

RECORD TYPE: FEDERAL (NOTES MAIL)

CREATOR: nycdan@earthlink.net@INET@LNGTWY (nycdan@earthlink.net@INET@LNGTWY [UNKNOWN])

CREATION DATE/TIME: 17-AUG-1998 18:12:16.00

SUBJECT: - no subject (01J0PWN444EA00HOWC) -

TO: Steven J. Naplan@eop (Steven J. Naplan@eop [NSC])

READ: UNKNOWN

TEXT:

Gen. Kagame Turns Rwanda
Into Kind of Israel of Africa

By ROBERT BLOCK

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

KIGALI, Rwanda -- While a rebel army again blasts its way through the jungles of Congo, the man widely believed to be the mastermind of the upheaval, Rwandan Major General Paul Kagame, plays tennis in his backyard in the wooded hills of Rwanda's capital, hundreds of miles away from the nearest battlefield.

"No matter what's happening, Kagame always finds time to play tennis or do something active," says Seth Kamanzi, a friend and adviser to the general. Gen. Kagame is also Rwanda's vice president and the de facto ruler of this tiny country of volcanoes, tea plantations and ghastly ethnic violence. A tall, cerebral and wispy-thin man, he was a force behind the scenes two years ago, when Rwandan troops provided the steel for a rebellion of ethnic Tutsis across the border in Congo, the former Zaire. That conflict ended last year in the overthrow of dictator Mobutu Sese Seko and the installation of rebel leader Laurent Kabila as president. Now some of Gen. Kagame's troops quietly are backing another Tutsi-led rebellion, this time against Mr. Kabila.

Deep Inside Congo

The anti-Kabila rebels now claim they are advancing on a position 95 miles southwest of Kinshasa, Congo's capital, after seizing two important southern ports. They also claim to hold the Inga hydroelectric power dam that provides power to Kinshasa. Hundreds of foreigners began leaving Kinshasa during the weekend, and the U.S. suspended operations at its Kinshasa embassy. Adding to the tension has been Mr. Kabila's use of the ethnic card to defend his rule. Charges that Rwanda and Uganda are behind the revolt have whipped up popular hysteria among many residents in Kinshasa.

Congo's information minister, Didier Mumengi, said government forces were recapturing occupied territory. Mr. Kabila, meanwhile, returned to the capital city Sunday after an absence of several days, vowing to remain in Kinshasa and defeat the rebels, Reuters reported.

Congo is a fractious and ineptly run country, but the question remains: How can Rwanda dominate Congo, a land 90 times as large and seven times as populous? Rwanda has tribal problems worse than Congo's -- in 1994, as many as one million Rwandan Tutsis were massacred by extreme nationalist Hutus. The answer is that in response to the genocide, Mr. Kagame and his fellow Tutsi leaders have, in some respects, turned Rwanda into the Israel of central Africa. Tutsi leaders have vowed that their people will never again be put to the sword. To this end, Mr. Kagame has built a small but disciplined military machine of about 35,000. Like the government, the army is dominated by Tutsis, though Rwanda -- a country of 7.8 million people -- is 85% Hutu. Despite its small numbers, this army routed the genocidal Hutu-led regime in 1994 and provided muscle for Mr. Kabila's revolution last year.

Obsession With Security

Rwanda's leaders are thus driven by an understandable obsession with security; Congo, for one, has harbored Hutu refugees whom the Rwandan Tutsis deem a threat to their state. The Rwandan Tutsis also are committed to protecting the millions of minority Tutsis living in surrounding countries such as Congo.

"That is what we share with Israel, a survival instinct," says Mr. Kamanzi, a founding member of the ruling Rwandan Patriotic Front and until recently a diplomatic counselor to the president. "This is the secret of our military power. People here are desperate. They fight for life and death." The Rwandan presence in Congo is much harder to pin down than in last year's rebellion. Rwanda's official denials of involvement are much fiercer. Nevertheless, 400 Rwandan troops under Col. James Kabare, a Rwandan officer who until recently headed Mr. Kabila's army, are reported to have hijacked a jumbo jet last week in the Congolese border town of Goma and flown it across the country to open up a new front in the west, which is threatening Congo's capital, Kinshasa. "The truth is we can't remain aloof from what is happening in the Congo given that the security situation is the way it is," Mr. Kamanzi says. Gen. Kagame's staff declined repeated requests for an interview.

Since Mr. Kabila came to power, attacks have continued on Rwanda by Hutu extremists based in Congo; such attacks were what motivated the Rwandan government to topple Mr. Mobutu last year.

Instead, the north of Rwanda has once again been plunged into violence. Hutu extremists have regrouped since the break-up of the Congolese refugee camps they once used as bases. Mobs of killers have cut a swath of bloodshed across a 200-mile-long arc of countryside, murdering both Tutsi and Hutu civilians. Villages have been attacked, vehicles ambushed on the main road linking the north to the capital and markets raided by armed gangs. Hutu extremists from mountain bases inside Congo are crossing into Rwanda to recruit Hutu peasants, threatening them with retribution if they refuse, just as they did in 1994, when neighbors were incited to kill neighbors, teachers to kill students and husbands to kill wives.

The aim of the Rwandan insurgents, the Rwandan government says, is to destabilize the government so that Hutus can finish the Tutsi genocide they started four years ago but failed to finish. "There is no political agenda -- only genocide," Rwandan Education Minister Joseph Karamera said recently.

For months Gen. Kagame had been trying to push Mr. Kabila into taking action against the insurgents in eastern Congo, but to no avail. Instead, the Rwandans say, Mr. Kabila reduced the influence of Tutsis and other ethnic groups in his government while he promoted members of his own family and people from his native Katanga province.

Anti-Tutsi Sentiment

Indeed, Mr. Kabila is whipping up anti-Tutsi sentiment among the Congolese to help buttress his government; the rhetoric is similar to that used by Rwanda's extremist Hutus to exhort the population to hunt down and kill Tutsis.

"People must bring a machete, a spear, an arrow, a hoe, spades, rakes, nails, truncheons, electric irons, barbed wire, stones and the like, in order, dear listeners, to kill the Rwandan Tutsis," a state radio station in the eastern Congolese town of Bunia said last week.

In March, Gen. Kagame, losing patience, vowed that "the problems of insecurity [which] have continually given us a headache since 1994" would soon, once and for all, be crushed.

From his earliest days, Gen. Kagame, 42, has been caught up in Rwanda's ethnic turmoil. Born in southern Rwanda, he was taken to Uganda at the age of two in 1959, when his parents fled the first of what were to become many anti-Tutsi pogroms by the majority Hutus. The Hutus were marginalized and the Tutsis gained dominance under Belgian colonial rule, so the Hutus revolted. Between 1959 and 1963, 100,000 Tutsis were killed and 200,000 driven into exile in surrounding countries.

Those Tutsis who fled to Tanganyika, now Tanzania, under the benevolent rule of Julius Nyerere, found acceptance. But the Rwandan Tutsis in Zaire, Burundi and Uganda had to live a life of secrecy and hidden identities in a deeply hostile environment. The Uganda in which Gen. Kagame grew up was the charnel house first of Idi Amin and then later Milton Obote. During an interview last year, Gen. Kagame recalled the horror: "We suffered 30 years of oppression. There were people who lost hope in the diaspora, people who gave up on life here in Rwanda," Mr. Kagame said.

What changed things for the Tutsi diaspora was a group of young, educated men determined to fight for security, first in Uganda and then in Rwanda. Gen. Kagame's childhood friend, Fred Rwigyema, was among the first small

group of Rwandan students to join the Ugandan rebel movement of Yoweri Museveni, who is today the president of Uganda. Gen. Kagame followed and rose to the rank of chief of military intelligence in the Ugandan army before forming the Rwandese Patriotic Front, or RPF, with Mr. Rwigyema. When the RPF invaded Rwanda from Uganda in 1990, Gen. Kagame was studying at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth in Kansas.

Strict Disciplinarian

On the second day of the invasion, Mr. Rwigyema was killed by a sniper, and Gen. Kagame flew back to take charge. As RPF leader he was a brilliant tactician and a strict disciplinarian, banning alcohol and discouraging sex. Violations of the rules meant death by firing squad. But despite his rigid code of conduct, he was viewed by many as being tolerant and inclusive. He broadened the RPF to include Hutus and members of Rwanda's disparate political factions, provided they shared his dream of creating a nonethnic society.

The RPF's war to take over Rwanda, against an army trained and supplied by France, lasted four years. On April 6, 1994, President Juvenal Habyarimana, a Hutu military leader who had been in power for more than 20 years, reluctantly agreed to implement the last stage of a power-sharing deal with the RPF. But as he returned home from a meeting in Tanzania, his plane was shot down, supposedly by extremists of his own camp, who launched a genocide whose aim was that there should be no Tutsi left to support the RPF. After the current Rwandan government took control and stopped the killing, Hutu extremists and hundreds of thousands of Hutu civilians fled into exile in Congo.

The experience left Gen. Kagame with a deep mistrust of the international community, which during the genocide intervened only to save foreign nationals and did nothing to stop the mass slaughter of Rwandan innocents. He is also convinced that there is an international conspiracy against Tutsis, and now displays the self-reliance and mistrust of the world that is common to many Holocaust survivors.

For Gen. Kagame, like many in the Tutsi leadership, it is the example of Israel that provide the key to understanding what the Rwandan Tutsis are going through. In 1995, Gen. Kagame told The Jerusalem Post: "Israel can understand this [the Rwandan tragedy] better than others. We want to learn now from Israel how to deal with those who carried out crimes against humanity. And of course how to rebuild a ruined country. Israel confronted this largely on her own, and that's very similar to the new situation in Rwanda."

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===== ATTACHMENT 1 =====

ATT CREATION TIME/DATE: 0 00:00:00.00

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RFC-822-headers:

Received: from conversion.pmdf.eop.gov by PMDF.EOP.GOV (PMDF V5.1-9 #29131)
id <01J0PWW9PJ4009FKS@PMDF.EOP.GOV> for NAPLAN_S@a1.eop.gov; Mon,
17 Aug 1998 18:09:05 EDT

Received: from Storm.EOP.GOV by PMDF.EOP.GOV (PMDF V5.1-9 #29131)
with ESMTP id <01J0PWWKYG2000H3NT@PMDF.EOP.GOV> for NAPLAN_S@a1.eop.gov; Mon,

17 Aug 1998 18:08:58 -0400 (EDT)

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(ip33.an3-new-york4.ny.pub-ip.psi.net [38.26.14.33])

by hawk.prod.itd.earthlink.net (8.8.7/8.8.5) with ESMTP id PAA03570 for

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RECORD TYPE: FEDERAL (NOTES MAIL)

CREATOR: Mail Delivery Subsystem <MAILER-DAEMON@gatekeeper.eop.gov> (Mail Delivery Subsystem

CREATION DATE/TIME:18-AUG-1998 13:44:25.00

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TO: Steven J. Naplan (CN=Steven J. Naplan/OU=NSC/O=EOP [NSC])

READ:UNKNOWN

TEXT:

----- Transcript of session follows -----

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<<< 550 Unknown user <briancullin>

550 <briancullin@hotmail.com>... User unknown

421 monitor.com (smtp)... Deferred: Connection refused by smtp.monitor.com

421 BARRB0201.usaid.gov (smtp)... Deferred: Connection reset by peer
during greeting wait with BARRB0201.usaid.gov

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Mr-Received: by mta EOPMRX; Relayed; Tue, 18 Aug 1998 13:40:14 -0400

Alternate-Recipient: prohibited

Disclose-Recipients: prohibited

Date: Tue, 18 Aug 1998 13:38:00 -0400 (EDT)

From: Steven_J_Naplan@oa.eop.gov

Subject: fascinating piece

To: ADUKE@UI.URBAN.ORG, gibney@ceip.org, agambino@usaid.gov,
mlorin@igc.org,

Shannon.Jacobs@mail.house.gov, wawrigh@midway.uchicago.edu,

action@gwis2.circ.gwu.edu, AENAPLAN@aol.com,

Ethan_Berg@monitor.com,

briancullin@hotmail.com,

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Message Creation Date was at 18-AUG-1998 13:38:00
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August 17, 1998

By ROBERT BLOCK
 Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

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--Boundary_(ID_HQJY3IBZHEdgHHsMhfuNMA)
Content-type: TEXT/PLAIN; CHARSET=ISO-8859-1
Content-transfer-encoding: QUOTED-PRINTABLE

The following attachments were included with this message:

TYPE : FILE
NAME : 081718AB.TXT

--Boundary_(ID_HQJY3IBZHEdgHHsMhfuNMA)
Content-type: MESSAGE/RFC822

Subject: 081718AB.TXT
MIME-version: 1.0
Content-type: TEXT/PLAIN; CHARSET=ISO-8859-1
Content-transfer-encoding: QUOTED-PRINTABLE
Al-type: DOCUMENT

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id <01J0PMMW9PJ4009FKS@PMDf.EOP.GOV> for NAPLAN_S@a1.eop.gov; Mon,
17 Aug 1998 18:09:05 EDT
Received: from Storm.EOP.GOV by PMDF.EOP.GOV (PMDF V5.1-9 #29131)

with ESMTTP id <01J0PWMKYG2000H3NT@PMDF.EOP.GOV> for NAPLAN_S@a1.eop.=
gov; Mon,
17 Aug 1998 18:08:58 -0400 (EDT)
Received: from hawk.prod.itd.earthlink.net ([207.217.120.22])
by STORM.EOP.GOV (PMDF V5.1-10 #29131)
with ESMTTP id <01J0PWLROOX2000EQT@STORM.EOP.GOV> for NAPLAN_S@a1.eop=
.gov; Mon,
17 Aug 1998 18:08:09 -0400 (EDT)
Received: from [38.26.14.33]
(ip33.an3-new-york4.ny.pub-ip.psi.net [38.26.14.33])
by hawk.prod.itd.earthlink.net (8.8.7/8.8.5) with ESMTTP id PAA03570 =
for
<NAPLAN_S@a1.eop.gov>; Mon, 17 Aug 1998 15:08:03 -0700 (PDT)

--Boundary_(ID_HQJY3IBZHEdgHHsMhfunMA)--

RECORD TYPE: FEDERAL (NOTES MAIL)

CREATOR: Gordon Michael L <Michael.L.Gordon@usdoj.gov> (Gordon Michael L <Michael.L.Gordon@u:

CREATION DATE/TIME: 20-AUG-1998 07:19:33.00

SUBJECT: RE: fascinating piece

TO: Steven J. Naplan (CN=Steven J. Naplan/OU=NSC/O=EOP [NSC])

READ: UNKNOWN

TEXT:

fyi this one went through - maybe there's something not working with a simple reply - maybe I'm not sending to the best address - I'm still using Naplan_S@a1.eop.gov is that the best?

-----Original Message-----

From: Steven J. Naplan@nsc.eop.gov@inetgw

[mailto:Steven_J_Naplan@nsc.eop.gov]

Sent: Tuesday, August 18, 1998 1:38 PM

To: Gordon Michael L; dwayne_lawler@conrad.senate.gov@inetgw;

lewduke@hotmail.com@inetgw; carolynr@idsa.com@inetgw;

ADUKE@UI.URBAN.ORG@inetgw; OPINCON@MSN.COM@inetgw;

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jeremy@greenbergresearch.com@inetgw; jpfreeman@webtv.net@inetgw;

jcook@haas.berkeley.edu@inetgw

Subject: fascinating piece

Gen. Kagame Turns Rwanda
Into Kind of Israel of Africa

August 17, 1998

By ROBERT BLOCK

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

KIGALI, Rwanda -- While a rebel army again blasts its way through the jungles of Congo, the man widely believed to be the mastermind of the upheaval, Rwandan Major General Paul Kagame, plays tennis in his backyard in the wooded hills of Rwanda's capital, hundreds of miles away from the nearest battlefield.

"No matter what's happening, Kagame always finds time to play tennis or do something active," says Seth Kamanzi, a friend and adviser to the general. Gen. Kagame is also Rwanda's vice president and the de facto ruler of this tiny country of volcanoes, tea plantations and ghastly ethnic violence. A tall, cerebral and wispy-thin man, he was a force behind the scenes two years ago, when Rwandan troops provided the steel for a rebellion of ethnic Tutsis across the border in Congo, the former Zaire. That conflict ended last year in the overthrow of dictator Mobutu Sese Seko and the installation of rebel leader Laurent Kabila as president. Now some of Gen.

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Deep Inside Congo

The anti-Kabila rebels now claim they are advancing on a position 95 miles southwest of Kinshasa, Congo's capital, after seizing two important southern ports. They also claim to hold the Inga hydroelectric power dam that provides power to Kinshasa. Hundreds of foreigners began leaving Kinshasa during the weekend, and the U.S. suspended operations at its Kinshasa embassy. Adding to the tension has been Mr. Kabila's use of the ethnic card to defend his rule. Charges that Rwanda and Uganda are behind the revolt have whipped up popular hysteria among many residents in Kinshasa.

Congo's information minister, Didier Mumengi, said government forces were recapturing occupied territory. Mr. Kabila, meanwhile, returned to the capital city Sunday after an absence of several days, vowing to remain in Kinshasa and defeat the rebels, Reuters reported.

Congo is a fractious and ineptly run country, but the question remains: How can Rwanda dominate Congo, a land 90 times as large and seven times as populous? Rwanda has tribal problems worse than Congo's -- in 1994, as many as one million Rwandan Tutsis were massacred by extreme nationalist Hutus. The answer is that in response to the genocide, Mr. Kagame and his fellow Tutsi leaders have, in some respects, turned Rwanda into the Israel of central Africa. Tutsi leaders have vowed that their people will never again be put to the sword. To this end, Mr. Kagame has built a small but disciplined military machine of about 35,000. Like the government, the army is dominated by Tutsis, though Rwanda -- a country of 7.8 million people -- is 85% Hutu. Despite its small numbers, this army routed the genocidal Hutu-led regime in 1994 and provided muscle for Mr. Kabila's revolution last year.

Obsession With Security

Rwanda's leaders are thus driven by an understandable obsession with security; Congo, for one, has harbored Hutu refugees whom the Rwandan Tutsis deem a threat to their state. The Rwandan Tutsis also are committed to protecting the millions of minority Tutsis living in surrounding countries such as Congo.

"That is what we share with Israel, a survival instinct," says Mr. Kamanzi, a founding member of the ruling Rwandan Patriotic Front and until recently a diplomatic counselor to the president. "This is the secret of our military power. People here are desperate. They fight for life and death." The Rwandan presence in Congo is much harder to pin down than in last year's rebellion. Rwanda's official denials of involvement are much fiercer. Nevertheless, 400 Rwandan troops under Col. James Kabare, a Rwandan officer who until recently headed Mr. Kabila's army, are reported to have hijacked a jumbo jet last week in the Congolese border town of Goma and flown it across the country to open up a new front in the west, which is threatening Congo's capital, Kinshasa. "The truth is we can't remain aloof from what is happening in the Congo given that the security situation is the way it is," Mr. Kamanzi says. Gen. Kagame's staff declined repeated requests for an interview.

Since Mr. Kabila came to power, attacks have continued on Rwanda by Hutu extremists based in Congo; such attacks were what motivated the Rwandan government to topple Mr. Mobutu last year.

Instead, the north of Rwanda has once again been plunged into violence. Hutu extremists have regrouped since the break-up of the Congolese refugee camps they once used as bases. Mobs of killers have cut a swath of bloodshed across a 200-mile-long arc of countryside, murdering both Tutsi and Hutu civilians. Villages have been attacked, vehicles ambushed on the main road linking the north to the capital and markets raided by armed gangs. Hutu extremists from mountain bases inside Congo are crossing into Rwanda to recruit Hutu peasants, threatening them with retribution if they refuse, just as they did in 1994, when neighbors were incited to kill neighbors, teachers to kill students and husbands to kill wives.

The aim of the Rwandan insurgents, the Rwandan government says, is to destabilize the government so that Hutus can finish the Tutsi genocide they started four years ago but failed to finish. "There is no political agenda -- only genocide," Rwandan Education Minister Joseph Karamera said recently.

For months Gen. Kagame had been trying to push Mr. Kabila into taking action against the insurgents in eastern Congo, but to no avail. Instead, the Rwandans say, Mr. Kabila reduced the influence of Tutsis and other ethnic groups in his government while he promoted members of his own family and people from his native Katanga province.

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Indeed, Mr. Kabila is whipping up anti-Tutsi sentiment among the Congolese to help buttress his government; the rhetoric is similar to that used by Rwanda's extremist Hutus to exhort the population to hunt down and kill Tutsis.

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Those Tutsis who fled to Tanganyika, now Tanzania, under the benevolent rule of Julius Nyerere, found acceptance. But the Rwandan Tutsis in Zaire, Burundi and Uganda had to live a life of secrecy and hidden identities in a deeply hostile environment. The Uganda in which Gen. Kagame grew up was the charnel house first of Idi Amin and then later Milton Obote. During an interview last year, Gen. Kagame recalled the horror: "We suffered 30 years of oppression. There were people who lost hope in the diaspora, people who gave up on life here in Rwanda," Mr. Kagame said.

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RECORD TYPE: FEDERAL (NOTES MAIL)

CREATOR: Steven J. Naplan (CN=Steven J. Naplan/OU=NSC/O=EOP [NSC])

CREATION DATE/TIME:23-OCT-1998 19:20:47.00

SUBJECT: fascinating piece

TO: snaplan@hotmail.com (snaplan@hotmail.com [NSC])

READ:UNKNOWN

TEXT:

----- Forwarded by Steven J. Naplan/NSC/EOP on 10/23/98
07:27 PM -----

Steven J. Naplan

08/18/98 01:38:56 PM

Record Type: Non-Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message

cc:

Subject: fascinating piece

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Into Kind of Israel of Africa

August 17, 1998

By ROBERT BLOCK

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

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Message Sent

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 jcook@haas.berkeley.edu

===== ATTACHMENT 1 =====
 ATT CREATION TIME/DATE: 0 00:00:00.00

TEXT:

RFC-822-headers:

Received: from conversion.pmdf.eop.gov by PMDF.EOP.GOV (PMDF V5.1-9 #29131)
 id <01J0PWW9PJ4009FKS@PMDF.EOP.GOV> for NAPLAN_S@a1.eop.gov; Mon,
 17 Aug 1998 18:09:05 EDT
 Received: from Storm.EOP.GOV by PMDF.EOP.GOV (PMDF V5.1-9 #29131)
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USCIRF Press Clips Part 2, 06/09/00

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Indian church bombings rekindle Christian fears

Reuters

Jun 9 2000 3:57AM ET

NEW DELHI, June 9 (Reuters) - A series of bomb attacks on churches in India and the murder of a Catholic priest have re-ignited fears of a fresh campaign against Christians by Hindu militants, church leaders said on Friday.

Bombs exploded in four churches in three Indian states on Thursday, two days after the priest was found battered to death in the northern Indian town of Mathura.

Christian leaders said the new round of violence, which follows a series of attacks early last year, suggested the Hindu nationalist-led coalition government was either unable or unwilling to rein in militant Hindu organisations.

"It is an open season on Christians again," said John Dayal, convenor of the United Christian Forum for Human Rights. "The new round of violence gives the lie to government claims of greater security to the community."

The Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which leads India's coalition government, has faced criticism at home and abroad for allowing its ideological Hindu mentor, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), to pursue its partisan agenda.

A spokesman for the BJP said it was wrong to conclude that Hindu groups were involved in the bomb attacks on churches.

"I fail to understand how you can name the the RSS, or any other organisation when the investigation has just begun," said the BJP's Venkaiah Naidu. "Since we came to power there has been a campaign to denigrate us."

The 75-year-old RSS, widely seen as the fountainhead of all Hindu groups, denies a bias against minority Moslems and Christians but advocates an end to what it says is a policy of appeasement of these communities.

NO ARRESTS MADE

C.Dinakar, police chief in the southern state of Karnataka where two bombs exploded outside a Roman Catholic church, said no arrests had been made in connection with the attacks, but that the incidents appeared to be linked.

Christians, who account for barely two percent of India's billion-strong population, and Hindu activists have been at odds over the controversial question of religious conversions.

In early 1999, a number of Christian priests were attacked and prayer halls set on fire in the western state of Gujarat, to spark a wave of attacks on Christians in other parts of the country.

Christian missionaries and activists blamed right-wing Hindu organisations for the attacks. Hindu leaders denied the charge but said forced religious conversions were responsible for unrest in tribal areas where the incidents occurred.

Since Hindu nationalists came to power in India two years ago, fringe groups have grown in confidence and strength, Christian rights worker Dayal said.

"There is this feeling that these groups are beyond the pale of law, no concrete action has been taken in even one case," he said.

RTR/RELIGION-INDIA/

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Newsroom.org
June 9, 2000

Four more churches bombed in India

NEW DELHI, 8 June 2000 (Newsroom) -- Bombs exploded in four churches in the southern Indian states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Goa on Thursday, injuring at least one person. The explosions bring to five the number of bombings at places of worship in Andhra Pradesh since May 20. One incident occurred in a Hindu temple; the other four were at churches.

The blasts occurred the day after a Roman Catholic priest was murdered in the Mathura district of Uttar Pradesh in northern India. Catholic Unions have demanded the suspension of senior police officers in Uttar Pradesh for incompetence after Brother George Kuzhikandam, a Franciscan priest from Kerala, was murdered in the Assisi Ashram in Navada, Uttar Pradesh on Tuesday night. The priest was to be buried Thursday in Agra.

One bomb exploded inside the 114-year-old Jewitt Memorial Baptist church in the coastal town of Ongole in Prakasham district, Andhra Pradesh, minutes after more than 100 people had finished morning prayers. One of four people who remained in the church at the time of the blast suffered minor injuries, police said. Ongole is about 345 miles southeast of Hyderabad.

Another bomb exploded in a church inside a hospital at Tadepalligudem town near Eluru, Gadavari district, damaging furniture and window panes. No one was present in the church at the time of the blast.

In another incident in the neighboring state of Karnataka, two bombs exploded outside St. Anne's Roman Catholic Church in Wadi town, Gulbarga district, about 400 miles north of the provincial capital, Bangalore. There were no reports of injuries.

Four hundred miles away in the western coastal state of Goa, parts of St. Andrew's Church in Vasco town were damaged in a blast powered by a crude, low-intensity bomb.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and Karnataka Home Affairs Minister Mallikharjun Kharge have ordered high-level inquiries into the bombings in their states.

Naidu said he suspects that organized gangs are behind the explosions and are trying to spread panic in the community. "My main concern was to ensure that panic did not spread," he remarked after visiting the damaged churches. Naidu, whose Telugu Desam party is a key ally in the Bharatiya Janata Party-led National Democratic Alliance that governs India, has openly supported Christians in Andhra Pradesh.

Karnataka state police chief Chingleput Dinakar ruled out any communal angle but said police found two plastic boxes with wires attached to a battery. Police suspect that gelatin powder was used in preparing the bombs.

Dinakar said police have no suspects because there is no history of enmity between Christians and members of other communities. There are 500 Christians, including Catholics, in Wadi.

Meanwhile, in a statement issued on behalf of the United Christian Forum for Human Rights, the All India Christian Council and the All India Catholic Union, John Dayal said the killing of Brother George Kuzhikandam "negates all promises of security and safety that Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and chief ministers of states have given to the community in the wake of unmitigated violence that has been unleashed on the community in the last two years."

The Kochi Diocese of the Roman Catholic Church in Kerala on Thursday expressed concern over the brutal murder of the priest and demanded "immediate action against the assailants."

Last year priests and nuns were attacked in the western state of Gujarat, which triggered attacks elsewhere in India. Church officials blame militant Hindu groups, while Hindu leaders claim that forced conversions are leading to unrest in tribal areas.

The All India Catholic Union pointed out that in Uttar Pradesh, where almost a dozen incidents have taken place against church personnel and institutions since January, Brother George's death exposes gross dereliction of duty by the police and civil authorities. In April another Kerala priest, Father K.K. Thomas, was beaten severely in Kosikalan, a few kilometers from Navada.

Religious leaders allege that police have trivialized the murder by insisting that it was just another random incident that is not related to previous attacks against Christian institutions in the area. "We wonder why they (police and the civil authorities) are not interested in investigation if there is a pattern to the crimes, most of which have taken place in the Agra-Mathura belt," Dayal said.

"The police officers should be suspended and the local officers who have failed in their duty should be removed," he demanded. "We call on the state and the central governments to order a full-fledged inquiry that will get

to the bottom of the abiding mystery of why this violence -- the so-called incidents of crime -- are all directed at priests, brothers, nuns, schools, and hostels of the Christian community."

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Fifteen Killed in Indian Kashmir Shootouts, Blast

Reuters

Jun 8 2000 10:10AM ET

SRINAGAR, India (Reuters) - Fifteen people were killed and 34 wounded in separate shootouts and an explosion in the insurgency-torn north Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, police said Thursday.

Unidentified militants lobbed a grenade at an Indian security post in a crowded market in Sopore, 30 miles north of Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, on Thursday, they said.

"The grenade missed the target and exploded on the road as a result of which 28 people were injured, of whom three are critical," a police spokesman said.

No militant group has claimed responsibility for the grenade attack.

Earlier, one foreign militant and three Indian soldiers were killed in a clash at Arnas sector of Udhampur district, 144 miles southeast of Srinagar, police said. They said six Indian soldiers were wounded in another gun battle in the same district.

Eleven people including five separatist guerrillas and two Indian policemen were killed in other shootouts in Jammu and Kashmir state Wednesday evening and Thursday, police said.

Separatist violence in the Himalayan region has increased since the onset of summer this year.

More than 950 people including 155 Indian security force personnel and 510 separatist militants have been killed in violence in the strife-torn state since January, officials say.

India, which controls 45 percent of Kashmir, accuses Pakistan of arming and training Kashmiri separatists, a charge Islamabad denies. Pakistan rules over a third of Kashmir and China the rest.

Nearly a dozen militant groups are fighting New Delhi's rule in Jammu and Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state where police and hospitals say more than 30,000 people have been killed in decade-old armed rebellion.

RTR/INTERNATIONAL-KASHMIR-VIOLENCE-DC/

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ILO set to compromise on Myanmar's forced labour

Reuters

Jun 9 2000 8:12AM ET

GENEVA, June 9 (Reuters) - Myanmar, accused of forced labour akin to slavery, looks set to escape sanction at the annual U.N. labour meeting despite a U.S.-European Union drive to punish the ruling junta, diplomats said on Friday.

The United States, Britain and Portugal backed trade unions in demanding that the International Labour Organisation (ILO) talks call for Yangon to be isolated until it ends the practice.

But Asian powers including Japan, China and Malaysia closed ranks with their neighbour and are likely to force a compromise which would delay action until November, according to diplomats.

"It looks like Myanmar is slipping the noose and we are moving toward some compromise," said one envoy.

U.S. Undersecretary of Labour Andrew Samet took the floor at a heated session on Thursday night against the background of a wider debate on linking global trade and labour standards.

He urged the ILO forum to call on states and international organisations to review their ties with Myanmar to ensure they were not abetting forced labour, according to diplomats.

Such an unprecedented call by the ILO, which itself has no power to impose sanctions, could be a green light for financial organisations like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund to apply economic sanctions, diplomats say.

800,000 BURMESE SAID TO BE SLAVES

The ILO committee, made up of 28 government delegations as well as workers' and employers' groups, resumes debate on Myanmar on Friday night. It will issue recommendations on Monday which the full conference is expected to endorse on June 15.

"The committee is working on a compromise text," a diplomat told Reuters. "It appears that the workers are on board for the compromise, but they want a very tight definition of how to measure Myanmar's progress on legislation to end the practice and its efforts to apprehend and prosecute perpetrators."

Under the proposal, the ILO conference would call on the ILO's Governing Body, composed of 28 key governments, to review Myanmar's compliance next November, according to diplomats.

A year ago, ILO member states barred Myanmar from the Geneva-based agency after a 1998 ILO commission of inquiry found the country violated a global treaty banning forced labour.

Trade unions have estimated that more than 800,000 Burmese are conscripted with little or no pay as army porters or workers in construction and agriculture in slave-like conditions.

Myanmar hastily invited an ILO mission last month in what trade unions saw as a bid to stave off further condemnation.

Labour Minister Major-General Tin Ngwe told the ILO experts that the need for porters for military operations had been greatest before a 1990 insurgency, according to their report. A May 1999 order had amended legislation to halt forced labour and no complaints had been received since, the minister said.

Tin later wrote in a letter to ILO Director-General Juan Somavia that Myanmar was "taking the necessary measures" to ensure that forced labour was halted.

But Samet dismissed the minister's letter as a "soft version of previous denials," according to diplomats.

Portugal, current president of the European Union, said in the debate that Myanmar did not appear to have taken any significant measures to combat the abuses.

Britain's delegation said that the military government was in "continued

contempt'' of the ILO. If the talks took unprecedented action, it would set a good precedent, it added.

RTR/MYANMAR-UN-LABOUR/

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Manila optimistic on hostages

Reuters

Jun 9 2000 7:39AM ET

JOLO, Philippines June 9 (Reuters) - The Philippines said on Friday it expected a breakthrough soon in negotiations with Moslem separatists holding 21 mostly foreign hostages for seven weeks.

A presidential spokesman said the government's negotiators were ``optimistic... something substantive'' could happen by Monday, when the country celebrates independence day.

``You can say we are moving,'' spokesman Mike Toledo said in a statement issued in Manila. Maybe the process is slow, but again you have to understand this is a complex situation.''

He did not give further details.

Previous hopes of a breakthrough, such as the release of a sick hostage, have always been dashed. Government negotiators met Abu Sayyaf guerrilla leaders deep in the jungle of southern Jolo island on Friday, but a planned mission by foreign doctors was delayed for a second day.

TALKS WITH COMMANDER ROBOT

Two of the government's four negotiators met guerrilla chief Galib Andang, known as Commander Robot, and four other rebel leaders, known only as Commander Global, Dr Abu, Commander T-40 and Commander Mujid.

German doctor Hort Heydlauf arrived on Jolo on Friday with boxes of fresh supplies for the hostages, most of them ill and four requiring urgent hospitalisation.

``I'm here to help,'' he told reporters.

He will join medical workers from the Philippines, Finland and Malaysia on Saturday on a trek into the thick jungle to deliver supplies and treat the hostages.

Their visit was originally scheduled for Thursday, but was pushed back to Friday and now Saturday for logistical reasons.

On Thursday, the hostages again vented their frustration at the delay in negotiations and the lack of reliable information.

``It's difficult for us to cope with this situation,'' German Werner Wallert, whose ill wife Renate is also captive, told reporters visiting the camp.

``We have been kept as hostages for such a long time, creating mental problems definitely and physical problems, too.''

Finnish hostage Risto Mirco Vahanen said the group had been told they would be released soon several times, only to have their hopes dashed as the negotiations dragged on. He urged those involved to give them ``true facts and not just illusions.''

FOUR HOSTAGES NEED HOSPITAL

The government wants the immediate release of four hostages, including a pregnant woman, who doctors say need hospitalisation.

They are Wallert's wife, South African Monique Strydom, French tourist Stephane Loisy and Malaysian Zulkarnain Hashim.

A medical team that visited the hostages last weekend said the pregnant Strydom needed tests, Wallert was suffering arthritic pains and complaining of bowel problems, Loisy was emotionally disturbed and Zulkarnain had suffered scorpion bites.

The government has said it cannot give in to rebel demands for an independent Islamic state in the unruly south of this mainly Catholic country and will instead wait them out.

The fundamentalist Abu Sayyaf is the smaller of two groups fighting for a Moslem state.

The hostages -- nine Malaysians, three Germans, two French nationals, two South Africans, two Finns, two Filipinos and a Lebanese -- were abducted from a Malaysian resort on April 23 and taken to Jolo, 960 km (600 miles) south of Manila.

They have been held in jungle hideouts, sometimes sleeping on the ground with just rice sacks to keep the heavy tropical rains off, and some have threatened to commit suicide.

Officials say the rebels have not formally demanded a ransom but guerrilla emissaries have reportedly demanded \$20 million.

The protracted hostage crisis has embarrassed President Joseph Estrada's government which is also struggling to curb a surge of Islamic militancy in the country's main southern island of Mindanao and a wave of bombings in the capital Manila.

RTR/PHILIPPINES/

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Christian Science Monitor
June 8, 2000

Evangelicals alter Ethiopia's traditions
Andrea Useem
Special to The Christian Science Monitor

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

The rented hall was hot and crowded when more than 700 members of Faith Army of Christ International Church gathered on a recent Saturday afternoon to praise their Lord. Congregants paced the aisles absorbed in prayer or lifted up their open palms, celebrating Jesus.

The free-form worship of this three-year-old church was a far cry from the ancient liturgy of Ethiopia's 1,600-year-old Orthodox Church, which for centuries has defined the nation's Christian life.

But these foot soldiers of the Faith Army, and growing numbers of evangelicals like them, are forging a new Christian identity in Ethiopia - one that threatens the traditional religious hegemony.

Evangelicals now represent an estimated 10 percent of Ethiopia's 60 million-strong population, and their numbers are reported to be growing quickly. Islam and the Orthodox Church divide the rest of the population equally, with animism representing less than 5 percent.

Protestantism gained a foothold through missionary work in the 19th century. The churches established then have grown, especially in southern Ethiopia, where whole ethnic groups converted from animism. New on the scene are urban congregations like Faith Army, whose members are often derogatively called "Pentes," short for Pentecostal.

Tesfaye Tadesse grew up in an Orthodox household, but only "heard about Christ" from a friend when he was 16. "When he told me that God was a loving God, I didn't hesitate to accept," said Tesfaye. The Marxist government known as the Derg was then in power; while it uneasily coexisted with the Orthodox Church, the regime cracked down on evangelical churches, jailing many of its members. Evangelicals say the real growth of their faith took place under this state repression, which ended in 1991 when the Derg was forced from power. It is only now that believers are declaring their beliefs openly, said Tesfaye, who is writing his doctoral thesis on charismatic healing at one of three Protestant seminaries in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia's capital.

"The fall of communism opened a door for a lot of exploration. Many people are ready to try something new," said David Emmert, a Southern Baptist career missionary from Tennessee.

Foreign missionaries are playing an important role in promoting new forms of evangelical Christianity. Emmert and his co-workers, for example, target the spiritually "lost" of Addis Ababa by teaching English classes, running a free library for book-starved students and distributing thousands of popular soccer schedules with evangelical messages on the back.

"We are not trying to defeat the Orthodox Church," said Emmert. "We are just bringing the Gospel to the people whoever they are, Muslim, Orthodox or Protestant."

Most evangelicals, local and foreign alike, share similar criticisms of the Orthodox Church: that it is too focused on outward piety, not an inward knowledge of Christ as the savior.

"The priests think that holiness is wearing a beard and a long skirt. I don't call that holiness," said the suit-and-tie clad preacher at the Faith Army service, referring to the colorful robes of the Orthodox clergy.

Paul Balisky, country director of the Society of International Ministries (SIM), an interdenominational missionary organization, pointed to a lack of Biblical literacy among church members: "If you ask an ordinary lay person who Jesus Christ is, they won't know, because they just hear the Bible read in Ge'ez," Ethiopia's ancient scriptural language that was a forerunner to the modern Amharic widely spoken in the country today.

Missionaries point with hope towards a group in Nazaret, a town about 50 miles south-east of Addis, known as Emmanuel Mehhaber, or Jesus Club. This group of Orthodox factory workers began to study the Bible - and focus on worshipping Jesus alone, leaving aside Mary and the other saints recognized by the church. As numbers grew to over 10,000 in three years, the group was gradually forced out of the church. "That was unfortunate, because they could have done some important work from the inside," said Balisky.

The Orthodox Church has enjoyed the power of prestige since it was founded in AD 341; while no longer the official religion of the state, the symbols and holidays of the church still dominate national life. With such strong links between religion and national identity, the evangelicals appear to critics as almost anti-Ethiopian.

"When Orthodox people claim that evangelicals are being Westernized or Americanized, in some ways they are right," admitted Talargie Tafesse, director of missions and evangelism for the Evangelical Church Fellowship of Ethiopia.

Indeed, the evangelical churches have given birth to a trendy new genre of

Ethiopian Christian music. The tunes, booming out from corner shops and commuter minibuses, are indistinguishable from modern Ethiopian pop music, except for the Christian lyrics. The new hymns are luring souls from the Orthodox Church, where the beautiful but labored music of the liturgy - brought to Ethiopia by the 5th-century Syrian saint Yared - takes years to master.

In spite of these advantages, evangelicals haven't converted Ethiopia's emerging urban middle class. A group of highly educated - and highly motivated - young Orthodox believers in a group called Mehhaber Keduset, or Club of Saints, are working to carry the Orthodox Church into the 21st century.

In Addis earlier this spring, the group organized an exhibit on the Orthodox Church, "past, present and future." The exhibit, which showcased everything from the Ethiopian nation's direct descent from Noah to a new software program in Ge'ez, squeezed in more than 50,000 visitors in a single week. Addis Ababa residents lined up as early as 6 a.m. to see the show, sometimes waiting hours in sun and rain.

"We are not selling our religion, we are simply informing people about it," said Ephrem Eshete, one of the exhibit's organizers. Mehhaber Keduset has designed a sophisticated web-site, now searching for a host, that contains information on the more than 17,000 Orthodox churches in the country. "The church needs to modernize - not our doctrines or the teachings of the saints, but our management," said Ephrem. "We need modern technology to transmit our teachings around the world."

Signs of such modernization are evident within the church, whose current patriarch, Abuna Paulos, received his PhD from Princeton Theological Seminary in New Jersey.

Most Orthodox worship services are now held in Amharic, rather than Ge'ez, according to Abuna Timoteos, head of the Holy Trinity Theological College, a modern Orthodox seminary in Addis Ababa, "so the people know what we are saying, and can fully participate."

With new and old faiths grating on one another, Ethiopians are straining to preserve their history of religious tolerance, recalling how Jews, Christians and Muslims have lived here side by side for generations. But does Ethiopia have room for more than one Christian faith?

Evangelicals like Tesfaye, the seminary student, say they are satisfied that the new government has guaranteed freedom of worship in the 1995 constitution.

But Talargie, of the Evangelical Fellowship, claims that evangelicals suffer persecution at the hands of private citizens, while the government remains quiet. "The constitution on paper is one thing, but the Constitution in practice is different," he said. Foreign missionaries agree that while the government appears open to evangelical churches, its support is unreliable.

Talargie reported that evangelical groups have trouble securing land for new churches or offices. Some villages have even refused to bury evangelicals, whose bodies then travel all the way to Addis. Other anecdotal reports speak of "converts" who are thrown out by their families, beat up, or left homeless when their houses are burned down.

The move to evangelism, Talargie protested, should not be politicized. "It's not a transformation from one religion to another, but the transformation of your whole life. Everybody is hungry for the spiritual life."

Newsroom.org
June 9, 2000

Christian council calls for Uganda withdrawal from the Congo

KAMPALA, Uganda, 8 June, 2000 (Newsroom) -- As the war in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo intensified on Thursday, the Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) appealed to the government to pull its troops out of the central African state.

Citing the impact of the 18-month-old conflict on the region, including strained relations among clergy from countries involved in the war -- Uganda, Rwanda and the DRC -- the council said it was time that Uganda leaves the Congo.

The appeal is among several resolutions passed by the Christian council at the end of a two-day meeting in the Ugandan capital. UJCC is the umbrella body that brings together the Anglican, Catholic, and Orthodox churches in Uganda.

The Rev. Canon Grace Kaiso, executive secretary of the council, said the war has seriously divided the clergy in the region. "Bishops from the Congo looked at us as enemies in the meeting of the Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches which ended recently," he said.

Indeed, Monsignor Francisco Javier Lozano, the apostolic nuncio in DRC, told the Vatican news agency FIDES, "Christians in Bukavu say the only thing that unites the Rwandans and Ugandans are their attacks against the church." The church, he said, is the only entity that "gives cohesion to the people in their devastated country." The cathedral in Kisangani has been shelled in the fighting.

Bloodshed in the mineral-rich city of Kisangani has not only led to suffering by people in the Congo but also has drained resources from the countries involved and strained their relationships, the church leaders said.

The Ugandan government maintains that it entered the Congo for security reasons. Two main rebel groups -- the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) operating in the western part of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) based in the north -- were using the eastern part of DRC for training and launching attacks, government officials maintain.

However, the Uganda Joint Christian Council argues that the government can effectively deal with the rebels by policing its borders effectively. "We urge the government to ensure that UPDF (Uganda Peoples Defense Forces) personnel remain within our borders while consolidating peace in our country," the religious body said in a resolution.

Since Monday, the UPDF and the Rwandan army -- Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) -- have been exchanging fire in Kisangani, despite an agreement less than three weeks ago that they would begin to demilitarize the city.

Reports indicate that many innocent civilians have been caught in the crossfire. Uganda's leading daily newspaper, The New Vision, reported on Thursday that more than 50 civilians, including at least 19 children, have been killed in three days of fighting between Rwandan and Ugandan troops there. Some international aid groups put the number closer to 80.

"We call upon the international community to prevail on all those promoting conflict in the Congo to stop it," the Christian council said.

Since the May 5 clash between the Ugandan and Rwandan forces -- the second since the two countries ventured into the Congo -- religious leaders in Uganda have been trying to end tension between the former allies. A team of church leaders led by Catholic Cardinal Emmanuel Wamala met with Rwandan President Paul Kagame and Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni last month over

the strained relationship.

Uganda and Rwanda, close allies in the last two decades, entered the Democratic Republic of the Congo in April 1998 to help rebels overthrow President Laurent Kabila. A year earlier the two armies helped Kabila topple the dictatorship of President Mobutu Sese Seko, who later died in Morocco.

In spite of the Uganda churches' call in May to Kagame and Museveni to end the fighting, the two countries have clashed again, shattering any possibility of peace in the region. There has been growing distrust between the two nations since they first exchanged fire in August last year.

The two armies successfully fought two wars together, the Ugandan guerrilla war of 1980-85 that brought Museveni to power and the war against Mobutu of Zaire in 1997. When the RPA was fighting the government of President Juvenal Habyarimana in 1994 Uganda provided weaponry.

Uganda and Rwanda went to the Congo as allies against Kabila's backers, Zimbabwe, Angola, Chad, and Namibia. Since the United Nations joined the conflict and stopped fighting between the protagonists, however, there have been conflicting interests between Uganda and Rwanda. Both countries support different rebel groups fighting to topple Kabila.

The U.N. plans to send up to 5,000 troops to the Congo to restore peace. But observers see the current clashes as a way for Rwanda to block U.N. peace efforts. Uganda accuses Rwanda of having wanted to force Ugandan troops out of Kisangani.

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Religion News Service

June 9, 2000

Greek Church Calls for Mass Protests Against State ID Plan

(RNS) The Holy Synod of the Church of Greece announced Tuesday (June 6) it will stage two major rallies later this month to protest the government's decision to remove religious affiliation from state-issued identity cards -- a move church leaders say is an attempt to diminish the role of the church.

"(This) is the first in a series of measures aimed at putting religion on the margin of public, social and national life," said a statement released by the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece, according to Reuters news agency.

The protests will be held June 14 in Thessaloniki in northern Greece and on June 21 in Athens, where a May 31 protest against the government's decision drew about 8,000 members of the Greek Orthodox Movement for Salvation, according to news reports from Athens.

In May, Greece's Socialist government moved to comply with a 1997 law and ordered the exclusion of religious affiliation from the identification cards Greek citizens older than 13 are required by law to carry. The government also ordered that identity cards exclude a person's occupation and fingerprints, and the name of the cardholder's spouse.

Leaders of the Orthodox Church -- the official state church of Greece -- have called for a national referendum to decide whether compliance with the ruling should be optional.

But government officials say they want to abide by privacy protection laws, according to the Associated Press, and discourage discrimination against the Jewish, Muslim and non-Orthodox Christian populations in Greece.

Greece is one of a handful of European nations requiring state identity cards and is the only European nation to include religious affiliation on

the cards. More than 90 percent of the Greek population is Orthodox Christian.

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