

# THE ROLE OF NON-AFRICAN STATES IN THE RWANDAN GENOCIDE

by

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## I Preamble

This paper will analyze the role of three<sup>1</sup> non-African states in the Rwandan genocide – Belgium, France and the United States. The three will be discussed in alphabetic order, and the discussion will focus on the controversies surrounding each. Belgium is included because it was the colonial power that administered the Trusteeship for Rwanda from World War I to independence and remained intimately involved with Rwanda since then. France and the United States were the two permanent members of the Security Council most involved with Rwanda. In any case, the United States could not be excluded, if only because it is the great power in the world since the demise of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. The unipolar world commenced at the same time as the RPF invaded Rwanda at the beginning of this decade.

However, the United States has to be considered as well because of its major role in preventing the use of the UN peacekeepers intervening in the genocide. That role is judged by many to be so destructive that Gourevitch (1998) wrote: "The desertion of Rwanda by the UN force was Hutu Power's greatest diplomatic victory to date, and it can be credited almost single handedly to the United States." (p. 150) Alan J. Kuperman (currently a PhD student at MIT researching the US role in Rwanda) repeated Gourevitch's accusation. In an op-ed piece in the 24 December *Washington Post*, however, he restricted the American failure to the period prior to 6 April, but broadened the accusation to cover the entire realm of prevention rather than just the withdrawal of UNAMIR. "(T)he United States almost single-handedly blocked international action in Rwanda six weeks prior to the genocide, which might have prevented the bloodbath altogether."

As discussed in the paper on the Arusha peace process, this is a great exaggeration. The information provided in that other paper explains why accusing the United States of playing a significant role in preventing action from being taken to stop or to mitigate the genocide is correct. However, charging the United States with "almost single-handedly" blocking international action to prevent the genocide or to force the withdrawal of UNAMIR is sheer journalistic hyperbole. The role the United States played is bad enough without, ironically, lightening its load of guilt by exaggeration.

Analyzing the roles of the three countries side-by-side will also permit comparisons to be made in their respective roles in the genocide.

## II BELGIUM

The reconsideration of Belgian's role in Rwanda has polarized Belgian society. The genocide instigated a period of introspection that only two events in recent history have done – the Nazi occupation of Belgium and the recent scandal connected with serial Dutroux', after the bodies of young girls were found in his house on 26 August 1996. The arrival in Belgium of both Tutsi and Hutu "refugees" has exacerbated that polarization.<sup>2</sup> Belgium has been the only country beside France to hold an official inquiry into its role in the genocide.

On 24 July 1996, an ad hoc group in the Commission of Foreign Affairs of the Belgian Senate initiated an investigation of Belgian's role in Rwanda in the 1993-94 period. Its report summarized the available documentation. The contents revealed that the Belgium government knew a great deal more about the impending genocide before it burst into full blossom on 6 April 1994 than had theretofore been believed.<sup>3</sup> The government was also aware in advance of the risk to the Belgian peacekeepers before ten of them were murdered by the armed forces of the instigators of the coup in Rwanda that set off the genocide firestorm. As a result of those findings, the Senate instigated a Commission of Enquiry<sup>4</sup>, which, on 30 April 1997, became a full-fledged judicial commission with power to subpoena witnesses. It produced a very informative, even if somewhat incomplete report<sup>5</sup> (because the Belgian role and the role of others is not contextualized) on the Belgian role in Rwanda 1993-1994.<sup>6</sup>

This section will take up Belgian's role under the following headings:

1. Belgium's Provision of Economic Assistance to Rwanda;<sup>7</sup>
2. Belgium's Diplomatic Efforts in Rwanda Prior to the Genocide;
3. Belgium's Military Role in Rwanda.

I will not consider Belgium's colonial role; it has been extensively covered in many publications.<sup>8</sup> In fact, I will concentrate on the period beginning with the year 1990.

### 1. **The Role of Belgium as a Provider of Economic Assistance to Rwanda**<sup>9</sup>

Following a new general policy of transferring the ownership and control over aid programs to the recipient with the goal of enhancing local government structures and enabling the government to plan its human resource requirements, the Belgian bilateral agency adopted a new partnership program for the nineties. To enhance recipient involvement in the development projects, control over aid negotiations and management was transferred from Brussels to Kigali.

Secondly, at the beginning of the nineties, when Rwanda was faced with handling its war with the RPF as well as dealing with the continuing crisis of the crash of the coffee market,<sup>10</sup> Belgium **increased** its aid to Rwanda. In the first full year after the RPF invaded Rwanda, Belgium provided 200 million in Belgian francs (BF) as aid and also financed a BF 400 million World Bank financial package to assist Rwanda with its

structural adjustment program when Rwanda signed its Structural Adjustment Loan (SAL) with the bank. The 1991 aid package translated into US\$56. In 1990, development aid had only totaled US\$43 million and in the latter part of the eighties had only averaged US\$30 million. Project feasibility<sup>11</sup> helped to account for continued and even increased inflow.<sup>12</sup> In 1992, the aid package was increased again and totaled BF720 million.

In addition to the development aid changes and increases, Belgium was the fourth largest donor of emergency aid (after the World Food Program, the US and France). That aid began in earnest when the RPF launched a new offensive in March of 1992, ostensibly in response to the increased attacks against Tutsi within Rwanda. The previous total of 100,000 displaced as a result of the RPF invasion quickly almost doubled. In response to these massacres, a coalition of Belgian NGOs proposed sanctions against the Habyarimana regime. (Reyntjens 1995, 269) The high numbers and demands for aid led donors to create a Crisis Committee for Emergency Aid composed of donors, Government representatives, NGOs and representatives of UN agencies to provide local coordination and to monitor the delivery of aid. Their needs assessment estimate was \$19 million and it very soon proved to be far too little.

In each successive advance of the RPF, including the dramatic one in the spring of 1993 which gave such an important thrust to the conclusion of the Arusha talks, the numbers of displaced eventually grew to almost one million people, 15% of Rwanda's population. In 1993, total aid to Rwanda from Belgium began to drop. More significantly, whereas in 1990, the total aid package in 1990 had been development assistance and in 1991 emergency aid only represented 10% of the budget, by 1993 the bulk of the new monies from Belgium was going towards emergency aid. However, after the Arusha Accords had been signed, four new aid agreements in the health sector were committed worth BF81 million. (Cf. *Africa Research Bulletin*, November/December 1993)

On 11 February 1993, before the RPF March offensive when the displaced population was still at 500,000, a meeting of donors took place. Representatives from USAID, Germany, France, Switzerland, Belgium, the EU, UNICEF, UNDP, FAO, CARITAS, and ICRC attended. Food stocks in Rwanda had been reduced to a 2-3 week supply. Famine was predicted. Opening a new direct supply route through territory occupied by the RPF was urged. On the next day, an interagency meeting was convened by DHA in response to Habyarimana's letters to the Secretary General of 1 January and 1 February. The key issue was the distribution of food to the displaced. At that meeting the donors proposed to have a follow-up meeting which would discuss diverting the country program development funds to supply the emergency assistance program. Events would accelerate these plans. At the beginning of March, the number of displaced was 600,000. By the end of the month the numbers had risen to 950,000. Despite Rwandese government objections, henceforth, emergency aid displaced the development program, and Habyarimana's regime headed towards bankruptcy in 1993.

By mid-1993, the same consortium of NGOs published a detailed report on human rights violations in Rwanda, partly based on the report of the International Inquiry into Human Rights Violations that had been published in March. (Reyntjens 1995, 269)

The Belgium government recalled its ambassador and threatened to cut aid unless the human rights situation improved. (Reyntjens 1994, 194)

There was a third program of aid as well as the development and emergency aid. Belgium had been Rwanda's traditional provider of military aid. However, in 1991 Belgium stopped providing Rwanda with lethal weapons. (Braeckman 1994, 152) France had taken over as Rwanda's main military supplier.

In sum, Belgium was not a supplier of military aid in the build up to the genocide. Belgium followed the pattern of virtually all the western donors except for its larger per capita contribution. Belgium remained economically supportive of the Habyarimana regime well into 1992. When the numbers affected by the conflict grew too large, emergency aid replaced development aid, though some development aid was restored as a carrot after the Arusha Accords were signed. As well, some degree of concern with the Habyarimana regime's human rights record may also have had some impact on Belgian economic assistance policy.

## **2. Belgium's Diplomatic Efforts in Rwanda Prior to the Genocide**

Belgium was a major initiator of the diplomatic effort to end the war when the RPF invaded on 1 October 1990. By 15 October, the Belgian Prime Minister himself, Wilfried Martens, along with the Foreign Minister, travelled to Nairobi to meet Habyarimana in Nairobi to discuss the conflict and to urge a peaceful resolution of the war. Martens also agreed to raise the issue of the invasion at the next EU meeting. Two days later, Martens was in Mwanza, Tanzania, with Habyarimana in toe, where together they met the President of Tanzania, Ali Hassan Mwinyi. Martens and Mwinyi together persuaded Habyarimana to agree to the withdrawal of foreign troops and the repatriation of the refugees as conditions for a cease-fire. In the next two days, the very high level Belgian diplomatic mission travelled to Burundi to put in motion plans for a regional conference. Three days later, Martens' shuttle diplomacy took him to Kampala, Uganda, where he met with Museveni, both to brief the President of Uganda on the peacemaking efforts and to bring him on board.

Upon Martens return to Europe, he tried to persuade the EU to become involved as peacekeepers by providing an interpositional force. He was unsuccessful. Instead, Europe offered an expression of concern, particularly with the human rights record of the Habyarimana regime. The EU did support the regional initiative under the auspices of the OAU to mediate that the Belgians and Tanzanians had agreed upon.

After this initial flurry of activity and leadership, the Belgians moved into a supportive and relatively minor role. However, as mentioned above, in response to the publication of the revelations in the International Human Rights Report in March of 1993, Belgium briefly recalled its ambassador as an expression of disapproval of Habyarimana's human rights record. Belgium would not become an important player again until it provided peacekeepers for UNAMIR and then decided to withdraw them.

Prior to the death of 10 Belgian peacekeepers on 7 April, 1994, and the subsequent Belgian decision to withdraw its peacekeepers, Belgium had engaged in a flurry of activities in an effort to warn the international community about the possibility of the resumption of the conflict as well as the prospect of a massacre of a large number of civilians. Belgium had also tried to get the Security Council to strengthen the peacekeeping force. Belgian's warnings and the proposal for an enhanced peacekeeping force largely fell on deaf ears,

### **3. Belgian's Military Role in Rwanda**

Belgium began its military involvement in Rwanda shortly after the invasion by the RPF on 1 October 1990. On 4 October, 500 Belgian paratroopers landed in Kigali. In good part, because the Belgian government consisted of a coalition of Christian Democrats and Socialists who were at odds over Rwandan policy, the military forces, ostensibly there to protect Belgian nationals, played no other role.<sup>13</sup> On 27 October, following the Belgian diplomatic mission to Africa, the 500 paratroopers were withdrawn. Belgium did not become militarily involved again until the Arusha Accords were signed and Belgium agreed to provide an experienced and well equipped full battalion for UNAMIR.

The murder of 10 Belgian members of UNAMIR prompted a public outcry in Belgium by a public poorly informed about the situation in Rwanda. A strong push quickly grew for Belgian withdrawal. In the interim, Belgium, along with France and Italy, quickly mounted National Evacuation Operations (NEOs) on 9-11 April with virtually no advance warning or coordination with the UN. In fact, they made the situation more difficult for UNAMIR: first they had to negotiate a weapons tight guarantee from the factions to allow safe use of Kigali airport. Second, the presence of French and Belgian aircraft created mayhem in the streets around Kigali as people tried to flee the fighting. “There was panic. Everyone wanted to leave Kigali while the French and Belgian troops were at the airport. It was common knowledge that once the foreign troops left, the warring factions were going to fight for capture and control of the airport” (Anyidoho 34). As it turned out, this common knowledge proved to be erroneous and the reduced UNAMIR mission retained control of the airport throughout the war.

However, given these beliefs and the public outcry over the murder of the 10 Belgian peacekeepers, Willy Claes, the Defence Minister, panicked. On 12 April in Bonn, he personally informed the UN Secretary General, Boutros Boutros Ghali, of Belgium's intention to withdraw forthwith and unilaterally.<sup>14</sup> The withdrawal, however, was not just based on emotional factors. Belgium had been dissatisfied that Belgium had been the only country to provide troops with a significant enforcement capacity. Belgium was also disappointed that UNAMIR had not been equipped with the promised armoured personnel carriers and helicopters.<sup>15</sup>

Even more significantly, just as Belgium had once lobbied strenuously for an enhanced UNAMIR presence, it now advocated that the entire UNAMIR force be withdrawn and lobbied strenuously to that end. Further, contrary to the promise the

Belgian senior officer, Machal, made to General Dallaire, Belgium also ordered its troops to bring all their equipment and weapons with them upon withdrawal.

The Belgian soldiers were extremely unhappy about abandoning their mission, and especially about abandoning the 2000 Rwandan civilians that they had been protecting and that they knew would meet certain death upon their withdrawal. They had already been very discontented with the very restrictive interpretation of the rules of engagement set forth by the DPKO. Their restriction to such a passive role had, in the eyes of the Belgian soldiers, meant that they had lost loss of military credibility in the eyes of the Rwandan army. The withdrawal now meant that they were viewed as cowards as well, and morally irresponsible ones as well. It is not surprising that many of them threw down their blue berets in disgust upon their return to Belgium. The Belgians did not leave Rwanda on a high note.

### III THE ROLE OF FRANCE IN THE RWANDAN GENOCIDE

#### A. Preamble

Traditionally, French policy in Africa was driven by two dominant goals - the preservation and enhancement of France's historical position in Africa largely through the promotion of *francophonie*, and, secondly, the promotion of French economic supremacy in francophone Africa. (Schraeder 1997, 206)<sup>16</sup> French defence policy was intended to supplement these goals through defence accords that made provision for supplying arms and military advisers, and even military intervention to ensure stability.<sup>17</sup>

Just a few weeks prior to this writing at the very end of 1998, France, the second country after Belgium to conduct an official parliamentary inquiry into the 1994 genocide in Rwanda<sup>18</sup>, issued its report.<sup>19</sup> The Rwanda government described the report as a "whitewash".<sup>20</sup> According to Rwandese radio, citing a statement from the president's office, the parliamentary commission was set up to "absolve France of any role in the genocide". According to the current Rwandan government, France played a "key role" in the genocide. How? First, France participated in the "disinformation campaign" which misled the international community. Secondly, France set up "Zone Turquoise" in southwest Rwanda with the aim of reorganising the ex-FAR and Interahamwe militia. Third, France had "systematically undermined efforts to address the course and the aftermath of the genocide in Rwanda." The IRIN report said nothing about Rwanda's older charges that France had been the major military supplier of Rwanda.

Did France play a key role in facilitating the genocide? Did France engage in a disinformation campaign to deliberately mislead the international community? Was *Opération Turquoise* launched to allow the ex-FAR and interahamwe to escape and reorganize? Has France engaged in an effort to undermine any enquiry into the path of the genocide?

Rwanda has not been the only party to level such charges. In his best selling book, Gourevitch (1998) claims that, "the signal achievement of *Opération Turquoise* was to

permit the slaughter of Tutsis to continue for an extra month, and to secure safe passage for the genocidal command to cross, with a lot of its weaponry, into Zaire." (pp. 160-1)<sup>21</sup> Gourevitch even quotes French ex-President, Valéry d'Estaing as accusing the French command of "protecting some of those who had carried out the massacres." (p. 157) Peter Uvin (1998) states baldly that France engaged in "blatant actions to shelter the genocidal regime." (p. 99) Did *Opération Turquoise*, whatever its intentions, lengthen the period of the genocide, protect the genocidists and then allow them to escape intact with all their arms?

I have no reason to defend France. With the exception of some individual French officials, France was the least cooperative state in supplying information to the researchers who had worked on the report Astri Suhrke and I wrote for the international community. (Adelman and Suhrke 1996) After they had received the draft and before we had had an opportunity to respond to any criticisms, France sent a formal *demarche* (a strong form of diplomatic protest) to Norway, Denmark and Sweden denouncing the report and cancelled a head of state visit from Sweden. Further, at our presentation of the draft report in Copenhagen at the end of 1995, the French denounced our report as full of lies and distortions. They were particularly incensed at the charge that we had made that France had continued to supply arms even after the genocide had started.<sup>22</sup> The French announced that they were withdrawing their financial support for the whole inquiry. And when, after our presentation and before we wrote the final version, Astri Surke traveled to Paris to try to explore the evidential basis of their concerns, the French officials were not very forthcoming.

Yet when I read Kagame's or Gourevitch's criticisms of the role of France, I find that they exaggerate to such an extent that they reduce rather than add to the level of understanding.<sup>23</sup> I will try to explain why by discussing the French role under the following headings: 1) France's military support for the Habyarimana regime; 2) France's diplomatic efforts to bring about a peaceful resolution of the conflict; and 3) *Opération Turquoise*.

#### 1. France's Military Support for the Habyarimana Regime:

On 4 October 1990, in response to a personal phone call from Habyarimana to Jean-Christophe Mitterand, France sent a small contingent of paratroopers (150 men) drawn from the French force stationed in the Central African Republic in Operation Noroît. The official instructions were to protect French expatriates in Rwanda.<sup>24</sup> The troop strength was increased to 350 in November when the Belgians left the country. To quote the report I co-authored with Astri Suhrke (1998), "In keeping with military cooperation agreements, Zaire and France sent troops to Rwanda at the time of the invasion. During the invasion and during its aftermath, French policy was decided at the highest level (President Mitterand). The immediate response was to send 'a few boys /\_to help\_/ , old man Habyarimana', as the head of Africa Unit in the Presidential Palace said at the time (Prunier 1995). France had previously done the same for other allies in Francophone Africa, and had paratroopers stationed in the region for that purpose. In this case, the determination to assist was sharpened by the fact that the rebels had come from and, in some respects were part of,

Anglophone Africa. The social origins and platform of the RPF also made them anathema in some French conservative and army circles and earned them the pejorative label "Khmer Noir", conveying the horrors of Cambodia's Khmer Rouge with the undemocratic practices of a once aristocratic caste. The initial decision not to make a major power demonstration reflected a belief that the RPF would easily be repulsed. Jean-Christophe Mitterand told Prunier (1995) that he thought it would be all over in 2-3 months...The French backstopped the Rwandan army in Kigali and "advised" Rwandans handling heavy artillery, but did not consider the operation a major one."

Gourevitch (1998) argued incorrectly that this intervention by France was in violation of the terms of its own military assistance agreement with Rwanda. (see endnote 2) His explanation for France undermining its own agreements was that, "President Mitterand liked Habyarimana, and Mitterand's son Jean-Christophe, an arms dealer and sometimes commissar of African affairs in the French Foreign Ministry, liked him, too. (As military expenditures drained Rwanda's treasury and the war dragged on, an illegal drug trade developed in Rwanda; army officers set up marijuana plantations, and Jean-Christophe Mitterand is widely rumoured to have profited from the traffic.) France funneled huge shipments of armaments to Rwanda - right through the killings in 1994 - and throughout the early 1990s, French officers and troops served as Rwandan auxiliaries, directing everything from air traffic control and interrogation of RPF prisoners to frontline combat." (p. 89)

Instead of explaining the intervention in terms of personal affections and corruption, Clapham (1998) viewed the intervention as one based on *francophonie*. "In the eyes of the Mitterand regime, this Ugandan support assumed the dimensions of an anglophone conspiracy to take over part of francophone Africa, and the defence of Habyarimana (and, hence, in turn, of the Hutu suprememecist ideology with which important elements of his regime were already closely associated) became part of the more general defence of *francophonie* and the French role in Africa, to the extent that to an anglophone observer seems quite bizarre." (p. 199; cf. Prunier 1995, 102-107) I support this explanation as the primary motive, provided that *francophonie* is understood in economic and political terms as well as cultural ones. (Cf. Schraeder above)

Whatever the motivation, French support to the Habyarimana regime was critical. "From the FPR invasion onward, France greatly stepped up its military support to the Habyarimana regime. Active involvement of its troops is generally credited with helping to halt both the October 1990 invasion and the March 1992 FPR offensive. However, French military advisers were involved in many more ways in the operation of the army; the French military's involvement in advising the president, training new recruits, defending important installations, manning roadblocks, and interrogating prisoners has been widely documented (Adelman and Suhrke 1996, 14-15; Braeckman 1994, 159; Reyntjens 1994, 175; Rwanda Third Degree 1991; Rwanda: French Agenda 1992; Verschave 1995). At the same time, the Habyarimana regime embarked on a campaign of rearmament, again with prime support from France. Arms were imported from Egypt and France with credits from French nationalized banks, and other arms were bought from South Africa (Braeckman 1994, 149). As mentioned earlier, these arms were used to

equip the army and the militia and were evenly widely distributed to ordinary citizens throughout the country. Human Rights Watch documented that during the genocide, arms were shipped from France to Rwanda, in contravention of a UN arms embargo." (Uvin, p. 97; we will return to the claims repeatedly made, including by myself, that France continued to ship arms after the genocide commenced.)

In the beginning of the campaign, the French were confident that the Rwandan government could defeat the RPF, perhaps by also complementing the military superiority with some degree of political compromise. As Clapham (1998) put it, In June of 1991, "neither side at this stage had any interest in reaching a settlement: the government, secure in its military backing from France, was confident of victory, while the RPF had no interest in admitting defeat. As the conflict ground on, despite various disregarded ceasefires, the RPF became increasingly confident of its ability to maintain the insurgency. By 1992, despite French support for the government forces that included not only credits for weapons purchases but effective French operational control of the counter-insurgency campaign (Prunier 1995, 100; JEEAR, 1996, 22), <sup>25</sup> the military initiative had passed to the RPF." (p. 201) Finally, as Jones (1995, 242) claimed, French military intelligence after the 1993 RPF offensive concluded that the RPF could defeat the government forces.

This intelligence analysis proved to be deadly accurate as could be seen when the RPF launched its military offensive on 8 February 1993. The impact on the balance of strength was so significant that Rwanda had to ask France to send reinforcements to bolster the army, which France did in two waves, on 9 February (150 troops) and 20 February (250 troops). The latter deployment was justified by France as being necessary since the RPF advance threatened Kigali. Tanzanian and French intelligence sources concluded at the time that the RPF could overrun the FAR were it not for the presence of the French troops in Kigali. This conclusion would form the backdrop to the subsequent round of negotiations. This perception evidently was shared by Habyarimana, for he personally called for a return to the Arusha process on 23 February and truly serious negotiations intent on concluding a full peace agreement began for the first time.

On 21 March, France began to withdraw its forces. The withdrawal was completed on 11 December after the first units of UNAMIR had taken up positions in Rwanda. However, France's withdrawal would prove to be short lived. For the Arusha Accords broke down with the murder of Habyarimana on 6 April 1994 and the extremist coup. This time the French troops returned but truly only to rescue European nationals. "On 9 April, unannounced to Dallaire, the French advanced parties of Operation Amaryllis arrived at Kigali airport to evacuate European nationals. The force totalled 1,100 troops of whom 400 were Belgian and 80 Italian." (Connaughton 1995, 12) Their mission completed, the French left on 13 April, though not without France announcing that the French/Belgian withdrawal would create a security vacuum in Rwanda. While in Kigali, French troops assumed full responsibility for the airport control tower and routes into the city from the airport, while the Belgians assumed responsibility for airport perimeter and assembly point security.

How can French military support be characterized up to the beginning of the genocide? It was open, blatant and fell into three stages. In the first stage the support was modest when there was a strong belief that Habyarimana could easily defeat the invaders from Rwanda. When the military situation became more balanced, the French increased its support in order to facilitate a political solution by retaining a degree of balance. When the military situation had deteriorated, and an RPF victory was forecast, France concentrated its attention on a peaceful solution and a multilateral intervention force and began to initiate its own withdrawal. Finally, the French did stop shipping arms once the genocide started, contrary to what had been very widely alleged<sup>26</sup> and what we ourselves wrote<sup>27</sup> in the report I co-authored with Astri Suhrke.<sup>28</sup>

## **2. France's Diplomatic Efforts to bring about Peace**

As indicated above, French diplomatic activity grew as the regime's position weakened. The diplomatic activity reached its apogee when the military commitment was strongest but when the demise of the regime was expected, its military support declined. The French involvement in Rwanda as the principle Western nation supporting Habyarimana began in November of 1990 after the RPF had invaded and the Belgians, because of domestic internal political splits, had retired from taking a leadership role. In the second week of November, a French delegation led by the Minister of Cooperation and Jean-Christophe Mitterand, the French African Advisor, met with various European and African leaders to discuss the situation in Rwanda

The French were could not have been ignorant of the vast number of charges of human rights abuses being levelled at the regime during this period. For example, in the 26 January 1991 - *Le Monde*, documents were cited about the circulation of anti-Tutsi racist propaganda just 3 days after the Bagogwe (500-1000) massacre in Kinigi and just before 300 Tutsi were massacred in Bigogwe. French policy did seem to follow the pattern which Mitterand and the current Foreign Minister, then Chief of Staff for Mitterand, insisted it was based upon<sup>29</sup> - traditional *francophonie* and a desire to facilitate a compromise with the RPF, but presumable on terms favourable to the government.

When the cease-fire again broke down again in the spring of 1991, France became more active. As we had written in Adelman and Suhrke (1996), emphasis on the military had been increasingly questioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. About mid-1991, it was believed that the RPF might win militarily but not politically. The government could not win militarily, though it might command the numbers to win politically. Hence, a negotiated settlement was the best way for France to salvage its interests in Rwanda. The October 1991 attempt by the Director of the Africa Bureau in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to mediate between GoR and RPF in Paris finally bore fruit in late spring of 1992, when the two parties agreed in Paris on June 8 to open formal peace talks. The Director at the time was M. Dijoud.

Possibly the French were piqued that a high ranking American official, Deputy Assistance Secretary Hicks, had organized a meeting between RPF and GoR in Harare in July. A subtle competition between Washington and Paris developed, driven on the French side by a sense that diplomatic initiatives in Central Africa properly belonged to a

French sphere. On 6-7 April 1992: negotiations began in Paris on the prospect of a meeting between the two sides. Finally, the initiative bore fruit. From 6-8 June, France began its efforts to directly mediate the conflict in a meeting between the Foreign Ministry of the Rwandan government and a representative of the RPF in Paris. The parties agreed to negotiate to end the conflict. Thus, the French were critical to beginning the Arusha peace process.

Ostensibly in response to a slaughter of Tutsi, the RPF resumed fighting in February of 1993. On 21 February, they once again unilaterally declared a cease-fire. France had just denounced the RPF advance. France said that those advances were threatening the peace. Although on 17 February, M. Marcel Débarge had assured French that the international commission report on human rights violations would not be ignored, he never publicly denounced the Habyarimana regime in the same way he castigated the RPF. On 2 April, France informed the UN officially that the situation was deteriorating. He claimed that the RPF were reoccupying zones from which they were to have withdrawn. The French expressed their fear that there would be massacres and a humanitarian disaster. France urged UN action. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of April, the Permanent Representative of France sent a new mission to the Security Council to complain that the military withdrawal was not progressing as agreed upon and that the political talks were deadlocked. He stressed the urgency of the situation and urged the UN to take emergency action, specifically sending a force to monitor the Rwanda/Uganda border. It was evident that the French government, while genuinely trying to mediate the talks, remained biased towards the Habyarimana regime.

France had an observer at the Arusha talks. I have already covered the French role in my paper on the Arusha peace process. It is interesting that some commentators criticize the French for not having taken a stronger, more leading role, in concert with other states, to ensure that the provisions of Arusha were implemented.<sup>30</sup> There is a second type of criticism. The lack of commitment to the process is not formed in advance but as a result of inadequacies in the agreement and distrust about the parties commitment to it. "Because deep distrust of an opponent remains in place at the time an agreement is set in motion, commitments made at the bargaining table may not be credible. Within-group rivalry may come into full view after the agreement, the provisions of the agreement may be vague and cause new tensions, and the world community may not be prepared to give sustained support to peacekeeping and peacemaking." (Lake and Rothchild, Chapter 9: 224) There is a third, realist interpretation that argues that states will not become engaged in enforcing a peace agreement unless their vital interests are at stake.<sup>31</sup> But whatever the explanation for the lack of commitment - the lack of effort or will, the inadequacies of the agreement itself and the consequent reluctance of outsiders to become involved, or the inherent lack of interest because of realpolitik - all three types of commentator agree that there was not a party sufficiently engaged to assure that coercive force was available to enforce the agreement. This was a s true of France, who had become most closely engaged with Rwanda in the nineties, as it was of the other Western states.

From the end of the Arusha process, France was not the active supporter of Rwanda, but its passive supporter. France became more of a bystander acting as a Cassandra to warn of impending disaster, but without targeting or putting sufficient pressure on its own client - the government of Rwanda. Though clearly supporting the peace process and the effort to install a multi-party regime, France was still obsessed with its own perception. The 'Anglophone' invaders were the principle beneficiaries of the agreement and France remained very insensitive to the Uncivil War being waged by the extremists against the Tutsi population. When France recovered some degree of concern, it was more to protect its own sense of honour than to protect the Tutsi or ensure that the perpetrators of the genocide were totally stopped and caught to be tried for their crimes.

### 3. *Opération Turquoise (OT)*

Security Council Resolution 929 of 22 June 1994 authorised France to mount a two month unilateral humanitarian intervention into Rwanda until UNAMIR II became operational. Was OT a smoke screen to facilitate the Hutu withdrawal from Rwanda in August 1994,<sup>32</sup> or was the mission a public relations exercise to mitigate the embarrassment of supporting a genocidal regime? Or was it a genuine if somewhat belated effort to save remaining Tutsi from the continuing onslaught of the genocide? According to its public rationale, OT was undertaken for two purposes. One was humanitarian - to stop the genocide and save civilian lives. The second was political, since France had traditional obligations and a loyalty to protect its compatriots, but also a responsibility to the UN and the goals of a peaceful resolution of conflicts. Further, the initiative was to be undertaken within a multilateral UN mandate with the following boundary conditions: limited engagement and avoidance, if possible, of any ground forces engagement.

In fact, the political motivations in France were multiple, for France was not a homogeneous actor. There were, in fact, many different voices in Paris, and some of those different voices had a hand in the decision. As Connaughton (1995) summarized them, "There was a political division in Paris. In the planning stage, many of the military firmly believed that they were going into Kigali to comfort and defeat the Tutsis, 'the Khmer Noir', and return to Rwanda to the *status quo ante*. President Mitterand represented a groundswell of humanitarian opinion which had seized itself with the notion of hundreds of orphans to rescue and care for. The Foreign and Defence Ministries viewed Turquoise as an opportunity for them to recapture foreign policy from the President." (Connaughton, net, section2, 10)

The size of the force was disproportionate and extremely well-armed for a rescue operation. Unless one takes into account the forces needed if France became involved in a firefight in spite of its peaceful intentions. The force included 2555 French and 350 Francophone troops from seven different countries including Senegal. There were 12 Jaguar and Mirage F-1s as well as armoured personnel carriers and other equipment. However, these were kept back in Goma, Zaire, the staging area for the operation. It must be remembered that only half the force ever landed in Rwanda. The force was instructed only to use force to defend itself, defend a protected population, deal with mission obstruction or if in a conflict situation with refugees.. Further, that force was to be used

only as a last resort. As further evidence that the force was not there to engage in conflict, the troops were ordered not to wear helmets or anti-shrapnel jackets.

The best example of the evidence for the peaceful intention of the force was the operation to rescue and evacuate 700 orphans and 50 civilians from Butare. Kagame's version of that event, and the brief firefight with the RPF outside Butare, as recorded by Gourevitch, is as follows.

"during our approach to Butare...I received from General Dallaire of UNAMIR a message from the French general in Goma telling me that we should not enter Butare. They were trying to tell me there would be a fight." Kagame told Dallaire that "he would not tolerate such a provocation and such arrogance on the part of the French." Then, he recalled, "I told the troops to change course, to move to Butare now. They arrived in the evening. I told them just to surround the town and stay put. I didn't want them to get involved in a firefight at night. So they took positions and waited until morning. When our troops entered, they found that the French had secretly moved out to Gikongoro" - to the west. "But then, through Dallaire, they asked permission to return for some Catholic orphans they wanted to take away. I cleared it. The French came back, but they didn't know that we had already secured the route from Gikongoro to Butare. We had set a long ambush, nearly two companies along the road."

The French convoy consisted of about twenty-five vehicles, and as it left Butare, Kagame's forces sprang their trap and ordered the French to submit each vehicle to inspection. "Our interest was to make sure none of these people they were taking were FAR or militias. The French refused. Their jeeps were mounted with machine guns, so they turned them on our troops as a sign of hostility. When the soldiers in the ambush realized there was going to be a confrontation, they came out, and a few fellows who had rocket-propelled grenade launchers targeted the jeeps. When the French soldiers saw that, they were all instructed to point their guns upward. And they did. They allowed our soldiers to carry out the inspection." In one of the last vehicles, Kagame said, two government soldiers were found. One ran away and was shot dead, and Kagame added, "Maybe they killed the other one, too." At the sound of the shooting, the French vehicles that had been cleared to go ahead turned on the road and began firing from afar, but the exchange lasted less than a minute." (Gourevitch 1998, 158-9)

From other accounts of the incident, the report is very factual in its details, but filtered through Kagame's vision and perspective. Set aside from Kagame's totally justifiable anger at the French for supporting the Habyarimana regime that had been engaged in the wanton killing of Tutsi for the last four years. Set aside the presumptuousness of the French entering another country to save its citizens after allowing most of the Tutsi to be killed by forces it formerly supported. Set aside that the French could have chosen to support Kagame's armies to stop the wanton killing much faster than even the French, and much more extensively. Note, instead, the following. When the French asked Kagame not to enter Butare, Kagame's interpreters interpret their request to mean that, "they were trying to tell me there would be a fight. It is Kagame who prepares his troops for a firefight, in spite of the prior agreement with the French and the fact that they had asked for his permission, through Dallaire, and he had given it. It is Kagame who prepares a surprise attack on the French. Kagame does not mention that in addition to the nuns, there were 700 orphans and 50 civilians in the military column that the French had taken under their protection and who would have suffered enormous casualties if a firefight had broken out. Kagame does not say, but we know from other

sources, that the French soldiers were not wearing helmets or anti-shrapnel jackets. They were travelling in jeeps and not in armoured personnel carriers. And, according to Kagame's own words, two ostensible FAR soldiers were finally allegedly found in the last car. Assuming they were really FAR soldiers, Kagame makes it clear to Gourevitch that they were shot. There was no attempt evidently to capture them. In contrast, in Kagame's own description, there is every bit of evidence that the French were trying their best to avoid a conflict.

More seriously, what if an extensive firefight would have broken out? Ignore for a moment the large number of children and civilian casualties that would have resulted. Kagame would have fallen right into the FAR trap and, inadvertently enlisted the French in combat fully on the side of the FAR.<sup>33</sup> Even if Kagame eventually would have won, the remaining Tutsi in the south would have been in even greater danger than they already were. And the French might well have resorted to the use of their extensive air power to wreck havoc on Kagame's military.

This suggests that, given Kagame's paranoia and understandable distrust of the French, the French have to be applauded for their skills in diplomacy in handling such a tough situation. Further, they did save lives - perhaps only 10,000 to 25,000.<sup>34</sup> Further, because of the French presence, a good part of the Hutu population in the south did not become refugees in Zaire to add to the vast number already there and the additional economic burden on the international community. True, the French allowed some Tutsi to be killed who were not in the main collection centres. True, the ex-FAR and militia units were not arrested.<sup>35</sup> True, the army was allowed to escape freely into Zaire. But the French had no mandate to arrest genocidists and no mandate to prevent the FAR soldiers and militia from seeking temporary sanctuary in the south and then in Zaire. It was a protection mandate only.

This suggests that OT was truly a humanitarian mission, even if Prunier (1995) is correct in suggesting that the motives for the mission were French pride and fear of loss of their honour and others have indicated that the French remained biased towards the side that produced the genocidists.<sup>36</sup> As General Anyidoho, the commander of the Ghanaian peacekeeping forces, summarized his assessment, "Within UNAMIR itself, the French proposal [for a humanitarian operation in June of 1994] was received with mixed feelings. While some of us supported the French initiative, others opposed the idea on the grounds that such an intervention could only worsen the situation. This French operation proved to be the right decision in the end."<sup>37</sup>

#### **IV THE UNITED STATES ROLE IN THE RWANDA GENOCIDE**

##### **Preamble**

In reviewing the role of the United States, and in a major contrast with the analysis of the French role, there is virtually no controversy about the facts of the case. There is some controversy over explaining why the United States did what it did, or, more accurately, why it failed to do what it should have done, and a great deal of

controversy over the evaluation of that failure. But there is an overwhelming consensus that the Rwanda genocide represented a failure in American foreign policy and, further, a great deal of consensus on most of the steps that led to that failure.

There are, of course, simplistic explanations of the American role. The current Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, is one of the most reliable simplifiers. In testimony, in speeches, in briefings to the press when the issue hit the headlines again with the Belgian enquiry or when Gourevitch's articles first appeared in the *New Yorker*, Annan blamed the failure on lack of political will by the international community. The most important player in the international community is the United States. He has done this ever since he was head of U.N. peacekeeping operations during the genocide. For Annan, the explanation for that lack of political will is what I and Astri Suhrke had dubbed the Shadow of Somalia. According to Annan, much of that will had been sapped by the failure of the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Somalia when, in October 1993, 18 American Rangers were killed in an attack on the stronghold of warlord Mohammed Mohammed Farah Aidid. The trauma of Americans watching their boys being dragged half-naked through the streets of Mogadishu destroyed their stomach for any future engagement of this type.

As a result of that fiasco, President Clinton later announced that all American forces would be withdrawn. Under pressure from Congress, Clinton set stringent conditions on future U.N. peacekeeping operations (Presidential Decision Directive 25, PDD-25) - measures that ruled out rapid international response to crises like the Rwandan genocide. These were signed into effect one month after the Rwanda genocide began, though the conditions of that directive governed policy before that time. As Ambassador Madelaine Albright testified when she was still the US Ambassador to the UN and when the genocide had been in full swing for almost a month, the US would only enter a multinational peacekeeping operation if specific criteria were met. Those were: "whether there was a real threat to international peace, clear objectives, and an identifiable end point."<sup>38</sup> The latter referred to an exit strategy.

On the surface, this appeared to restore American policy to its customary foundation in serving the national interest bounded by prudential concerns when acting on those interests.<sup>39</sup> As Vaccaro articulated that policy, the US strongly opposed new interventions and had become skeptical of mounting coercive peace operations after the Somali debacle. Vaccaro quoted Anthony Lake's (NSA) announcement of PDD-25: "neither we nor the international community have either the mandate nor the resources nor the possibility of resolving every conflict of this kind."<sup>40</sup> This view was projected onto the international community at large: "The international community seemed willing to help other countries resolve conflicts, but only at low cost and at the request of the local parties to those conflicts. To suppress genocide in Rwanda, coercive operations would have been required." (375)

In other words, the emotional trauma was explained to be a product of straying from the traditional foundations of American foreign policy. Based on the priority of national interest, the US acted within the boundaries of what could be done, what could be afforded to be done, what could be efficaciously done, and what could be done at low

risk to the lives of American soldiers. Ivo Daalder stressed the no risk factor and explained this as a shift from multilateralism and towards the priority of domestic policy issues influenced by Clinton's presidential campaign. This move was motivated by two factors, first the president's electoral platform which asserted that foreign policy was to be subordinate to domestic concerns, and, second, that the Mogadishu syndrome resulted in a "no casualty" approach to foreign policy. "The impetus for the administration's endorsement of multilateralism and its efforts to strengthen the UN's capacity to conduct peace operations was partly attributable to this political imperative. Multilateral peace operations, it was thought, offered a way for the US to remain engaged internationally without having to bear alone all the burdens of international leadership. But as domestic and congressional criticism of multilateralism and the UN mounted in the wake of the Somali debacle, the administration chose to join its critics rather than defend its policy, believing that in so doing it could better protect its domestic political agenda." (61-62)

This interpretation of American policy has been questioned on two grounds, neither of which challenges the accuracy of the realist explanation. One points to its inadequacy in reflecting how the United States actually behaves. America simply does not act on the basis of narrow national self interest in foreign policy. This was the case when America diverted its policy towards a multilateralist approach before the Somali episode. But it was also the case immediately after the promulgation of PDD-25 when American forces went abroad in the humanitarian effort to help the Rwandan Hutu refugees who had crossed the Rwanda/Zaire border in such massive numbers. As R.M. Connaughton phrased it, "As a result of their interpretation of the Somalia episode, the US Congress adopted a view that it did not like UN Peacekeeping. In April 1994, when effective action might have achieved something in Rwanda, both the executive and the legislative agreed that there was no US national interest in Rwanda. However, the unfolding TV tragedy of the post-Goma period had a political impact which was not evident in pre-Goma when the worst incidents had occurred." (1995 for ODI, UK, on internet, p 5of13, section 2)

There is also a normative critique. If the US acts only out of a narrow sense of self-interest, "small, vulnerable countries may draw the conclusion that the family of free countries is no family at all and that real friends lie elsewhere; and because the strong democracies are weakened by the resulting appearance of hypocritical self-interest that begins to gnaw at their moral (and thus their political) credibility." (Tony Judt, "What Are American Interests," NYRB XLII:15 5 October 1995, p. 37.) In other words, acting on self interest is not only morally questionable, it does not even serve those self interests. Even the implementers of PDD 25 admitted that the Presidential Directive was a catastrophe.<sup>41</sup>

Before taking on the issues of explanation and normative evaluation, I will review, reasonably quickly and concisely, the factual analysis of the US role and contribution to the genocide. As I indicated, there has been a general concurrence about these factors, one that has been helped by America's willingness to be forthcoming about its motives and policies. For purposes of economy of space, I will review them by category rather than chronologically.<sup>42</sup>

### **The Categories of American Failure in the Rwandan Genocide**

## A. Will or Guts

Jane Holl, Executive Director of the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, at the 1998 December forum of the Council on Foreign Relations suggested that the phrase 'political will' be banished from the lexicon of political science. It lacked any content, she insisted. Certainly, as used by many, the phrase is reduced to banality. To see the Mogadishu Syndrome as a lack of political will or to read America's refusal to take action on the genocide as a failure of political will is simply misleading. The US administration had a great deal of will in standing up to all the pressures when it refused to endorse any action. This may have been misguided. Its stance may have been shortsighted. It was certainly immoral. But it was also **not** a problem of lack of will.

Political will is divisible into two aspects. In one, it is the capacity to mobilize energy and resources to tackle a particular task or to insist on using its energy for other tasks. In many conflicts in which America saw itself primarily as a bystander occupying a ringside seat, such as initially in former Yugoslavia where the United States saw the EU as the major outside player, the US was the only party that demonstrated it could get its act together once it resolved to do so. One may disagree with the results, but that disagreement should not be converted into a charge that the Americans lacked political will, unless this simply means that America had resolved not to act in that way, a peculiar use of a lack of will. That type of political will is the ability and resolve to mobilize its energy to focus on one problem rather than another.

There is another aspect to political will. It is the ability to use coercive power to make others bend to your will. It is other rather than self-directed. And coercive force or the threat to use coercive force on another is the exclusive expression of that aspect of political will. The creative energy aspect of political will can be identified with a lion tamer who separates the lions and the tigers and gets them to perform. The coercive power aspect of political will means that one acts as if one is a tiger or a lion.

Will is the capability of doing things, of mustering one's own energy, sometimes to control the destructive energy of another, or applying that energy in the form of coercion to limit the destructiveness of another's energy or to turn one's own energy into a destructive force. An agent lacks political will if the agent clearly decides on following one course of action and proves incapable of following through. There is a lack of political will when there is a gap between our determinations and our actions. When this results from another overpowering one's own energy, then there is a lack of will of a different order.

In none of the cases of American failure can one find a lack of American political will. It is perfectly understandable why Jane Holl wants to ban the phrase for it has been so misused and abused. Nevertheless, as a Canadian, the category is crucial. In the operation we initiated in Zaire in 1996, we demonstrated a lack of political will in both senses. We decided to do something and lacked the capacity to do it on our own or in

concert with others. When we had accumulated those resources, we failed to follow through.

Americans are not gutless. Quite the reverse. But American leaders can be heartless and stupid. What America lacked was not will but heart and intelligence.

## **B. Heart or Compassion**

In virtually all countries, including those countries most closely identified with a commitment to development in the third world, such as the Scandinavian countries, Canada, the Netherlands, Switzerland, there was an indifference to the plight of the Tutsi refugees from the 1959-1966 period. Further, within Rwanda, these countries turned a blind eye to the discrimination in Rwanda based on the use of identity cards.<sup>43</sup> In the early nineties, this indifference, with some notable exceptions of Belgium and Canada in a literally half-hearted and belated way, focussed on a totally inadequate response to the trial runs of ethnic killing for the genocide that developed.<sup>44</sup> The same indifference emerged when the actual genocide started and countries mobilized resources to get out Westerners, but abandoned loyal locals who had worked for them or whom they were even protecting. Instead, these Rwandese were left to be slaughtered.

The indifference manifested itself on a variable scale when it came to the racial hatred and encouragement of ethnic cleansing promulgated on Radio Mille Collines. No country tried to jam the broadcasts. No country engaged in alternative broadcasting targeting the racists. No country even formally protested. In almost all of these areas, the United States shared the same heartlessness as most of the rest of the nations. But in the area of radio broadcasting, Ambassador Rawlson, the US Ambassador in Kigali, told me that he listened to Radio Mille Collines because it played the best music and was the liveliest station. He did not take the racist rantings seriously because they were so outrageous.

Heartlessness is evident when you do not even feel that which hurts or is intended to hurt others. But it is also evident in another aspect when one party - either an individual or a nation as a whole - is insensitive to how others are affected by one's actions. The world community was insensitive to the commitment that the parties had made at the Arusha Accords and the expectations they had of the role of the peacekeepers. Even before the agreement was signed, the United States especially insisted on watering down the commitment of the UN. After the Arusha Accords were signed, the fulfillment of that commitment was continually short changed in the numbers of troops provided, the quality of troops, the equipment made available, and even in the bureaucratic administrative nightmare in which UNAMIR was enmeshed. The peacekeepers never received a budget until two days before the genocide started. Further, many countries, but especially the United States, were insensitive to the hopes that UNAMIR had given to the local community that they would be protected by these peacekeepers. This insensitivity was not expressed by the average soldier or officer on the ground but by politicians in the various relevant capitals around the world.<sup>45</sup> It is with regard to this insensitivity that, with the exception of Great Britain, the United States

stood out as exceptionally insensitive. This was evident in the US refusal to brand the activities in Rwanda as genocide lest they obligate themselves to act when they were determined not to become involved militarily or financially.

As Herman Cohen: stated in testimony before the Belgian Commission of Enquiry, 7 July 1998:

"Après la Somalie, les Etats-Unis, surtout le chef de la sécurité nationale à la Maison Blanche, étaient très réticents à toute nouvelle opération dans un pays sous-développé. Il était même hors de question d'envoyer des soldats africains qui étaient prêts à partir pour le Rwanda. Le 1er mai, Ahmed Salim Salim, secrétaire général de l'OUA, avait déjà des promesses de 5 000 soldats africains prêts à partir, mais ils avaient besoin d'un appui logistique. Les Etats-Unis ont refusé de parler d'un génocide qui aurait des obligations juridiques."

Lest Herman Cohen be considered an exceptional voice in the administration because of his close concern with Africa, Warren Christopher, Secretary of State, accepted the obligation to intervene in accordance with the 1948 Genocide Convention in his testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee 6/30/94. As he said in that testimony, the Administration did not want the term genocide used lest the public express a desire to intervene "in a situation in which the Administration did not want to intervene." (*New York Times* A8, 6/10/94)

But the height of American heartlessness came when Americans wore their hearts on their sleeves most distinctly - when the mass of refugees crossed at Goma in mid 1994. The Joint Chiefs of Staff of the American Armed Forces had just held a press conference to indicate that the US would not be sending any troops to Zaire to deal with the plight of the Hutu refugees. The result was a cascade of faxes, e-mails and telephone messages to the White House. By 10:00 a.m. the next morning, President Clinton reversed policy. Three days later, American troops were being flown to the Great Lakes region.

Does this not indicate an excess of compassion rather heartlessness? Yes if one forgets that among the refugees were genocidists. The insensitivity was the failure to distinguish between the genuine refugees and the killers and to make sure that the former received aid while the latter were arrested. Instead, driven by the politics of sentiment rather than a compassion which morally discriminates, aid went in droves to assist the refugees. And it did so in a context which allowed the genocidists to gain control of the camps and steal the excess food aid, sell it again and use the funds to regroup and continue the genocide on another day.

### **C. Mind**

There are two ways in which the mind applies itself to political problems. In one way, it acts on the basis of instrumental rationality or prudence. A primary outlet for this instrumental rationality is the use of money or material resources to influence a situation.

Up until 1990, the United States followed the general Western pattern of allocating aid and encouraging the creation of an elite dependent on that aid. (Uvin 1998) By the early nineties, the US had introduced aid conditionality in a serious way. Its first use was economic - to pressure states to restructure economically and open their states to foreign investment and to reduce the protection for their home markets.

(T)he U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), listed in detail their own conditions. The conditions of a 1991 grant, for example (officially termed 'Production and Marketing Policy Reform') read as follows: 'prior to the first (\$15 million) tranche, the GOR [government of Rwanda] will replace the existing foreign exchange allocation and licensing system with an interim managed system, to ease the shock of decontrol. Other conditions precedent to the first tranche are to remove controls on price and profit margins (except for monopolies), abolish fixed prices for most goods and services, and reduce tariffs, custom duties, and import surcharges. Conditions to the second tranche include implementation of an open licensing system and a comprehensive review of export policies.'<sup>46</sup>

By 1992, economic conditionality was beginning to be used for political purposes. But not to ensure that Tutsi were not discriminated against or even to make aid conditional on the end of massacres. Herman Cohen made aid conditional on Uganda pressuring the RPF to come to the negotiating table and stop the fighting.<sup>47</sup> Whether circumstances, RPF policy or American pressure was the cause, with a bit more diplomacy and a bit more time and few new military initiatives, eventually the parties came to the negotiating table in an apparent effort to pursue peace seriously.

If material influence was used selectively in 1992 and with questionable effectiveness, it was not used once the parties were at Arusha. Cohen did not try to pressure the RPF or use economic incentives to get the RPF to modify what the Americans considered unbending policies. The United States disagreed with the RPF policy of excluding the CDR from the Broad Based Transitional Government (BBTG) and in the strong position the RPF took in insisting on reserving 50% of the officer corps of the new integrated army for its own people.<sup>48</sup> But it expressed that disagreement and did not try to muscle the RPF into changing its mind or blackmail the RPF with economic threats or tempt it with economic goodies.

When it came to the funding of the peacekeeping force authorized by the UN, material influence was an important factor in sewing the seeds for the failure of UNAMIR. In the UN, the United States used its political weight to insist, even before the Arusha Accords were signed, that the peacekeeping force provided would have a very restricted mandate and would never be involved in directly confronting the local population. Secondly, when the size and composition of the force went to the Security Council, it was clear that the United States attitude was a limiting factor in what was recommended by UNDPKO.<sup>49</sup> Thirdly, once authorized the United States influence on the UN budgeting process meant that the resources for UNAMIR were not forthcoming. There was no budget for the helicopters or the armoured personnel carriers. The right

wing American Republican Congress was blamed with its anti-UN bias.<sup>50</sup> Thus, although the UNAMIR Force Commander, Romeo Dallaire, called for an increase in his troops, there was no support in New York for decisive action against the genocide. The main concerns were protecting the troops, evacuating the ex-pats, and possibly facilitating negotiations. The troops were given specific instructions that they were not to engage in rescuing civilian who were in mortal danger.

This frugal approach was equally true of UNAMIR II which was authorized to provide domestic protection.<sup>51</sup> As Alison des Forges phrased it in her testimony before the Senate Subcommittee, 5 May 1998:

"At first, the U.S. delayed implementation of the decision as it sought guarantees that the operation would conform to Presidential Decision Directive 25, (PDD 25), the just established policy concerning U.S. support for peacekeeping forces. After lengthy discussions resulted in clearing the plans for the operation, the U.N. experienced much difficulty in getting nations to contribute troops and then in getting other nations to contribute the equipment and supplies needed for the troops. The U.S. required seven weeks to negotiate a contract for delivering armored personnel carriers--a period needed to arrange the desired terms "for maintenance and spare parts"--but other nations also contributed little, if anything, or contributed it slowly. The U.K., for example, came up with only fifty trucks. Such delays were not unusual for mustering U.N. operations. What was unusual was the context."

However, stupidity is not just a matter of imprudent actions based on instrumental miscalculations. It is also a matter of failing to develop the capacity to gather, synthesize and analyze knowledge and translate that analysis into policy alternatives to be chosen based on that analysis in relationship to some standardized and broadly shared norms. This was by far the greatest failure of the United States. Unfortunately, the United States was not alone and does not deserve the dubious credit of single-handedly<sup>52</sup> permitting the genocide to succeed and most of the genocidists to escape. But it does deserve the criticism that it failed in its leadership responsibilities which only the United States holds. For realism does not only take **self** interests into account. It uses that leadership to forge and enhance alliances as one of the core elements in fulfilling that self interest. As Barry Steiner has written in his excellent draft manuscript [and I trust he will forgive me for quoting from a draft], "Great power concert linkages were importantly built upon the ability of the major states to cooperate on local small power conflict issues." <sup>53</sup> (p. 315)

To do that, great states must possess superior knowledge, not only of facts, not only of the principles behind the facts, not only of the implications of those facts and principles, but the normative framework for translating those implications into choices. The United States failed its leadership responsibilities on every single level. For instead of being driven by the humanitarian pragmatism that is at the heart of that great country, the United States has most recently been directed by a pair of horses veering in opposite directions, one a wild horse maddened by a false, narrow and misbegotten ideology which parades its colours in the name of individualism, and the other an affectionate, cuddly and well-disposed dog that has visions that it is a horse. When a country cannot

see right from wrong when evil stares it in the face, when that country plays with language to hide its moral blindness, that country is stupid. And the United States, and most of the countries it purports to lead - as well as the United Nations - shared in that stupidity.

And the stupidity is all the greater when we now know that those countries had far more evidence to anticipate the ensuing genocide than Astri Suhrke and I pointed out in 1996. We had been allowed to see a study circulated in January of 1993 by an unassuming analyst in the American government that predicted the likelihood of large scale massacres which was estimated could total a half a million people, a study that was presumably ignored in the euphoria of Arusha. But the explanation for ignoring the study goes deeper. The United States was uninterested when the RPF invaded Rwanda. It became mildly engaged in the process leading up to Arusha. Then it combined uninterestedness with mild engagement to adopt a disinterested stance at Arusha itself. In this, the United States was well served by its ambassador in Kigali. The affairs in Rwanda were at most worthy only of peripheral attention to the United States.

The path leading up to the greatest moral test the United States has faced since both World War II and the War Against the Jews was fast approaching. The United States was preparing to fail what would be the greatest test of its contemporary leadership and the one easiest to pass. It failed that test with spectacular moral obtuseness.

Between the signing of the Arusha Accords and the onset of the cataclysm, radio and newspapers in Rwanda incited the Hutu to neutralize their enemies and accomplices for all time. These media warnings adumbrated the approaching catastrophe. UNAMIR and every embassy<sup>54</sup> collected information on the arms being stored, on the militias being trained, on the massacre trial runs, on the assassinations, and, most of all, on the Akazu, on Hutu Power, which would mastermind the genocide. Dallaire's famous January 11<sup>th</sup> cable was but the tip of a vast array of information that seemed to bring it all together by specifically mentioning that every Tutsi in Kigali was targeted for elimination at the anticipated rate of 1000 every twenty minutes. Moderate Rwandan army officers had already informed Dallaire and several ambassadors that massacres were being planned aimed at the Tutsi.

The United Nations served as the mirror of that moral blindness, not because it ignored the cable as just one of many warnings it received, but because it developed a deliberate blindness to all the information that was accumulating.<sup>55</sup> Further, it later used that same multiplicity of information as its excuse for its inaction. In fact, at the time the UN knew the information was hot. The UN placed the cable in a separate Black Box and not in the regular files. An individual who became obsessed by the implications of that cable was exiled to the boonies. Then when the international body first initiated its investigation on what went wrong, UN officials first denied that any information existed in its files pointing to an impending genocide. Then when the existence of the cable and copies were circulated, UN officials dismissed its significance.<sup>56</sup> And it did not recognize its failure to collect, to analyze and to provide well-thought out options to all the members of the Security Council based on full information. Instead, the UN leadership

refused to share in that responsibility. The fault belonged to their members for whom they were only loyal servants.<sup>57</sup>

In that respect, and in contrast to the leaders of the United States who have owned up to their failures, the United Nations reflected what was worst in its members not what was best. For the officials in the United Nations on their own, without consulting the Security Council, denied Dallaire the right to seek out the arms caches and verify the credibility of the informant.<sup>58</sup> Further, Dallaire was instructed to inform Habyarimana about the information on the preparations underway for a genocide.<sup>59</sup> The irony, of course, was that the government of Rwanda was a member of the Security Council during this period and observed the unwillingness of the great powers to take any action.<sup>60</sup> Thus they knew they could extend the range and extent of the genocide with impunity. Further, the Secretary General until the end of April when he changed his tune dramatically and characterized the massacres as a genocide, previously misrepresented them as the products of Hutu/Tutsi sectarian violence in his press releases, documents which are not included in the UN official record.

The United States has been accused of single-handedly ensuring the demise of UNAMIR. It certainly played a leading role.<sup>61</sup> But the UN Secretary-General himself admitted to reporting to the Security Council on 12 April that the mandate of UNAMIR was untenable with the withdrawal of the Belgian troops and without a replacement of forces of equal caliber. (The Blue Book, p. 40) Further, the Belgians not only withdrew, but campaigned for the withdrawal of all the forces, even though this ran contrary to the recommendations of the Belgian commanding officer in the field.<sup>62</sup> The UK led the proposal for total withdrawal. The UN Secretary-General insisted that he opposed withdrawal of UNAMIR as neither advisable nor feasible.<sup>63</sup> In fact, the Secretary-General opposed withdrawal *at that time*. The thrust of his advice was to retain a remnant of UNAMIR for use in mediating between the parties. The S-G appeared to take at their word that the leaders of the coup were committed to Arusha and in establishing a BBTG in cooperation with the RPF<sup>64</sup> while they proceeded to accelerate the rate of the genocide.

The United States, with the UN leadership and many other countries following close behind, were blind to the extensive information providing a basis for early warning of genocide,. They were blind to the nature of the power grab. They were blind to the potential for utilizing an internal potential opposition and moderates, many of them in official positions and in the army. These officials maintained a single-minded focus on peacekeeping and peacemaintaining versus protecting civilians, and hoped for the possibility for mediation in a context in which mediation was a pipedream.

Ironically, the small force retained in Rwanda for purposes of mediation was instructed not to take an active role in protecting Rwandan civilians. In this, the UN officials provided the leadership rather than the US. Yet, through the shenanigans of Dallaire, the force remained at twice the size authorized. And it did manage to protect an estimated 20,000 - 25,000 Rwandans during the course of the genocide. But it was the US that led the contingent deliberately obfuscating that a genocide was taking place, only reluctantly acceding to referring to the massacres as genocide-like. And when the events

were recognized for what they were, the United States made a perfect marriage with the UN bureaucracy in finding excuses to delay the deployment and equipping of UNAMIR II until that major wave of the genocide had effectively ended.

### **Evaluation and Explanation**

I have drawn the conclusion that those who wish to blame the United States for single-handedly failing to intervene and stop the genocide are wrong. There were plenty of others around to share the blame. But the US did play a leading role. Further, I have argued that this was not because the US lacked political will, but because its will was directed elsewhere. Instead I have suggested it was because the US lacked heart and intelligence rather than will, perhaps a more pointed accusation.

There are too many people in the United States who are both compassionate and intelligent to accept such a charge easily. It might help if the US role as a spoiler in the effort to stop the genocide was explained. Certainly, the shadow of Somalia played a primary role. But it did so because the United States largely distinguishes what is of primary interest to the nation based on geo-political and strategic requirements alone when its own citizens make no such distinction. That is why the United States officials were afraid to brand the events as genocide. They did not want to become involved. The public might demand America's involvement. In other words, there is a discrepancy between what the public-at-large regards as of central concern in foreign policy and what a good part of the policy establishment takes to be central. The result is that the United States is led into a number of foreign policy intra-state roles through the media of sentimental politics rather than through information, analysis and strategic planning. The United States is a democracy which, in foreign policy, distrusts its own public.

Further, to the degree the US becomes involved in peripheral areas, it sees disinterestedness and commitment as opposites. The US leadership believes to the degree it becomes interested - as France was - it loses its sense of balance and becomes ineffective as a mediator.<sup>65</sup> The problem is that whereas there must be a sense of balance in inter state wars to conduct mediation, balance is not morally permissible when one side is engaged in genocide.

The effect of both these observations is to recognize that moral commitment requires emotional commitment. But emotional commitment cannot be the basis for foreign policy initiatives. On the other hand, without such an emotional involvement, the United States remained uninvolved and only became committed when the US public was aroused over the plight of the Hutu refugees in Goma.

In this respect, the United States stands in strong contrast to France in which cultural rather than emotional identity is a primary basis of foreign involvement.<sup>66</sup> The problem is that the United States not only demonstrated heartlessness and stupidity in attending to Rwanda, it failed its most important duty in foreign affairs - the responsibility of knowing itself.

## FOOTNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> I originally planned to write a paper on five states and had included the United Kingdom and Canada. However, time and space limitations made me drop both sections. The material on the United Kingdom is incorporated in a few other places; the UK was not one of the significant players so a separate section would have been very short. However, Canada had a long and intimate history with Rwanda. Canadian priests and academics were the founders of Rwanda's university at Butare. Rwanda was a favourite development country for CIDA., the Canadian International Development Agency. Finally, Canadians played major roles as peacekeepers in general and in Rwanda in particular. General Baril, currently the head of Canada's armed forces, was the military adviser in the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations during the period in which UNAMIR was created and deployed and when the genocide was at its height from April to July of 1994. Brigadier-General Romeo Dallaire was the Force Commander of UNAMIR. However, instead of incorporating the Canadian material in this paper, I have left it as a separate paper.

<sup>2</sup> The refugee admissions procedure in Belgium is based on the Minister of the Interior determining the admissibility of a claim on both formal grounds (the timeliness of the application, the possession of valid travel documents, whether the claimant stayed in a safe third country over three months, etc.) and substantive grounds so that the Minister may determine a claim to be inadmissible because it is manifestly unfounded. (For a detailed explanation of the Belgian refugee determination system, cf. Dirk Vanheule's article on the Belgium system in, *Who Is A Refugee: A Comparative Case Law Study*, Jean-Yves Carlier et al, editors, The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 1997) During the period 1 April 1994, just before the genocide firestorm broke, and 31 August 1997, 1730 claims for refugee status from Rwandans were filed with the Minister. Of these, the Minister determined that 783 or 45% were deemed to be admissible. Of the 876 rejected, 824 were appealed to a refugee appeals board. Of these 824, the Appeals Board deemed that 702 (85%) to be admissible. Thus, of the original 1730 claims filed, 1485 were deemed to be admissible claims. Of these, 974 (66%) were recognized, 77 (4%) were rejected, and 425 (30%) waited a decision. This extremely high acceptance rate contrasts with an average acceptance rate of 8% from other nationals. The largest controversy over these refugee admissions concerned the large number of alleged perpetrators of genocide who had been admitted as refugees.

<sup>3</sup> The information available to the Belgian government concerning the impending genocide was even more than Astri Suhrke and I had indicated in the report on early warning and conflict management that we had co-authored for the international community with respect to the Rwanda genocide *Early Warning and Conflict Management*, Volume 2 of *The International Response to Conflict and Genocide: Lessons from the Rwanda Experience*, Copenhagen: DANIDA, 1996.

<sup>4</sup> Family members, the media and concerned Parliamentarians put pressure on the government to set up the commission and was backed by a public petition with 200,000 signatures.

<sup>5</sup> Belgian Senate, *Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry into the Events in Rwanda*, December 6, 1997.

<sup>6</sup> For most of the insights gained in this section analyzing the role of Belgium, I am most grateful to my conversations over the last three years with Philp Verwimp, a doctoral candidate in Development Economics at the University of Leuven, Belgium and, more recently, a visiting fellow in the Genocide Studies Program at Yale University. He and Els Vanheusden, a lawyer in Brussels Bar, Belgium, made available to me an as yet unpublished paper dealing with the Belgian role in Zaire in 1996 which reviews the results of the enquiry as a background to their analysis.

<sup>7</sup> In the year preceding the period of the Commission of Enquiry, a number of scandals broke in the press concerning Belgium's failed development projects.

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<sup>8</sup> In my estimation, the most heinous of its acts was the reification of the Hutu/Tutsi divide with the introduction of identity cards in 1933/34 to the Hutu (85% of the population), Tutsi (14%) and Twa (1%).

<sup>9</sup> In addition to the Senate Report, cf. Robert Brusten and Nelson Bindariye, *Les Politiques des ONG Belges au Rwanda de 1969 à 1994*. Brussels: ATOL/South Research, étude commandité par le NCOs, 1997 and Peter Uvin, *Aiding Violence: The Development Enterprise in Rwanda*, West Hartford, Connecticut: Kumarian Press, 1998, esp. pp. 87-96.

<sup>10</sup> The Belgian economy had already been stagnant for several years when the coffee prices crashed in 1988. Combined with poor weather conditions, the crash contributed to a dramatic decline in economic productivity, dropping 5.7% in 1989. Adding to the problem, the budgetary deficit rose in 1989 to 8% of the GDP. In the preceding years, the domestic debt had also quadrupled. Net reserves in the same period had fallen from five to two months. Unemployment rates also rose, in part because of the impact of the influx of 75,000 Hutu refugees who escaped to Rwanda from the massacres in neighbouring Burundi in 1988. On 15 January 1989, Habyarimana announced his new five year plan. It was to be based on four guiding principles: discipline, cooperation, transparency, and solidarity.

<sup>11</sup> Rwanda received a large volume of non-military aid from several donors throughout the 1990-3 period. Rwanda had been rewarded in the eighties for its perceived commitment to the rule of law and for delivering results in its partnership with aid projects. With a traditionally efficient local administration and functioning infrastructure, Rwanda's ability to absorb aid had partly accounted for the large inflow of aid in previous years. In the early 1990's, it was still a country where foreign aid bureaucracies could reasonably disburse money.

42. Under the guidance of two "old Rwanda hands", in the Ministry of Cooperation and its implementing agency (ADCD), Belgium had chosen Rwanda for a pilot project in Belgian foreign aid based on new guidelines. Bureaucratic incentives to maintain the aid help to explain why the Minister of Cooperation, Andre Geens, strongly advocated not only renewing but actually increasing aid in late 1991, despite his admission that the government had not undertaken the expected economic and political reforms. (Willime 1995, pp. 436-439). Another Belgian official who accompanied Geens on his tour of Rwanda in August 1991 noted that he was "very keen on aid". (Interview, July 1995). The French ambassador in Kigali, George Martre, was known as an "ancien du Rwanda". Martre was not a diplomat but came from the Ministry of Cooperation. He was described by close observers as a "projects man". Martre was considered to have wielded considerable if indirect influence on French policy towards Rwanda during his tenure as ambassador from September 1989 until March 1993.

<sup>13</sup> The Belgian government lost a debate in the Parliament about keeping the troops in Rwanda. The Christian Democratic government did not get enough parliamentary support from its coalition partners (who split along Flemish-French lines) to overcome Socialist opposition to support Habyarimana. A compromise was reached to send a three-party mission to the region to help set the stage for the peace process.

<sup>14</sup> It is worth noting that J.L. Dehaene, the current Defence Minister in Belgium, in his testimony before the Senate Commission, stated, "If I would have to make the decision to withdraw the Belgian paratroopers again, I would have made exactly the same decision."

<sup>15</sup> However, as the Senate Report noted, Belgium lacked an information and intelligence gathering capability. The government was already prone to act on totally inadequate information sources.

<sup>16</sup> French officials word the same thing slightly differently. For example, when French Foreign Minister, Hubert Vedrine - who was President Mitterand's Chief of Staff during the Rwandan genocide - testified before the French Parliamentary Enquiry in May of 1998, he stated that French policy, with respect to Rwanda, had two objectives: helping countries like Rwanda with links to France to ensure security and protect their borders while continuing economic and political development, and to urge Habyarimana to share power with the Tutsi and to develop democratic institutions.

<sup>17</sup> Contrast this with the claim by Gourevitch (1998) that, "A Military agreement signed in 1975 between France and Rwanda expressly forbade the involvement of French troops in Rwandan combat, combat training, or police operations." (p. 89) Though literally true, it is misleading. The French forces were

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dispatched under the existing military assistance agreement between the two states rather than a defence agreement because a military assistance agreement was the only instrument in place. That agreement did not make provision for direct involvement of the French military in the conflict. However, it must be recalled that the French initially conceived of the operation as a modest one in which advisers merely gave advice and did not actually man the artillery. However, the French military in such situations are given the right of self defence when attacked, and the French believed that the RPF was a foreign invasion instigated by Museveni in Uganda.

<sup>18</sup> The source of the French Parliamentary Enquiry was a campaign initiated on 3 March 1998 in Paris by Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), along with prominent French academics and NGO's (including Action Contre La Faim and Liges des Droits de l'Homme) and human rights activists. The signatories heading the petition included Henri Leclerc, Ligue des Droits de l'Homme, Marie-Line Ramackers, Agir Ici *Relief NGO's*, Philippe Biberson, President of Médecins Sans Frontières, Jose Bidegain, Director General of Action Contre la Faim AICF, as well as the following prominent academics: Jean-François Bayart, Director of Research CNRS, Rony Brauman, Teacher and former president of Medecins Sans Frontieres, André Guichaoua, Professor at Lille University, Alfred Grosser, professeur émérite, Alain Joxe, Director of Studies at *Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales* (EHESS), Elikia M'Bokolo, Director of Studies at EHESS, Yves Ternon, Doctor Historian, Claudine Vidal, Director of Research at *Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique* (CNRS), Marc Pilon, President of l'Observatoire Permanent de la Coopération Française. The campaign presumed mounting evidence of the deep involvement of the French authorities in the arming and organising of the Rwandan army under President Habyarimana's government. The publication of the results of the Belgian Senate Enquiry was a catalyst. But the petitioners had a number of very specific questions related to French actions on which they wanted answers. What was France's role in] the training of the Rwandan "gendarmérie" and the military council, the provision of uniforms and the delivery of weapons and the direct support for military activity in Rwanda (in 1990 and 1993)? Why did France support, until the bitter end, a regime which was clearly committing crimes against its own civilian population? How was the decision taken to evacuate in April 1994 an entire section of the Rwandan political elite involved in the massacres? Beyond the mandate given to France for the "Operation Turquoise" in June-July 1994 during the last days of the genocide, how was this intervention really conducted and what were the consequences for Rwanda and the Rwandans? Did France supply, or organize the transport of, weapons to Kigali after April 6th, 1994?

<sup>19</sup> Paul Quiles headed a French parliamentary commission into France's role in Rwanda and the genocide in the nineties. Its 1200 page report was made public on 15 December 1998. The report rejected all charges implicating France in the Rwandan genocide. However, the report did point to errors and shortcomings by French authorities, but Belgium and the US, in particular, as well as the international community in general, are held to be at fault as well for errors and misjudgements. The US, incidentally did hold Senate hearings this year but they are not the same as a parliamentary inquiry.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. irin@ocha.unon.org Tue Dec 22 06:14:37 1998, Central and Eastern Africa: IRIN Update 571 for 21 December 1998.12.21.

<sup>21</sup> It should be noted that Paul Kagame had concluded that not only France, but the whole international community was engaged in a high-level conspiracy "to protect the killers and, perhaps, to assist them toward an ultimate victory." (Gourevitch 1998, 338)

<sup>22</sup> The two French delegates had been the first to register their criticisms at the presentation. After all the other delegations commented, it was absolutely clear that the French were alone in their evaluation, and that all the other concerns expressed, though important in themselves, were not basically critical of the report. Quite the reverse; the report was generally highly praised. I asked to have lunch with the French delegates to discuss the issues further. In that lunch, a number of things became clear. First, the delegates, though they spoke English perfectly well, could not explain their misinterpretations of the English text version. Second, the delegates themselves were not well enough versed in the issues to stand behind and substantiate their criticisms; they could only echo the party line. Third, I asked why they were upset given that, in my reading of our report compared to the numerous books and articles that I had read on the French role that had been published in France, our report was far less vitriolic. It had tried to provide an in-depth

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account and explanation of the government's actions. As they explained the French reaction, the French officials loved their intellectuals but paid no attention to what they said. But they could not ignore the barbs directed their way from foreigners. Those criticisms hurt French honour. As we left the lunch I remarked openly that France seemed to have learned nothing since the Franco-Prussian war, for, according to Trevelyan, the historian, the French government had mobilized to defend French honour insulted by Bismark's editing of the famous Ems telegram. Further, the discussion seemed to add confirmation to Prunier's (1995) interpretation of *Opération Turquoise*, namely, that it had been launched to protect French honour.

<sup>23</sup> I would have liked to have read the Parliamentary Commission Report before submitting this report, but I have had not received the copy yet that I requested be sent from France, and the deadline was already two days past because I had spent so much time searching the internet hoping that someone would have posted the report. If it was there, I did not find it (and that would not be the first time). So this paper is not based on a direct reading of the documents, analysis and conclusions of that report.

<sup>24</sup> Though the ostensible rationale for the French intervention was the same as the Belgian one - the protection of nationals - during the first phase of the war, the French performed rear-guard duty for the Rwandan army by securing the airport, manning road blocks in the Kigali area, and providing logistics.

<sup>25</sup> On 12 December 1992, the New York Times Magazine carried a lengthy report on French arms sales to Rwanda and French fighting on behalf of the Rwandan army.

<sup>26</sup> Gourevitch, for example, states, "In the nights of June 16 and 18, arms shipments for the Hutu Power regime were landed, with French connivance, in the eastern Zairean city of Goma [the headquarters for *Opération Turquoise*] and shuttled over the border to Rwanda." (1998, p. 155) This was, of course, the same day that the UN Security Council endorsed *Opération Turquoise*. Since Gourevitch provides no sources for his charges, it is virtually impossible to check them. I can say that from all the bills of lading that I examined for arms shipments to the Hutu extremists in Zaire found after the camps were evacuated, enough arms to equip a 30,000 person army, there is no hint of French connivance. Given the demands for prepayment and collection, there is evidence that payment for the arms was no longer guaranteed by France. Further, there is a logical explanation for the transport of arms across the border on June 22. It is clear that the French anticipated Security Council approval and began preparations five days earlier. "The order to the French forces to prepare to move was given on 17 June, five days before authorised by the UN and nine days before the Rwanda/Zaire border was crossed ." M. Connaghton, "Military Support and Protection for Humanitarian Assistance - Rwanda: April-December 1994," report prepared for ODI. Cf. <http://www.ha.sps.cam.ac.uk/freps/FR001A.Htm>

<sup>27</sup> Our error on this one point explains the vehemence with which the French attacked us on this issue. As with many others, based on the evidence we accumulated and cited, we had stated that the French continued to ship arms to Kigali even after the genocide had started. This interpretation was reinforced when we presented our draft report. One ambassador came up to me and told me not to be intimidated by the French. He had been on the tarmac of Kigali airport being evacuated five days after the coup and the genocide had started and observed cases being unloaded with French arms. I did not have my wits about me at the time to clarify how precisely he determined that they were French arms, but presumably it was a deduction based on the French labeling on the packing cases. In fact, as I shall show, this same evidence understandably seemed to have misled most people. The immediate past practices of the French and their unwillingness to be forthcoming did not get out the exact truth on this one point. The French unwillingness to be forthcoming about this matter in the way of evidence may be explained by three reasons. First, once it came out that we were in error on this point, the credibility of our claims on other issues would be more in question. Second, revealing out error on this issue would have meant revealing the truth about the other charges concerning arms shipments. Third, it is difficult but, contrary to what many believe, far from impossible to 'prove' a counterfactual.

<sup>28</sup> The evidence is based on a series of bills of lading for military supplies from MHL-Tec Corporation Limited, Ragnal House, Peel Road, Isle-of-Man as well as the dunning financial collection letters they had

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sent concerning the shipment that arrived in the week after the genocide started. Evidently, any payment guarantees had been cancelled by that point. Further, although the arms had come from Eastern Europe and had been shipped via Russian Israeli intermediaries, they seemed to have carried French labels. Possibly this was done to mislead any observer who might be enforcing the arms embargo in order to make it appear that these arms were part of an outstanding shipment before the embargo was introduced.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Endnote 1.

<sup>30</sup> In Findlay's view, a key lesson was that the lack of an organised formal Core Group of interested countries prepared to "nurture, shepherd, assist, cajole, bribe and if necessary coerce the parties towards fulfilling their obligations" (165) threatened the process from the start. Findlay points out that the reason for this was the lack of a major power interested enough to take the lead as a patron state to pressure international organisations and other governments on behalf of the peace process. He also cast light on the discussions leading to the creation of the new UN peacekeeping mission to replace NMOG and UNOMUR. Because the OAU had readily acknowledged its inability to field an entire peacekeeping operation, the claim made by Study 2 of the JEEAR report that the decision was motivated by France and the Rwandan government who had suspected the regional organisation's partisanship with the RPF. On the controversy over the OAU or the UN providing the force, Findlay made the following observation on the report I co-authored with Astri Suhrke (1998). "The Joint Evaluation takes a conspiratorial view of the decision [for a UN-led operation], attributing it in part to French machinations designed to keep control of the force out of the hands of what it perceived to be a pro-RPF OAU." (Findlay for UNITAR, 167) What I believe we did say was that the Rwandese were suspicious of the UN because of the French role in the Security Council and preferred the OAU. There was a complementary fear that the OAU would be biased towards the RPF, but this suggestion hardly amounts to a conspiratorial view. Further, when the OAU admitted its limitations, the RPF accepted the UN playing that role.

<sup>31</sup> Keller holds such a view. "Apart from the failure of adversaries to make credible commitments in the course of third-party negotiations, much of the blame for the failures in such efforts must be laid at the feet of the international community, which has always been reluctant to intervene either coercively or non-coercively in conflicts where they do not perceive their vital national interests to be at stake." (In Lake and Rothchild, Chapter 12: 289)

<sup>32</sup> As Connaughton wrote, "this (OT) could also be regarded - given the very close relations between the Habyarimana and Mitterand regimes, and visceral French hostility to the RPF - as a device for defending an area of Rwandan territory against the RPF, and protecting French clients in the old regime, killers included, who were flooding into the region before the RPF advance." (cf. Prunier 1995, ch. 8; Verschave and Vital 1994, ch3:7; Reed 1998)

<sup>33</sup> Connaughton (1995) argued that the FAR withdrew over the Zaire border in hopes that the French would clash with the RPF., but the French persuaded Kagame of the humanitarian intentions of the intervention.. (Section 2, 10) I think Connaughton over-estimated the French powers of persuasion as well as Kagame's susceptibilities.

<sup>34</sup> Rudy Brueggemann's French Connection web page provided a narrower range for the number of lives saved. "According to Rwanda watchers, *Opération Turquoise* did save 12,000 to 15,000 Tutsi lives, though some Tutsi were killed once they came out of hiding after seeing French flags flown on roadsides to greet the arriving French troops. TV images made during the time embarrassingly show Hutu genocidaires holding pictures of Mitterand." [Http://www.oz.net/~rudybrue/frenchconnection.htm](http://www.oz.net/~rudybrue/frenchconnection.htm)

<sup>35</sup> Vaccaro's analysis does suggest that the mission at least partially favored the RGA over the RPF. The RPF/Hutu were withdrawing westwards and the French imposed 'Humanitarian Protected Zone' seemed well-positioned to protect them. RPF officials were warned not to penetrate this zone, and FAR troops were able to seek sanctuary in this area. His final conclusion was that OT "must be considered a success. If it had not occurred the remaining Tutsi in the southwest would likely have been killed." (398)

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<sup>36</sup> MSF declared that, although the mission was successful in that it saved lives and controlled the flow of refugees, it was politically slanted in favour of the Hutus. "The venture was much criticised. And for good reason. It allowed numerous criminals to find a previously unimagined form of exile in the French-established security zone. Yet it did save lives within the safety zone. It diminished the flow of refugees to Zaire, it protected some of those Tutsis who remained alive and some Hutus against revenge killings." (6-7) However, MSF expressed concern that Turquoise sets a dangerous practice of UN subcontracting. "While the French government announced Operation Turquoise in Rwanda, the venture was greeted with widespread hostility. The French was basically subcontracting a UN responsibility [...] the UN may be turned into a flag of convenience." (11) Finally, the overall motive for the operation is suspect: "French troops were sent in to protect the civilians and discourage any exodus towards Zaire. But the intent was less to provide sustained protection than mount a dramatic, headline-catching intervention on behalf of France's clients – the Rwandan Hutu – who were now losing the war." (82) Predergast's analysis was similar. "Turquoise was designed to facilitate humanitarian aid in the southwest corner of Rwanda, performed well on technical grounds but created major political problems in two areas. First, it provided a safe haven for retreating government officials, military officers, and militia members, allowing and even aiding their orderly exodus into Zaire. Second., it undermined the UN's efforts to get troop commitments for UNAMIR and weakened multilateral intervention objectives." (65-66)

<sup>37</sup> This former UNAMIR Deputy Force Commander was nevertheless skeptical of the France/RGF conspiracy judging from the manner in which the French had conducted the Nationals Evacuation Operation on 9-11 April. "Those of us who were in Kigali before 6 April and saw the way the French came in and evacuated their nationals believed that France meant well. If France wanted a fight with the RPF or wanted to help the RGF why did the commando battalion withdraw after rescuing the nationals? Another demonstration of the genuineness of the French intention was when UNAMIR decided to introduce its troops into the HPZ; they gladly welcomed the idea. Their mandate was for two months (22 June to 22 August), and GHANBLATT, being the only formed troops on the ground, was rushed into that zone on 31 July to work alongside the French for an eventual take-over... The warm manner in which I was received, briefed and conducted around [by General Lafourcade, head of OT] reassured me of the genuineness of French intentions in Rwanda." (1997, 103)

<sup>38</sup> Ambassador Albright in her testimony to the Foreign Operations Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, 5/5/94.

<sup>39</sup> If interest was the singular justification for involvement, all other explanations for US inaction in Rwanda are irrelevant, for *à priori* there would be little US involvement in Rwanda. As Herman Cohen, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, stated it in his testimony before the Belgian Commission of Enquiry, 7 July 1998, "Notre aide au FPR était inexostante. Le seul lien entre le FPR et les Etats-Unis concerne une douzaine d'officiers qui ont suivi des cours dans des écoles militaires aux Etats-Unis dans le cadre de notre coopération avec l'Ouganda. Nous n'avons jamais fourni d'armes au FPR, ni même à l'Ouganda." In Washington, the low level of interest in Rwanda gave lower-level officials greater leeway for initiatives. One exception to the lack of interest was exhibited by Herman Cohen. And his primary interest entailed putting pressure on Uganda to control and inhibit the activities of the RPF. In the Spring of 1992, Herman (Hank) Cohen, met the President, Minister of Defence and Foreign Affairs Minister in Kigali followed by meetings with Museveni of Uganda and Moi of Kenya. Cohen expressed his support for the peace process and the transition to a multi-party democracy in Rwanda but left the leadership to the OAU and the UN. Evidently Cohen made the point to the Ugandan government in no uncertain terms: If the RPF did not agree to talks, Uganda would find its foreign aid in jeopardy. The Ugandan Foreign Minister was told that the international community was going to deduct aid for every month the situation stalled. (Cf. Jones 1998)

<sup>40</sup> This statement, of course, ignores the conviction of many, including the Force Commander, that the resources required were relatively few, that the issue was not resolving the crisis in its entirety but protecting civilians, and that the resources required as a result of not intervening were far more costly than the resources needed for prevention. Scott R. Feil in "Preventing Genocide: How the Use of Force Might Have Succeeded in Rwanda." New York: A Report to the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, April 1998, observed that the hypothetical force proposed by General Dallaire – at least 5000-strong – could have made a significant difference in the conflict. "In Rwanda, a window of opportunity for

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the employment of such a force extended from April 7 to April 21, when the political leaders of the violence were still susceptible to international influence. The rapid introduction of robust combat forces, authorised to seize at one time critical points throughout the country, would have changed the political calculations of the participants.” (16)

<sup>41</sup> In reference to PDD-24, Herman Cohen in testimony before the Belgian Commission of Enquiry, 7 July 1998 said, "J'étais catastrophé!"

<sup>42</sup> For an excellent and reasonably succinct chronological account of those failures, cf. the testimony of Alison Des Forges of Human Rights Watch before the Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights on 5 May 1998 entitled "Rwanda: Genocide and the Continuing Cycle of Violence".

<sup>43</sup> See the earlier section on Belgium and development aid. Rwanda officially identified persons by ethnic group and used the identity cards they carried to discriminate against the minority Tutsi in education and employment. USAID received a report in 1991 recommending economic conditionality in this area - that is that economic aid be conditioned upon removing the use of identity cards. "(T)he advice was ignored. Rwandan authorities were permitted to believe that isolation of and discrimination against Tutsi was acceptable to the international community." Alison des Forges, testimony before the Senate Subcommittee, 5 May 1998.

<sup>44</sup> This was in spite of the fact that beginning in 1990, the U.S. Special Rapporteur on Arbitrary and Summary Executions documented government-directed massacres against the Tutsi. The culture of genocidal impunity was being inculcated and even encouraged.

<sup>45</sup> "As the peacekeepers were regrouped from their outlying posts to more secure locations, they abandoned Rwandans who had sought protection under the U.N. flag. In the worst such case, that of the Kicukiro technical school, some one hundred, fully armed Belgian soldiers drove out of the school, leaving behind two thousand unarmed persons. Outside the compound were the military and militia who had been waiting for days for the chance to attack. As the Belgians drove out one gate, the killers stormed in the other. Most of those who had trusted in the protection of the U.N. troops were slain. At a psychiatric hospital near the capital, troops of the evacuation force arrived to escort foreigners to safety, ignoring the pleas for help of Rwandans on their knees before them." Alison des Forges, *ibid*.

<sup>46</sup> Production and Marketing Board abstract, USAID database project, no. 696-0135; cf Unwin (1998) p. 88 and 101 nt.

<sup>47</sup> Upon reflection, Cohen came to believe that he had not put enough pressure on Uganda, and, hence, on the RPF. Herman Cohen: in testimony before the Belgian Commission of Enquiry, 7 July 1998 said, "Museveni pensait que les Etats-Unis ne critiqueraient pas publiquement l'Ouganda en cas d'invasion du Rwanda par le FPR. Il avait raison. L'erreur des Etats-Unis est de n'avoir pas pris l'invasion au sérieux et d'avoir, au contraire, utilisé l'invasion pour encourager les négociations à l'intérieur du Rwanda. La France avait, elle aussi, tort de faire trop confiance à Habyarimana: elle lui a garanti son soutien quoi qu'il fasse, même s'il refusait la négociation. Je pense que la France et les Etats-Unis ont été trop gentils avec leurs clients respectifs."

<sup>48</sup> "Arusha était très bien sur le papier. Mais il y avait une chaise vide: Habyarimana était absent. Il a laissé son ministre des Affaires étrangères de l'opposition négocier tout ce qu'il voulait." Herman Cohen, testimony before the Belgian Commission of Enquiry, 7 July 1998.

<sup>49</sup> The U.S. led the efforts "to cut the costs of the U.N. peacekeeping operation that was necessary to oversee implementation of the Accords. Haunted by the ghosts of Somalia, the U.S. wanted a successful peacekeeping operation, but faced with paying a substantial part of the cost of such an operation, it refused the means needed to ensure such a success. When U.N. military experts proposed a force of 8,000 or, at the very least, 5,000 troops, the U.S. suggested 500. In the end, some 2800 troops were sent. Because the force was of such minimal size, its mandate was also limited. Instead of a force to protect civilians throughout

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the country in the period of transition to a new government, the peacekeepers were tasked only with exercising a general supervision over security in the capital." Alison des Forges, *ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> "Au-delà du syndrome de Somalie, il y a une question d'argent. Les Etats-Unis ont beaucoup d'arriérés à l'égard des Nations Unis, surtout pour le Peace keeping. Ils ne veulent pas autoriser des opérations qui vont augmenter leurs arriérés. Dans le case de la République Centrafrique, il a été très difficile d'obtenir le vote positif des Etats-Unis. Le Congrès a ensuite beaucoup critiqué ce vote." Herman Cohen, testimony before the Belgian Commission of Enquiry, 7 July 1998.

<sup>51</sup> "Once US personnel were deployed to UNAMIR II (Op Support Hope), there was a strong indication that force protection reigned supreme over mission effectiveness. Findlay cites both the JEEAR report (Study 3) and other sources that the utility of US forces was hampered by tight restrictions on the use of their equipment and a strict concern for the safety of personnel. The lesson from this is that "the over-riding imperative of the deployment – no casualties – tended to be counterproductive to the aims of the mission and the very ethos of US intervention" (191). By placing their own restrictions on the humanitarian operation, and setting their own rules governing the conduct of personnel and the use of equipment independent of the broader UN requirements, no effective coordination could take place beyond the most superficial. "Governments must be more willing to consider UN requirements for peace operations and ensure better coordination by placing such contributions under UN authority rather than acting independently." (Findlay for UNITAR, 192)

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Gourevitch and Kuperman quoted at the beginning of this paper.

<sup>53</sup> Barry Steiner, *The Varieties of Collective Preventive Diplomacy: Great Power Approaches to Intrastate Conflict* - draft of manuscript, dated 1 July 1998, p. 315.

<sup>54</sup> Though Belgium accumulated information on the prospects of the massacres, the Belgian information collected specifically concentrated on the dangers to its own peacekeepers which were forwarded to Brussels. It is this threat that appeared to be the primary motive behind the futile efforts of Belgium to beef up UNAMIR in February and March. The United States and United Kingdom would not contemplate any initiative that would add to the costs that they would have to bear as US officials have subsequently admitted.

<sup>55</sup> In fact, even in the official account, the claim is made that only "later evidence demonstrated irrefutably" that violations of human rights had become more widespread, with the possible implication that the evidence was not available at the time. (Cf. ; *The United Nations and Rwanda: 1993-1996*, New York, United Nations Department of Public Information, 1996, p.3)

<sup>56</sup> This is how the official Blue Book of the Rwanda episode explains the treatment of the cable. "In a communication sent on 11 January 1994 to United Nations Headquarters in New York, UNAMIR raised concerns about a report of a plot being formulated by Hutu militia aligned with the Mouvement républicain pour la démocratie et le développement (MRND), known as the *interahamwe* to kill large numbers of Tutsis in Kigali. Through that communication, the UNAMIR Force Commander informed Headquarters that an informant advised UNAMIR that such a plot was being developed and that weapons were being stockpiled. The Force Commander asked for instructions from headquarters on how to respond to this information. *Such situations and alarming reports from the field, though considered with the utmost seriousness by United Nations officials, are not uncommon within the context of a peace-keeping operation.*" (my italics, *ibid.*, p. 31.) Quite aside from the small error in equating the *interahamwe* with the MRND, in explaining the instruction to Dallaire to inform the head of the Mafia in Rwanda, President Habyarimana, about the plans underway and asking Dallaire to request Habyarimana to stop such plans, the UN officials, in explaining the reasons for denying him the right to verify there were arms caches, the report misrepresents Dallaire's cable by characterizing it as a request to use "overwhelming force". This was **not** the request which Dallaire made and Dallaire's document is omitted from the Blue Book. It is also clear that the reason for the denial was the restrictive interpretation of the mandate. UNAMIR had only an assistance role. The primary responsibility for the maintenance of law and order had to remain with the

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parties, ignoring the fact that the main source for the undermining of that law and order was one of the parties.

<sup>57</sup> "If the absence of a resolute commitment to reconciliation by some of the Rwandan parties [something which had been part of Arusha from the beginning] was one problem, the tragedy was compounded by the faltering response of the international community." Blue Book, *ibid*, p. 4. In other words, UN officials were betrayed by the members who did not back them up. This was a message I would hear over and over again in my interviews with UN officials, with the longest finger pointed at the United States.

<sup>58</sup> Of course, the US embassy had been informed afterwards on instructions to Dallaire from New York. It could have independently sought to verify the truth of Dallaire's claims. As Holly Burkhalter, advocacy director of Physicians for Human Rights, stated in testimony before the US Senate Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Operations, 5 May 1998: "We believe that the U.S. Ambassador in Kigali, Ambassador Rawson, also had extensive information on the gathering genocide. We are troubled by the United Nation's claim that the peacekeeping office did not respond positively to General Dallaire's request because it could not assess the validity of the intelligence he was relying upon. The U.S. could have helped investigate and corroborate Dallaire's information."

<sup>59</sup> As a story that appeared in the *New Yorker* on 3 May 1998 characterized the UN headquarters denial of permission to Dallaire and its belated and quasi-acceptance of responsibility, "I was responsible," Riza, still Annan's deputy, told the *New Yorker* when shown a copy of the order. "This is not to say that Mr. Annan was oblivious of what was going on. No. Part of my responsibility was to keep him informed." UN officials previously have blocked investigations to determine who saw the fax and who ordered Dallaire to abandon his plan to intervene. In a letter to the Belgian government last year, Annan refused to let Dallaire testify before a Belgian parliamentary panel investigating the events in Rwanda because he did not believe it was "in the interest of the organization." A copy of the response sent from UN headquarters and obtained by the magazine showed the order was labeled being from Annan. Besides discouraging Dallaire from intervening to head off violence, the order told him to assume the late Rwandan president, Juvenal Habyarimana, was not involved in planning the genocide despite the informant's statements. Dallaire also was told to turn over the informant's reports to Habyarimana and the French, Belgian and U.S. ambassadors to Rwanda. Riza said Dallaire's initial fax was dismissed because it was speculative. Also, since it came just four months after 18 U.S. soldiers were killed in Somalia during a UN peacekeeping mission, there was no political support for military intervention in Rwanda, Riza told the magazine.

<sup>60</sup> The United States was supporting total withdrawal of UNAMIR in the Security Council when Rwandan Council of Ministers decided to extend the genocide to the south of the country where the officials currently in office were not cooperating.

<sup>61</sup> As Holly Burkhalter also stated in her testimony before the US Senate Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Operations, 5 May 1998 "For two weeks, the Security Council discussed the fate of UNAMIR, with Washington strongly supporting complete withdrawal of the force on the ground that it could neither carry out its duties nor be protected."

<sup>62</sup> Colonel Luc Marchal, "Rapport relatif aux Ops d'évacuation des expatriés (08-19 avr 94) au RWANDA," 05 aout 1994.

<sup>63</sup> Blue Book, p. 41.

<sup>64</sup> *Op. Cit.*

<sup>65</sup> Barry Steiner characterizes the disinterestedness/involvement paradox as follows: "While primary state regime antagonists often exercised larger than expected power and influence, the major states were often weaker than expected. This resulted from (1) low resolve of the major states to intervene, relative to the resolve of the primary antagonists to obtain support from the major states to be affected more by the international balance of power than by the primary antagonists." (p. 311) "Low great power resolve interfered in two ways

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with influencing the primary antagonists. First, the great powers often had little incentive to mobilize resources to push the primary antagonists toward a settlement. Second, when they provided considerable assistance to the governing regime, they diminished their ability to position themselves as disinterested mediators." (p. 312) Barry Steiner, *The Varieties of Collective Preventive Diplomacy: Great Power Approaches to Intrastate Conflict* - draft manuscript dated 1 July 1998.

<sup>66</sup> I am grateful for this insight to a paper by Donald Sylvan and Jon C. Pevehouse, "Deciding Whether to Intervene: Problem Presentations of U.S. and French Foreign Policy Elites Dealing with Central Africa." I heard the paper at a conference at which I also presented a paper at Humboldt University Dec. 12-14, 1996.