

# London's Museveni readies E. Africa war

by Linda de Hoyos

Etienne Tshisekedi, leader of the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS), was summarily arrested in Kinshasa on Feb. 12, along with 35 party leaders and workers, by the military government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, led by Laurent Kabila. Defending this action against pressure from the United States and other locations, Kabila declared that he had rejected pressure for democracy, and that no elections will be held in Congo-Zaire until "peace prevails."

Diplomatic sources from Africa and Europe now confirm that Kabila's "peace" will be gained by more war, as has now become the norm in East Africa since the 1990 British-backed invasion of Rwanda by Ugandan forces which ultimately led to the 1994 holocaust and the taking of Kigali by the Ugandan-Rwandan Patriotic Front of Paul Kagame, and the 1996-97 Zaire war which installed Kabila in power in Kinshasa.

The center for the impending regional holocaust is Kampala, Uganda, where President Yoweri Museveni is amassing military equipment and a regional defense force for a two-front war against the Kivu provinces of Congo-Zaire to the west, and Sudan to the north. In January, according to eyewitness reports, tons of military equipment and weapons arrived at Mombasa port in Kenya, and were loaded onto trucks headed for Kampala.

## The Sudan front

The Kampala press is now whipping out propaganda to prepare the population for war. On Feb. 16, the Ugandan government paper *New Vision* announced that Ugandan troops had been sent to the border with Sudan, following reports that the insurgent Lord's Resistance Army, whose offers for negotiations have been spurned by Museveni, had crossed into Uganda from Sudan. But counterinsurgency is only the pretense. On Feb. 12, *New Vision* had reported that the "battle for the largest southern Sudanese city of Juba is imminent," following the capture by John Garang's Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) of the town of Wau. But the assault on Juba cannot take place without the regional force, and anti-aircraft weapons to back it up, mobilized by Museveni.

For this mission, Museveni lists among his backers the Netanyahu government of Israel, the British House of Lords, and British intelligence's fifth column in the United States, led by Roger Winter, director of the U.S. Committee on Refugees. On Sept. 17, 1997, Winter demanded an invasion of Sudan, even though, he said, "I know it will mean a

humanitarian catastrophe."

By Feb. 23, *New Vision* reported: "Fear of war looms over the Ugandan border districts of Kitgum and Kotido following a build-up of troops and heavy weaponry by the Sudanese government and the rebel SPLA. . . . Security forces said fighting is imminent. . . . 'The troops and arms build-up has reached a crisis level. It is a matter of days before a full-scale fighting breaks out there.' "

## The Kivu front

The assault on Kivu is necessitated by the fact that military activity against the Rwandan occupation of eastern Congo-Zaire and increasing insurgency in Rwanda itself against the Rwandan Patriotic Front, have cut the trade routes from eastern Congo-Zaire to Kampala and from there to Mombasa. The road from Gisenyi to Kigali is cut, and insurgent activity has made it very difficult for trucks to circumvent the road. Hence, Kabila's "peace"—or, war—is actually a precondition for the quick extraction and transport of eastern Congo-Zaire's enormous mineral wealth by the British Commonwealth companies that financed the Rwandan-Ugandan war against Zaire.

The hype is now building for a Ugandan invasion of Kivu. In mid-January, the Ugandan press began targetting Congo, in preparations for military operations across the border. "More than 1,000 defeated West Nile Bank Front rebels are reportedly regrouping in a national park in the Democratic Republic of Congo, security sources said yesterday," one article said. It claimed that the 1,000 rebels had merged with 4,000 other "ex-Mobutu soldiers, SPLA deserters, and some Hutu extremists," and are grouped in the Garamba national park.

Then, on Jan. 29, while visiting the eastern city of Bukavu, Kabila accused France, the UN High Commission for Refugees, and the Catholic charity Caritas of aiding the Mayi-Mayi rebellion in eastern Congo, which is fighting the Rwandan occupation army. "All the evils originate from this," he said. Congolese Interior Minister Gaetan Kakudji told reporters the same day that "in the east a war is beginning," and that Kabila is considering a state of emergency over Kivu.

Residents of the province are already under a terror regime. On Jan. 27, Congo government troops arrested local chiefs of Kivu, including Mwami Desiré Kabare Rugemanzizi of Kabare and Mwame Pierre Weza III of Walungu, and two of Kivu's leading intellectuals, Ruhigita Bulangalire, rector of the Evangelist University of Africa in Bukavu, and Masu Rugamika, rector of the University of the Great Lakes in Goma. During Feb. 18-22, Congolese troops, led by Rwandan Tutsi officers, carried out house-to-house searches for weapons in the cities of Bukavu, Goma (still continuing), and the northern city of Bunja Kiri, which is believed to be the stronghold of the Congolese Mayi-Mayi fighters. Since no one keeps weapons in their homes anyway, the soldiers are entering homes, stealing what they can, and raping the women, according to Kivu sources.