

AFRICA NEWS

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UGANDA Clouded Prospects For Stability

With Tanzanian troops hoping to depart within the year, time is running out on Ugandan President Milton Obote's efforts to bring the security situation under control. Africa News looks this week at several of the major issues facing the Obote administration, with a file from Tony Avirgan in Dar es Salaam and an interview with author Cynthia Enloe on ethnicity in Uganda's army.

[AN] President Milton Obote celebrated the 21st anniversary of his ruling Uganda People's Congress (UPC) on March 9, several months after his return to office, in an atmosphere of relative calm. But the prospects for his administration are still plagued by unresolved problems of security, which threaten the confidence both of outside funding agencies and of the ordinary Ugandan. Among the recent developments:

• Over the weekend of February 6, armed attacks on police posts and military training schools in western Uganda, in the Mubende area, were followed that Monday by an assault on the Luzira prison only five miles from Kampala, the Ugandan capital. A previously unknown organization called the Uganda Freedom Movement (UFM) claimed responsibility and called for the overthrow of Obote's government.

Subsequent reports from Nairobi said the UFM was principally a conservative Baganda movement, with leadership from remnants of a guerrilla group led by the late Robert Serumaga, which had fought against Amin.

The Democratic Party, which won 51 seats against the UPC's 72 in the December election, is the largest opposition party, with considerable strength among the Baganda, and it has not associated itself with the violent opposition to Obote.

DP leader Paul Ssemogerere met with President Obote on February 24, and he sought assurances that security forces would follow discipline and not harass DP followers indiscriminately. President Obote said that strong instructions had been given to this effect, and both sides, according to Radio Kampala, "expressed their strong condemnation of the raids and agreed that they were not a reflection of anything near a popular uprising, but were the work of lawless elements."

More uncertain was the role of Yoweri Museveni, and his Uganda Patriotic Movement (UPM), which won only one seat in December. Government statements have blamed the attacks on Museveni, who has the following of up to 5,000 soldiers whom he had led in the struggle against Amin. Several UPM party officials have been detained, and the party offices ransacked, while Museveni evidently disappeared from Kampala several weeks before the raids.

According to reports reaching Nairobi, Museveni himself led the attack on the military training school at Mubende. In addition, a self-described Museveni emissary later confirmed the UPM leader's involvement to journalists in Kampala, but the spokesman named the group responsible as the Movement for the Struggle for Political Rights. The connection of this group to the previously named Uganda Freedom Movement or to the UPM remains obscure.

Museveni has a reputation as one of the more leftist of Uganda's political leaders, and his

apparent alliance with conservative Baganda, if genuine, is unlikely to last.

• The government drive against corruption and smuggling, with its accompanying perennial shortage of essential supplies for both troops and civilians, is continuing, though no one is yet claiming victory. Internal Affairs Minister William Ogara, however, said in late February that in the operation numerous multimillionaires, seven district commissioners, five UPC chairmen, three magistrates and two doctors have been detained. Ogara pledged that the campaign against *magen-do* (corruption) would continue.

• Northern Uganda, both Karamoja in the east and West Nile in the northwest, have continued in desperate straits due to drought and violence.

Karamoja, long beset by famine, has been supplied with food by several agencies, including private groups such as the Save the Children Fund and Oxfam, and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), which has held responsibility for coordination. In an early February news conference, the two private agencies strongly criticized the UNDP's planning as inadequate, and they urged that its responsibilities be handed over to UNICEF. A key problem has been transport for the foodstuffs, with fuel shortages a recurrent problem. The UNDP's local representative had defended the program, and some reports said the critique simply reflected "bickering in the family." New aid from the European Economic Community, Britain and the Lutheran World Federation, meanwhile, appears to have alleviated the immediate crisis in Karamoja.

More serious is the situation in West Nile, which was characterized by the official *Uganda Times* as "hell on earth." The *Times* agrees with most other sources in charging the government's own security forces with indiscriminate violence against civilians in their effort to combat guerrillas loyal to deposed dictator Idi Amin. Government troops are alleged to have carried out acts of vengeance on the ethnic groups they blame for the massacres that took place when Amin was in power. In the villages of Adjumani and Pakelle in mid-February, for example, thousands of villagers of the Madi ethnic group were reported expelled and some 25 killed by soldiers.

In October of last year, an estimated 250,000 people fled across the border into Zaire and Sudan after confrontations between the Ugandan army and guerrillas loyal to Idi Amin, and though perhaps 180,000 have now returned to their homes, the harvest is likely to be only some thirty per cent of normal. Movement continues back and forth across the border, in response to the insecure situation, and there are some 75,000 Ugandan refugees reported still in southern Sudan, also in need of aid.

Washington Post correspondent Jay Ross, who reported on a five-day trip to the area in a *Post* series February 5, 6 and 7, portrayed the area as extremely unstable, and he cited the role of the Verona Catholic missions as providing what buffer there is between the army, the guerrillas, and the civilian population. The UNDP early this month allocated \$350,000 in emergency relief for West Nile, described as only a first step in response to a Ugandan government appeal.

Any permanent solution, however, clearly depends on the Ugandan government's capacity to establish a military force

responsive to discipline, and a civilian governmental structure which can alleviate the mistrust of the West Nile population.

Tanzanians Want Out

DAR ES SALAAM [AN] Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere wants and needs desperately to withdraw his 10,000 troops from Uganda, but he will have to go against the wishes of his friend Ugandan President Milton Obote in order to do so.

A two-year defense pact, under which Tanzania is obliged to provide security for Uganda, expires in June, and President Nyerere has made it clear that he wants to bring his troops home at that time.

Dr. Nyerere told a news conference in mid-February that Tanzanian troops will withdraw from Uganda in June. "Even if they [the Ugandans] ask us to stay on, it doesn't mean that we have to say yes," the Tanzanian president remarked.

President Obote, on the other hand, has made it equally clear that he feels there is a need for the Tanzanian army to remain in his country. He told a recent news conference in Entebbe that Tanzanian forces continue to play a vital role in Uganda. He gave as an example the early February operation mounted when dissident forces attacked police stations around Kampala and other cities.

"The Ugandan soldiers were very angry," President Obote said. "They would have killed everyone who was caught. But the Tanzanians are much more experienced at this kind of thing and they made sure that people were arrested, not killed."

The one thing about which everyone agrees is the fact that the Ugandan army is not up to the task of providing security for the country.

Tanzanian officers assigned to train the Ugandans are totally frustrated and demoralized. One officer complained that, despite the insistence of the Tanzanians, Ugandan commanders have refused to create a register of who is in the army.

"The only way to tell a Ugandan soldier is that he has a uniform and an identity card," the officer said. "So we give a young man basic training and after several months think we have a soldier. Then he gets a month's leave and goes home to his village where he decides he doesn't like the army. So he gives the uniform and the 'I.D.' card to his brother, and we get back someone with no training at all."

The lack of records has also made a shambles of attempts to "detrain" the army Tanzania has worked to create after crushing Idi Amin's forces two years ago. Ugandan soldiers, instead of staying with the units to which they are assigned, often hear of a kindly commanding officer (invariably from the same ethnic group as the soldier) in another part of the country, so they go there.

The result is basically Acholi units in the Acholi area of northern Uganda, Ankole units in the west, and so on. The danger of such a development was tragically illustrated late last year when Acholi troops were sent into the West Nile district to put down a rebellion by remnants of Amin's forces. The Acholis proceeded to massacre any civilian not prudent enough to flee into neighboring Zaire or the Sudan.

Attempts by Tanzanians to gradually turn over responsibility for security on the borders to the Ugandans have, for the most part, come to naught.

"We gave them respon-

sibility for certain areas of the Sudanese border where there are occasional ambushes by small, poorly-armed bands of Amin soldiers," complained one high-ranking Tanzanian officer. "But the Ugandans refuse to fight. Every time a shot is fired they run back to us. We ask them, 'Why did you run?' and you know what they say? they say, 'We hired Tanzania to take care of this kind of thing.'"

The 'hiring' of Tanzanian army is one of the major reasons the Tanzanians want to get out. Under the defense agreement, Tanzanian military aid to Uganda consisted of ten Tanzanian officers assigned to work at Ugandan army headquarters. The Ugandan government agreed to pay all the expenses incurred in keeping 10,000 or more Tanzanian troops in Uganda. However, to date, the Kampala government has not paid Tanzania a single



ADMINISTERS OATH OF OFFICE

TRENTON, N.J. — While former Judge Arthur Lane holds the Bible (far right), U. S. District Judge Anne Thompson administers the oath of office to former U. S. Attorney Robert Del Tufo (c) as he is sworn as a new member of the State Commission of Investigation at the Court House. Judge Lane is chairman of the SCI. UPI PHOTO

shilling under the agreement.

Estimates of the cost of keeping the Tanzanians in Uganda range between \$1 million and \$4 million per month, in either case an amount that financially hard-pressed Tanzania

can ill afford.

Among Tanzanian soldiers and among the Tanzanian civilian population there is strong sentiment for withdrawal. From brigadiers to top government officials to peasants, there is a feeling

that Tanzania has sacrificed more than enough for Uganda and the time to turn attention and resources to domestic matters is at hand.

The popular theory among Tanzanian officials and officers at the

moment, a theory that conveniently justifies their desire for withdrawal, is that it is the very presence of the Tanzanian army in Uganda which is keeping the Ugandans from being serious about organizing a viable army of their own.



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