

Editorial

Time to investigate the Kigali gang

May 17 will mark the one-year anniversary of the taking of power in Congo-Zaire of Laurent Desire Kabila, the front man for the combination of Ugandan, Rwandan, and Burundian troops that marched through Zaire in 1996-97 to bring down the regime of President Mobutu Sese Sekou. Immediately, the United States government made known that it would be unable to support the Kabila government, unless Kabila cooperated with a probe by a United Nations investigating team into the multitude of allegations of the mass slaughter of Rwandan, Zairean, and Burundian refugees in eastern Zaire throughout the war. The figures of those refugees known to have existed in eastern Zaire, and now unaccounted for, range from 180,000 to 500,000 men, women, and children.

Now, on April 17 of this year, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan decided, according to his spokesman Fred Eckhard, "reluctantly and after full consideration of all alternatives," to withdraw the UN investigative team from Congo. "In the light of the total absence of cooperation of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo in allowing the investigative team to carry out its work, and following a careful assessment made by a mission sent by the Secretary General for this purpose, the Secretary General has decided to withdraw the team."

The decision follows a consistent pattern of harassment of the UN team and its witnesses in the Congo, since it arrived there in August 1997, after protracted negotiations with the Kabila regime. The latest provocation came on April 7 and 8, when Congo expelled a team member from Goma and then detained him at the Kinshasa airport. "Confidential United Nations documents in the possession of the staff member were seized, searched, and assumed to have been photocopied by the authorities, in complete disregard of the obligations of Member States under the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations," Eckhard said.

The exit of the investigative team will not succeed in covering up the mass death in eastern Zaire. *EIR* was the first publication in the United States to decry the genocide of refugees in eastern Zaire, and Lyndon

LaRouche's Schiller Institute was virtually the only institution in the United States in late 1996 which demanded that President Clinton initiate an emergency airlift to aid the refugees who had been militarily forced out of the camps in violation of international law.

EIR investigations showed that the invasion of Zaire, directed by Ugandan military dictator Yoweri Museveni, was being conducted on behalf of the British Privy Council and financial interests arrayed under the British Commonwealth, who were following in the wake of Kabila's march across Zaire, killing everything in its path, including refugees.

Subsequently, the story of the mass murders of the refugees broke in the Belgian and French press, and then, finally, on May 21, 1997, in the United States, in the *Washington Post* and *New York Times*.

Then, on July 9, 1997, a virtual confession of responsibility for the slaughters by Rwandan Defense Minister Paul Kagame appeared in the *Washington Post*. "Rwanda's powerful defense minister Paul Kagame, has acknowledged for the first time his country's key role . . . , saying that the Rwandan government planned and directed the rebellion that toppled the longtime dictator and that Rwandan troops and officers led the rebel forces," the *Post* reported. Kagame also admitted that the Rwandan Army was given a free hand to destroy the refugee camps and "scatter" their inhabitants.

Thus, it would appear that Kabila is not only covering up for himself, but also for Kagame and the Rwandan government. In this context, it is noteworthy that according to Congressional testimony, U.S. embassy officials in Rwanda—who are known to work closely with Roger Winter of the U.S. Committee on Refugees—reportedly bragged to human rights workers that they had urged Kabila not to cooperate with the UN probe, in violation of U.S. policy. Although the embassy denied the report, Winter, according to his own testimony, was put in contact with Kabila through people in the Rwandan capital of Kigali, and was with Kabila when the military assault and subsequent slaughter at the Mugungu camp were carried out in November 1996.