

INTERNATIONAL

U.S. opposes U.N. forces in Zaire

Special to Sentinel-Voice

Washington, D.C. — The administration of President Bill Clinton appears to have started pulling the plug on Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko, Washington's staunchest Cold War African ally.

In its clearest statement to date on the subject, the State Department has said that it has no intention of backing a multinational military force to help deliver humanitarian assistance and protection for as many as 200,000 Rwandan refugees caught up in the fighting in eastern Zaire. U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan had called for the United Nations to authorize the creation and deployment of the

force late last month as fighting, which had begun along Zaire's border with Rwanda and Burundi last October, heated up again.

His appeal was joined by that of Pope John Paul II who, in a letter to Annan released by the United Nations in New York, noted the "deplorable deterioration" of the situation in Zaire.

I am still confident in the possibility of the international community making a concerted effort designed to avoid yet more tragic developments," he wrote. But State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said that, while Washington will continue to discuss the idea at the United

Nations, "we are not prepared right now to sign on to a multinational force."

He added that there is "no active planning at all" in Washington to contribute even logistical assistance to such an effort.

For now, he went on, the best course was the one that is already being pursued: gaining a cease-fire, as called for in South African-led mediation efforts begun earlier this month and enabling U.N. relief agencies to get aid to those who need it most.

Senior U.S. officials are consulting intensively with their French and Belgian counterparts on these issues in Brussels, he added.

Eminent Nigerian citizens charged with treason

Special to Sentinel-Voice

Lagos, Nigeria — Nigeria has started criminal proceedings against some of its most respected and internationally-known citizens for allegedly conspiring to wage war against the government.

In a surprise move on March 12, 1997, which came hot on the heels of an Organization of African Unity (OAU) mission to review human rights in the country, the Chief Magistrate Court in Ikeja, a northern industrial suburb, began criminal proceedings against 15 Nigerians, four of whom were not present when the charges were read. Among the 15 are the exiled Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka, Olu Falae, former finance minister in the administration of Ibrahim Babangida and Fredrick Fasehun, chair of the Campaign for Democracy (CD).

According to the first count read at the court, between May 1995 and February 10, 1997, the 15 "conspired to levy war against the Federal Military government of Nigeria and thereby committed an offense punishable

under Section 37(2) of the criminal code."

The second charge, which listed the accused names, read: "You ... between May 1995 and February 1997 at Lagos in the Lagos Magisterial district did levy war against the federal military government by causing explosions in various parts of Nigeria in order to intimidate and overawe the Head of State of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and thereby committed an offense punishable under the criminal code."

A spate of bombings rocked the commercial capital earlier this year, but no one claimed responsibility for the blasts which were aimed primarily at military and security targets. Soyinka, who is in the United States, Dr. Arogundade Akingba, retired Lt. Gen. Alani Akinrinade, and Chief Anthony Enahoro were all listed among the 15 as "still at large."

Speaking from California, Soyinka denied the charges read at the Magistrate Court. The writer has been in exile since November 1994.

Rift between labor, South African government widens

Special to Sentinel-Voice

Johannesburg, South Africa — South Africa's largest workers' umbrella, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), plans to take to the streets on May 12 in protest against a new bill which is set to further deregulate the labor market.

The federation is part of a tripartite alliance that also includes the South African Communist Party, but it has increasingly questioned the

policies of its senior partner, the African National Congress (ANC). COSATU entered the 1994 elections in partnership with the two parties and the alliance garnered 62.5 percent (12.2 million) of the votes.

However, COSATU is now not pleased with government's Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) policy, which it sees as neo-liberal.

The 1997-98 budget announced recently has also raised concern within labor

about the effectiveness of GEAR to achieve job creation.

Finance Minister Trevor Manuel himself has admitted that while South Africa's gross domestic product (GDP) grew by about 3.1 percent over the last year, relatively few jobs were created.

Unemployment, officially estimated at over 30 percent, is rising and the country's limited public services in areas such as health and education are already heavily stretched. Additionally, COSATU believes that the imposition of a four-percent budget-deficit target in the 1997-98 financial year will mean a cut in public spending at a time when millions of poor South Africans are not covered by a basic social security net. COSATU also wants to see a reduction in the statutory working week from 46 hours to 40 hours, but it appears that the government will propose a 45-hour.



Margaret Brooks points to the "KKK" symbol at her neighbor's house.

Photo by Savoy LVS/Voice

Racist

(Continued from Page 1)

Soon the name calling started and the neighbor would drive into their driveway as fast as possible and slam on the brakes.

Other whites in the neighborhood who had become friends of the Brooks' were also harassed, stalked and called names. The Brooks are the only African-Americans in the neighborhood and they are also the oldest members of the neighborhood.

"We taught school in the South during integration, and we never experienced anything like this," Margaret Brooks said.

They filed an order of protection which helped for awhile, but they have recently had to file another order.

One of the white neighbors, who is a friend of the Brooks, has also filed two orders of protection against the woman.

"We tried to sell the house, but no one would buy it with her next door," Mrs. Brooks said.

Once, Mrs. Brooks recalls being outside her home with an electrician who was installing a motion light. The next-door neighbor put a radio in her window and played it so loudly, she and the electrician had to go inside and finish their conversation.

The entire time Brooks and the electrician were outside, they were harassed by extremely foul racial slurs.

Mrs. Brooks, who is afraid of her neighbor, has not been back on that side of the house since. Las Vegas police are called to the neighborhood four times a week, she said.

She has filed a report with the police about the neighbor's antics and have requested that patrol officers cruise the neighborhood more often. The police said they would do what that they could.

The Rev. Chester Richardson, spokesman for the Las Vegas branch of NAACP, said some

type of new law, city or county ordinance against racially-motivated harassment should be enacted.

Such type of law of regulations would give the police the teeth to act in the situation. Richardson said.

Richardson and the Rev. James Rogers, president of the local NAACP, have been to the Brooks' home and have requested the FBI and the Department of Housing and Urban Development investigate the incidents.

He called the Brooks' retirement nightmare, "...a dream deferred."

"What a shame. They've worked hard and long only to have their dream deferred," Richardson said.

"Racism and prejudice grows and thrives," he added.

He put the responsibility for racism on Americans who allow it to happen.

"When Americans become tired of a behavior they term deviant, they protest and fight it, Richardson said. "If a nazi or sex offender moved into that neighborhood, you can be sure something would be done about it, but here we have a blatant supporter of the KKK and nothing is done."

"You can't legislate people's hearts and morals, but it's time to enact a city or county ordinance that prohibits that kind of blatant racism and all acts of blatant hate," he said.

Meanwhile, James and Margaret Brooks have recently received a phone call from family members in Texas who heard their story on national evening news.

"They were outraged," Margaret Brooks said.

As soon as the neighbor is evicted, Paulsen said he will fix the house up and sell it again, but only this time to someone other than a modern-day bigot.

Urban

(Continued from Page 6)

viewers are white," he said.

"We're marching about it's use and yet using the word among ourselves. It's use is acceptable among blacks," he added. The dichotomy illustrates Smith's position. "We're fighting the wrong

thing," he said.

"Our values are distorted if we are spending energy fighting things like this, but we don't get upset if a black business closes in our community," he said.

The black community's economic power actually

began to decline with the civil rights movement, he said. Until then, blacks purchased goods and services from blacks because they had no choice. There were a variety of healthy black owned businesses and services in black communities.

However, when blacks were given a choice, they abandoned the black-owned businesses and exercised their freedom to do business with other stores and service providers.

"Now, we have an entire first generation of black people (See Urban, Page 16)

Weight

(Continued from Page 7)

going on with your emotions. Be specific about what you write. Seek alternatives. Instead of turning to food to cope with your feelings, work on dealing with them in other ways. Exercise is a great way to deal with some of your misplaced emotions. And, if you feel you need help, don't hesitate to see a professional.

Before starting your fitness program consult your physician.

NOTARY PUBLIC
AT YOUR CONVENIENCE
Ask for Deborah
Call 631-0098
DOOR TO DOOR SERVICE
Open 7 Days • 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
BY APPOINTMENT ONLY
Licensed and Bonded