanda, simply underlines the unsustainability over any long term of the present arrangement in both the countries. It also admits of no solution, given the direction of the political and military developments since they attained independence.



Namibian forces in 'hot pursuit'

By M.S. Prabhakara

CAPE TOWN, JAN. 6. The Namibian armed forces have crossed the northern border into southern Angola in 'hot pursuit' of suspected UNITA rebels operating on both sides of the border.

The armed forces of the two countries, which are bound by a treaty, have been closely co-operating in the operations against the UNITA for several months now.

During this period, the UNITA has retreated from much of the territory it once controlled, including its 'strongholds' of Bailundo, Andulo and, finally, Jamba. It is now believed to have retreated to areas close to the Namibian border where sections of the population, having their own problems with the central government in Windhoek, are known to share cross border kinship and ethnic links.

The development comes in the wake of the attack by what the Namibian authorities describe as UNITA bandits' earlier this week on a touring French family in which three children were killed, and their parents seriously wounded, near Bagani on the trans-Caprivi highway, close to the popular tourist destinations of Popa Falls and the Mahango Game Reserve.

The family was returning to Windhoek on Monday, after celebrating the millennium weekend in the Caprivi, when they came under attack by suspected UNITA rebels.

In two separate incidents the following day in the same area, two other persons were injured. An unidentified UNITA spokesperson speaking from Geneva has however denied UNITA's involvement in the attack; and an agency report from Windhoek today quotes another unidentified 'UNITA representative in Namibia' putting the blame on the Angolan Armed Forces — an astonishing claim (leaving aside the suggestion that UNITA has a functioning representative in Namibia) since both the FAA and the Namibian armed forces have launched joint operations against what they described as 'UNITA bandits'.

The area, which was the scene of an abortive secessionist uprising last year, borders on three countries — Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

According to a news agency re-

port from Windhoek, the UNITA rebels who are 'moving randomly on foot within the area seem to have taken complete control, despite the presence of both the Namibian and Angolan troops in the area'. It quoted local game rangers who have fled from the invading forces as saying that the rebels were communicating in Lozi, a local language, also spoken across the border in Zambia. The linguistic map of Zambia does show a small area bordering Angola as inhabited by speakers of Lozi.

The extension of the war against the UNITA rebels into Namibia is a logical and indeed an inevitable stage in the ongoing 'fight to the finish' against the UNITA by the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA).

Interestingly, just as the FAA's offensive is yielding results, voices are again being heard against the 'wasteful war' in Angola.

Most eloquent and dripping with concern for the 'victims of the conflict' are 'aid agencies' and other 'organs of civil society' active in all the countries of southern Africa, as well as war games experts of 'security think tanks'.

All these voices were muted, if not utterly silent, during the decades of civil war imposed on the country by the UNITA, in particular in the last two years when it actively resumed fighting, though its leaders had been elected to Parliament and had been accommodated in government positions at all levels — all under the provisions of the Lusaka Accord of 1994.

It is only in the last three months when the UNITA has been on the run, and has lost all its so-called 'strongholds' inside Angola, that these structures, and sections of the media whose main sources of information are these 'organs of civil society' and 'aid agencies' and 'security think-tanks' are now expressing concern over the Angolan conflict becoming a broader sub-continental conflict. No one, not even those in official positions in South Africa, can explain how, short of an all out military assault, the UNITA and its leader, Dr. Jonas Savimbi, characterised by the leaders of the Southern African Development Community so recently and with such unanimity as a 'war criminal' after he resumed the civil war, can be defeated.

Common currency in Africa soon

DEUTSCH PRESSE AGENTUR

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ABUJA, Jan. 20. — African countries are determined to have a common currency soon, Mr Joseph Sanusi, chairman of the association of African central banks, said in Abuja yesterday.

Mr Sanusi, a Nigerian national, said at a one-day meeting of the association that hurdles obstructing the realization of a common African monetary zone had been overcome.

He said the meeting resolved that Africa's four sub-regional economic blocks should start working toward integrating their currencies, as a prelude to the integration of the monetary and financial sectors of African economies.

The African regional blocks are north, south, east and west Africa. Mr Sanusi noted that the nine French-speaking west African countries already had a common currency, while Nigeria and Ghana had started to integrate the currencies of the countries of the Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas).

Ecowas is the economic sub-regional grouping of west African countries. Mr Sanusi, governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, said two other economic blocks of the southern Africa development community and countries of east Africa had agreed to having a common currency.

He said representatives from all of Africa's 41 countries besides Uganda had attended yesterday's meeting. They had shown a renewed desire for economic integration on the continent.

The Central Bank of Gambia governor, Mr MC Bajo remarked Ecowas travelers cheques needed more time to gain acceptability. He said increased trade among member countries was necessary for a meaningful economic integration of the African continent. It is noted that the current level of intra-African trade was not encouraging.

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UNITA strikes again

17/1

By M.S. Prabhakara *AmC*

CAPE TOWN, JAN. 16. In yet another attack by suspected UNITA rebels inside Namibia, five persons were killed when the minibus they were travelling in came under fire on the Trans-Caprivi highway, between Katima Mulilo and Rundu, on Friday evening. According to the Namibian police, four persons died on the spot while another died later in a hospital at Rundu.

The 520-km long Trans-Caprivi highway runs parallel to and over some stretches very close to the Angolan border. The Namibian and Angolan troops have been conducting joint operations against the UNITA rebels, following its extension of the war against the Angolan Government by acts of 'cross border retaliation' inside Namibian territory.

The UNITA blames Namibia for this widening of the conflict which it says became inevitable following Namibia's decision to actively help the Angolan armed forces in the war against it.

The extension of war into Namibia follows a series of reverses

suffered by the rebel movement in recent weeks, marked by return to government control of several vaunted UNITA's 'strongholds'.

The Namibian Government has meanwhile strongly criticised the 'vitriolic propaganda by the print media' against Namibia's decision to actively assist Angola in its fight against the UNITA.

A statement issued by the acting Foreign Minister, Mr. Tuliameni Kalomoh, early this week accused the Namibian print media of sympathising with the UNITA and of calling into question the veracity of every government statement.

Though the Minister did not mention any names, it is a fact that a leading structure engaged in such regurgitation till recently, before it sent its own professional reporter to cover the incidents on the Namibia-Angola border, has been the South African Broadcasting Corporation.

The spat is related to the claims in the Namibian press that the Angolan army was forcibly recruiting Namibian civilians - in essence raising a mercenary

corps. This is an extremely serious charge, given the history of mercenary activities in southern Africa, and the existence of formal treaty arrangements between the two countries.

Denials by the Namibian Government of such claims are routinely (and scornfully) rejected by those making such accusations, in particular by an organisation called the Namibian Society for Human Rights, which is spearheading the campaign.

Acknowledging that there could be 'an element of speculation and sometimes an error' in the reports in the Namibian media, the regional director of the Windhoek-based Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) has said: "The Namibian Government is failing very seriously in informing the Namibian population on a regular basis of what is actually going on along its northern border. In these circumstances, they should not be surprised if there is an element of speculation and sometimes an error. It is unfair to accuse the media of being propagandistic", the MISA statement said.

The UN mandate for policing the truce in the Congo expired this week, without the 500 military observers requested by the Secretary-General ever being sent into the field. It remains to be seen whether the Security Council's recent decision to send a 6,000-strong force to police the very tentative truce in Sierra Leone will be acted on. At the moment it seems more than doubtful. The outside world appears to be almost frozen in its tracks when it comes to dealing with African civil wars.

In Somalia the UN pulled out, after the grisly death of 18 American soldiers. In Angola, the UN pulled its peacekeepers out last year after years of apparently fruitless wear and tear.

And in Rwanda, the scene of the worst genocide since the killing fields of Cambodia, the UN is accused of turning a blind eye in its moment of need.

The horror of Rwanda will not go away. It lives on like the Holocaust, keeping thinking people awake at night, as they struggle with their consciences over what they failed to do and what they might do to avoid a similar situation next time.

Just over a year ago on his African safari, President Bill Clinton personally admitted fault. And earlier this month UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, made an abject apology after an inquiry made by the former Swedish Prime Minister, Ingvar Carlsson.

Yet we err if we think they should have known what exactly was going on, before it was too late. And we err more if we think that even when we do know what is happening in a civil war, military intervention is a straightforward panacea.

In an interesting piece of detective work, published in the new issue of "Foreign Affairs", Alan Kuperman shows that one major reason why the world failed to act to halt the carnage of Tutsis by

Hutus in Rwanda — the fastest genocide in recorded history — was that the reporting was so poor that not until it was nearly over did we know what was going on.

So much for "the CNN effect."

The genocidal violence began on 7 April 1994. But as Kuperman shows, "Mr Clinton <or any other outside leader> could not have known that there was a nationwide genocide under way until about 20 April".

Just a few days into the genocide the "New York Times" reported that "fighting had diminished in intensity". Three days later, "Le Monde" wrote, "A strange calm reigns in downtown Kigali <the capital>."

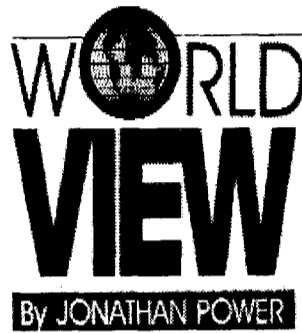
Only on 18 April did a Belgian radio station question the journalistic consensus, explaining accurately that the decline in the reports of violence was because "most foreigners had left, including journalists."

Human Rights Watch, an American NGO, made the first correct guestimate when on 20 April it said, "As many as 100,000 people may have died." The Red Cross followed the next day with a press release saying "hundreds of thousands" may have died.

It has been repeatedly said, if only the UN had responded to the request of General Romeo Dallaire, the UN's man on the spot, made on 10 April, for 5,000 more troops, the worst of the carnage could have been headed off.

But the importance of Kuperman's analysis — aside from demonstrating the widespread ignorance — is that it shows that a last-minute intervention could not have saved most of the Tutsis from

Rwanda a blot on UN's conscience



their Hutu killers.

Even a US light infantry ready brigade of 5,000 men would have required a week after receiving orders to begin significant operations in Rwanda. And even then it could have only carried out limited operations until its equipment arrived a few days later.

Thus, even if Dallaire's telegram had been acted on half of the genocide would have been already completed. Dallaire himself was unaware of what was going on outside the capital and in all probability the arriving troops would have stayed in Kigali.

If, indeed, Dallaire had known what was going on all over the country, 5,000 troops would not have been enough; it would have required a good 15,000. Transporting such a force to a landlocked country with limited airfields would not have been a quick business. It would have taken two weeks to get enough troops and equipment sufficient to attempt a halt to the fighting.

If there was a time to have intervened on a large-scale it was, in fact, way back in January. That is when the moderate Hutu government was still in power, desperately trying to keep Hutu mili-

tants in check. (These moderates were one of the first to be murdered when the killing began.)

This is when both that government and its old colonial power, Belgium, were arguing for a major UN intervention. (There was a small force on the ground, under Dallaire's command.) But the USA and Britain quashed the idea, arguing that the cost was prohibitive and that peacekeepers would be endangered, as they had been in Somalia the previous October.

What does one deduce from this? Yes, the obvious. We have to use our imaginations to better anticipate situations. But it is not as simple as that. Each of the recent interventions around the world teaches a different lesson. Somalia taught us not to allow peacekeeping troops to start to fight like an invading army. Haiti taught us even a successful military occupation by outsiders may not change the fundamental antagonisms that undermine society.

Bosnia teaches us that after there has been an awful war, military intervention can buy a little time for reconstruction, but it can't make a precariously unbalanced political situation stable.

Kosovo taught us that military intervention can, first, precipitate the situation it is supposed to forestall and, second, substitute one problem (Albanian terror) for what preceded it (Serb terror).

The intervention debate has become impaled on the horn of multiple dilemmas. No wonder the Security Council becomes so often deadlocked on these issues. No wonder even when it votes to do

its preventive diplomacy. That means developing a large cadre of people — not just a lone troubleshooter who flies in to meet the President — which can go into a situation of conflict, stay a year or two or more and work at every level of society, not just the very top.

There is a model for this in the work of the Swedish Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research. But that requires a further column next week.

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Africa

something it finds no member-countries want to risk their troops to implement the decision.

If the UN needs to beef up anything, it needs to beef up

S. Africa rejects DRC charges

By M.S. Prabhakara

CAPE TOWN, JAN. 25. South Africa has rejected what it describes as "allegations" in "recent media reports" that it is not impartial in the ongoing conflict in the Great Lakes sub-region and, in fact, that it is providing assistance to "certain belligerents to the conflict."

In fact, the said allegations amount to several accusations, including one that South Africa has supplied arms to the "rebels and aggressors," made by the President of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Mr. Laurent Kabila in an interview last week in *Pretoria News*.

Without referring specifically to Mr. Kabila's trenchant criticisms of South Africa's policy towards the DRC conflict, a statement issued today by the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) in Pretoria said that South Africa remained committed to "a process that would ensure that the interests of all the Congolese are promoted." South Africa further supported "interaction with all parties to the conflict, in acceptance of the principles agreed upon by the Lusaka ceasefire agreement."

A crucial sentence reads thus: "South Africa supports the perspectives of the Lusaka agreement that the existence of the rebel movements and the non-military opposition groups is a fact in the political dynamics of the DRC and that unless this fact is accepted there will be no progress in the full implementation of the Lusaka ceasefire agreement."

Equally crucial is the reiteration of the South African position that it has "since the Pretoria Declaration of 23 August, 1998 consistently and tirelessly promoted a

ceasefire agreement that would call for cessation of hostilities, troop standstill and withdrawal of all foreign troops on DRC soil."

Both these positions, and the underlying implications of the "inclusive government" formula first promoted by South Africa in the dying days of the Mobutu regime (even then firmly rejected by Mr. Kabila), cut to the very heart of the DRC conflict. They also indicate the ongoing contradictions between the stances of South Africa and its closest neighbours on the DRC issue. Indeed, they also hint at why the Lusaka Accord has thus far been a non-starter, with not even the first item of its elaborately-drawn peace time table — cessation of hostilities — as yet fully implemented.

Mr. Kabila maintains that he heads a legitimate government, and what the DRC has been facing since August 1998 is not so much a civil war as an invasion by Rwanda and Uganda, in support of malcontent domestic rebel factions. Furthermore, Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe, which support the DRC government, have done so at a state-to-state level with the legitimate government there, in terms of bi- and multilateral treaty obligations, the latter as members under the charter of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Neither Rwanda nor Uganda are SADC member states.

Hence, any reference to a need to accept rebel movements and non-military opposition groups as "a fact in the political dynamics of the DRC" is bound to be seen as an intolerable political provocation in Kinshasa.

The reiteration of South Africa's commitment to the so-called Pre-

toria Declaration of August 23, 1998 is consistent with such a provocative approach. That meeting was convened by the then President, Mr. Nelson Mandela in his capacity as chair of the SADC, to address the deepening conflict in the DRC. However, although Angola and Zimbabwe had begun to extend help to the DRC government to repel the "rebels and aggressors," notably absent from the talks were not only the DRC President, Mr. Kabila, surely central to any initiative pertinent to the issue, but also Mr. Robert Mugabe, President of Zimbabwe and Mr. Jose Eduardo dos Santos, President of Angola.

One of a spate of initiatives taken on all sides, at least some mere exercises in regional one-upmanship, the Pretoria "summit" was widely seen as an attempt by South Africa to use its political and economic clout to paint the DRC and its allies into a corner. However, even the Pretoria summit acknowledged that the "Democratic Republic of the Congo has a government in place which the summit recognises and which is headed by President Laurent Kabila."

Thus, on the one hand, there is a public acknowledgement by regional players that Mr. Kabila heads a legitimate government. At the same time, it is urged that not merely "non-military opposition groups" but also "rebel movements," also be acknowledged as "a fact in the political dynamics of the DRC."

This amounts to a phenomenal exercise in political spin doctoring, a feat which perhaps only South Africa, with its purported moral heft, may in the end manage to pull off.

HD 16

Playing big brother

20/1



Mr. Nelson Mandela ... an icon in South Africa's efforts at conflict resolution.

There is a marked lack of warmth towards South Africa on the part of most of its neighbours.
M. S. PRABHAKARA looks at the possible reasons.

supporting the rebels have to be viewed in the context of this unique role that has been both assigned to, and assumed by, South Africa. This perception of South Africa on the part of some of its neighbours is neither new nor unique. Angola too has for long maintained that South Africa is aiding the rebel force, Unita. Indeed, in September last year, the Deputy Foreign Minister of Angola called for "international sanctions" against South Africa, along with Burkina Faso, Uganda, Ukraine and Zambia, accusing them of not adhering to the U.N.-imposed sanctions against Unita.

The realpolitik view of South Africa's foreign policy is that in essential respects it is marked by continuity rather than by change. In this view, given the size and economic strength of South Africa, and its arrogant sense of destiny as the leading power of the continent, such continuity in the pursuit of its "national interests" is entirely natural. The permanent interests of nation-states do not change merely because there has been a change in government — even of so radical and fundamental a kind as took place in South Africa in 1994. South Africa's sense of destiny on the continent is indeed strong, and is articulated in terms of an historical and a suffused poetic vision as an ideology and theory of the African renaissance, driven naturally by it. Rather more tellingly, this historic destiny is also articulated in the gloating (and corresponding moaning) over every victory (and defeat) in the competitive sports.

This would be, however, a superficial and perhaps even a cynical view, though one should also note that the now no more new South Africa has absorbed and made its own many of the most detested symbols and even the substance of the apartheid regime — the most obvious being those abominations of the old regime such as Parliament and the judicial system.

The problem lies deeper. Fundamental to South Africa's perception as a nation-state, inasmuch as it was to the apartheid regime too, is its perceived exceptionalism — both in its history and in its destiny. Thus, the process and the components of what many foreigners still characterise as the South African miracle — negotiations and an inclusive political settlement — have now assumed the status of a universal panacea for every conflict in the region, on the continent, anywhere. Indeed, insofar as the South African prescriptive view of the world is concerned, now that it has attained its miracle, the era of conflicts is definitely over — this notwithstanding the evidence to the contrary. This too is of a piece with the curious mix of innocence and moral arrogance that characterised the conduct of Indian foreign policy in the early years of independence.

A NOTABLE feature of South Africa's relations with other countries is the marked lack of warmth towards it on the part of most of its neighbours. This, on the face of it, is surprising given that these were the frontline states which provided crucial material, diplomatic and military support to the struggle against apartheid; and in that process were themselves subjected to open and covert aggression by the apartheid regime. The Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission presents detailed accounts of crimes committed by the apartheid regime against the Governments and people of nine countries of the southern African region: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Swaziland, Seychelles, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

This, however, is on the way to becoming a historical curiosity. Since the liberation movement became the party of government in South Africa, things have become rather different. The legitimate admiration of the "moral stature" of the democratic government in Pretoria is now mostly limited to distant admirers in the West and occasional visitors, some of whom seem to be caught in a time warp of the heady days of the installation of Mr. Nelson Mandela as President. Countries closer home, however, have problems with their big and powerful neighbour. An Indian observer cannot help being reminded, in this context, of the moral high ground that India occupied in the early years of independence; and equally, of the rapid erosion of that stature as harsher realities prevailed, especially since the mid-1960s.

The starkest examples of the uneasy relationship between South Africa and some of its neighbours is the correlation of forces in the ongoing conflicts in Angola (25 years old) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe have sent troops in support of the Government of Mr. Laurent Kabila to defeat what he claims is "aggression" by Rwanda and Uganda in support of

malcontent rebel factions. In a related development, Namibia has allowed Angola to conduct operations against the Unita rebels along its northern border. Both Angola and the DRC have accused South Africa, which has been urging an "inclusive" settlement in both the cases and has played host to the rebels, of actively or covertly supporting the rebels.

Zimbabwe's problems with South Africa are rather more complex, given the close historical links between the settler and colonial regimes that preceded the dawn of independence in both the countries and the many common factors in their liberation struggles. Both Angola and Zimbabwe were actual theatres of war in the armed struggle against the apartheid regime. Though the resentment against South Africa in Zimbabwe is, for now, grounded in issues of economy and commerce, Pretoria is also resented for what is seen as its support to parties and groups opposed to the ZANU-PF Government headed by Mr. Robert Mugabe. One should not be surprised if in the not-too-distant future, leaders of the Government in Harare also accuse Pretoria of aiding "rebels and aggressors".

What is the stand of South Africa in respect of the conflicts in its neighbourhood, and indeed on the continent and in the rest of the world? The question is important in the light of the initiatives being taken by South Africa (Northern Ireland, East Timor, Palestine, Lockerbie) of its own volition and in response to pleas by the "international community" as mediator and facilitator in conflict resolution, often accompanied by much media hype. The assumption is that South Africa is uniquely qualified to provide solutions, given its resolution of the seemingly irresolvable conflict within the country. Things are, however, not so simple. Some of these have gone awry, some are proceeding apace or gurgling away under the influence of factors outside such initiatives.

The recent accusations by Mr. Kabila that South Africa is openly and covertly