

forces inside the movement. Bombings like those which killed Israelis in Afula and had not been in the Hamas repertoire heretofore, lead terrorist experts to hypothesize that the hand behind the attacks really was that of the Abu Nidal group. On the ground, Hamas sympathizers have been rounded up by the hundreds in Israeli Army raids launched following the Afula bombing. Hundreds of Hamas members have been in Israeli prisons for years.

Politically, Hamas enjoys popularity among Palestinians doctrinally opposed to peace with Israel, but, even with escalating terrorism, it has not been able to halt the dynamic unleashed on Sept. 13. Much of its support in the Occupied Territories comes from Palestinians who initially welcomed the Gaza-Jericho accord, but were demoralized by the lack of visible improvement in their living conditions thereafter. As soon as visible progress is made, in the release of prisoners and/or the withdrawal of Israeli military, these layers are expected to rally to Yasser Arafat's leadership.

King Hussein turns some screws

A further development which undermined Hamas was a statement issued by Jordan's King Hussein in the second week of April, denying that the group enjoyed legal status in the country. He said, "We do not recognize or agree to cooperate with anybody representing or professing to represent our Palestinian brothers except the Palestine Liberation Organization." The king made his remarks following accusations by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, that Jordan was harboring Hamas terrorists—accusations which carried the threat that the United States might be urged to place Jordan on its list of countries supporting terrorism.

King Hussein's statement represented no change in policy for the Hashemite kingdom; Hamas has no official status as a party in Amman, although it does have offices there, and most of its personnel are members of the Muslim Brotherhood, which is a recognized party in Jordan. The Muslim Brotherhood and its Hamas offspring enjoy support from the Saudis. Furthermore, Jordan has always recognized the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people. Nonetheless, the public reiteration of the king's stance, accompanied by the withdrawal of Jordanian passports from two leading Hamas members, underlined the delicacy of the position Hamas occupied politically.

If Hamas pursues the path which leads to rapprochement with the PLO, it could open the way to a national dialogue, averting the specter of civil war. Rapprochement works both ways: Some of the points on which Hamas was most intransigent have now been pushed up on the list of priorities also for several members of the PLO executive committee, particularly in the wake of the Hebron massacre. Clarification of programmatic aims between Hamas and the PLO will be important, not only for the elimination of terrorism, but also for coordinating an agreement which will lead to a comprehensive settlement including all Arab partners.

Rwanda heads down the Somalia route

by Linda de Hoyos

Rwanda is the latest African target in the drive by the United Nations and its non-governmental organization allies to create conditions for depopulation in Africa. Violence in Rwanda, believed to have claimed 100,000 lives in only two weeks, was sparked by the April 7 terror-downing of an airplane carrying Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana and Burundi President Cyprien Ntaryamira. Both Presidents were killed. No one has claimed responsibility for the downing of the plane, which was bringing the two heads of state back from negotiating sessions in Tanzania.

The western press has sought to explain the violence as a result of conflicts between the minority Tutsi and the majority Hutu groups in the country. Although both groups speak the same language, Rwanda had been traditionally ruled by the cattle-owning mercantile Tutsi group, until the post-colonial period.

Another more accurate picture has been put forward by Africa Watch, the Africa branch of Human Rights Watch, a well-heeled outfit with longstanding ties to the U.S. State Department. Alison Des Forges and Frank Smythe of Africa Watch have published accounts in the press stating the conflict is not tribal but political. According to this account, Habyarimana had agreed in February—under pressure from the U.S. Project Democracy crowd and its assets in Rwanda—to form a transitional government, dividing ministerial posts three ways: among Habyarimana's own Akazu clique, Hutu opposition parties led by Prime Minister Agathe Unwilingiyimana, and representatives of the Tutsi minority.

The proof of this, says Africa Watch, is that as soon as it became known that Habyarimana had been assassinated, his Presidential Guard—joined by Hutu hardliners in the military—went on a rampage in the capital city of Kigali. One of the first victims of slaughter was Prime Minister Unwilingiyimana, a Hutu. Another Hutu democracy-activist, Monica Mujawamariya, had warned in late March that plans were afoot among the military and among hand-picked militia armed by Habyarimana to eliminate "all those who give trouble" to the President. The murder of Habyarimana thus set off a slaughter that had already been planned.

Blame lies outside Rwanda

Nevertheless, this more informed view is a grotesque lie. The reality is that the 100,000 men, women, and children

killed in Rwanda and the thousands more forced to flee their homes, and the millions more living in total terror for their lives, under siege and without food and water, are the victims of a plot to destroy their country—originating *outside of Rwanda*. Despite Africa Watch's fulminations against Habyarimana, since 1973 the President had given Rwanda some stability and some progress in its economy and infrastructure. As in the case of Somalia, the plug was pulled on Habyarimana without any viable institution on hand to replace him.

The trouble began in 1990, when the Rwandan Patriotic Front invaded Rwanda from Uganda. The RPF, led by Paul Kagame, represented Tutsi refugees who had fled to Uganda. Kagame, who was trained in the United States, was a leading officer in the Uganda Armed Forces, and it is believed that the Tutsi refugees were an early element of Uganda President Musaveni's National Resistance Army in the early 1980s, through which Musaveni took power in Uganda in 1985.

The RPF invasion became the pretext to "internationalize" the situation in Rwanda. Habyarimana responded to the invasion by calling in French troops. For its ability to procure weapons to fight the RPF, Rwanda had to depend upon French credits. Foreign aid donors began to place pressure on Habyarimana to come to terms with the RPF and the growing "democracy movement"—aided and abetted by outfits such as Africa Watch—inside Rwanda.

In August, Habyarimana was forced into a settlement with both the RPF and the democracy movement. In September, U.N. Secretary General Boutros-Ghali initiated plans to send in a "peacekeeping force" to monitor the progress toward the transitional government. The force was comprised of French and Belgian troops, with some troops from Bangladesh and Ghana thrown in to cover for the striking presence of former colonial powers on the premises.

At the same time, Habyarimana was forced to sign a new deal with the International Monetary Fund, enforcing harsher austerity on the population to pay Rwanda's debt, which is nearly half its Gross National Product.

The April murder of the Rwandan President has now become the pretext for the international forces to leave Rwanda to its own devices. RPF forces are driving toward Kigali from the north. Armed Hutu military and gangs are meanwhile rampaging to kill any "fifth-column" Tutsi they can find—including women and children. On April 21, the U.N. Security Council agreed to reduce the U.N. "peacekeeping force" from 2,400 to 270. With the pullout, Rwanda can be expected to descend to the same type of chaos that engulfed Somalia after rebels took Mogadishu in 1990. Once the country has been reduced to such ruin, then likely Boutros-Ghali will demand that the U.N. "Blue Helmets" come back in.

As the *New York Times* illuminated the final goal in all this: "The United States and its allies have decided it would be difficult to maintain it [peace in Rwanda], without transforming the country into a United Nations trusteeship or a colonial-style administration."

Are Nigeria, Sudan threats to IMF model?

by Lydia Cherry

Recent Anglo-American attempts to brand Nigeria as a pariah regime, and a stepped-up campaign to dismember Sudan, no doubt have a lot to do with how threatened the world of Anglo-American finance is over the fact that both nations have said "No" to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) economic model.

The destabilization operation against Nigeria took a big step forward on April 4 with the announcement, given front-page play by British and Eastern establishment media in the United States, that the U.S. State Department and President Clinton have labelled Nigeria a top drug-trafficking country and placed it on a State Department list of nations failing to cooperate in international drug-control efforts, along with Burma, Iran, and Syria. The action immediately brings a halt to U.S. aid.

In a memorandum, President Clinton also singled out Afghanistan, Bolivia, Laos, Panama, Peru, and Lebanon as countries that do not cooperate sufficiently with American anti-drug efforts, but waived economic sanctions against these nations because of unspecified "vital national interests." Even if a Nigerian government role had been established, which it has not, one would have assumed that the Nigerian role as a big oil supplier to the United States would have exempted Nigeria from sanctions from the standpoint of vital U.S. national interests.

But not so.

The two nations, both former British colonies—Nigeria, the most populous country of Africa, and Sudan, the largest country in Africa that is also located in one of the world's top 10 "natural" breakbasket regions—are both openly seeking alternatives to the IMF model. Nigerian head of state Gen. Sani Abacha in mid-April appealed to the international community to understand why Nigeria has pulled back from the market reforms since early January and to acknowledge what destruction this model has wrought. "It is no longer enough to insist on reforms whose patterns of effect have now been catalogued country after country . . . and yet for the international community not to appreciate what are the likely outcomes of changes that it advocates," he said.

Part of the British "Great Game" for Africa has been to keep these two countries apart, as it has been to convince