

Russian Pastor Re-Deported, Inflammatory Doctrine Cited

Alexei Ledyaev, leader of 60 churches in Russia, uses language that may have made him a target

A “new world order” doctrine allegedly being espoused by a well-known Russian charismatic pastor could be the cause behind the minister’s recent second deportation from his native country, Moscow church leaders believe.

A Charisma report in July explained how Russian border guards took Alexei Ledyaev’s visa, barring him from the country and denying him access to the more than 60 Russian churches in his fast-growing New Generation movement.

“It has practically paralyzed our work there,” said Ledyaev in a telephone interview from his office in Riga, Latvia, a former Soviet republic on the Baltic Sea.

Ledyaev’s visa problems started in March when he flew into Moscow’s Sheremetyevo airport, where he was stopped at passport control, jailed for eight hours without explanation and then deported on a flight out of Russia. He was allowed to keep his valid Russian visa.

On June 7, however, Russian border guards took Ledyaev’s visa and voided it when he attempted to enter the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad in his Mercedes sedan.

Ledyaev was on his way to a New Generation church service for some 600 people in Kaliningrad, a formerly closed Soviet port city.

"You are on a list of undesirables. You are on a blacklist," Ledyaeв quoted the border guard as saying to him.

Several Moscow-based pastors have suggested that Ledyaeв's controversial philosophy may be the reason he has been singled out among leaders of what is perhaps Russia's fastest-growing denomination.

In his call to a new world order, Ledyaeв uses language that could easily strike Soviet-bred Russian bureaucrats as incendiary.

"Invasion and expansion are the rails the 21st century church will move on to establish the kingdom of God all over the earth," the pastor writes, continuing later, "The throne of Russia is for Him."

In a country headed by former KGB Col. Vladimir Putin and where Western missionaries are sometimes accused of being American spies, evangelical Protestants typically take pains to avoid the overtly political. Ledyaeв dismissed the notion of a link between his ban and his ideas, saying that his philosophy is nothing new.

Anatoly Pchelintsev, a Moscow lawyer representing Ledyaeв, however, said the link was possible. "In principle, it could be a factor. Nominally, [new world order] could be considered an attack on the government."

Ledyaeв returned to Riga where several days later he met with the chief consul at the Russian Embassy there. The consul, Ledyaeв explained, merely cited international treaties that

allow countries to deny entry to those people deemed “dangerous”.

Pchelintsev said the pastor has no legal recourse because the Russian government is fully within its rights in keeping Ledyaev out and is not required to offer any explanation. Pchelintsev also said he believes Ledyaev will be granted a visa in a year or two.

“It is not the position of the government as a whole. It is the position of just a few officials in certain parts of the government,” said Pchelintsev, emphasizing that the actual reasons for Ledyaev’s visa woes are unknown since the Russian Foreign Ministry has offered no explanation.

Frank Brown in Moscow