

## **THE GRINDING MACHINE: TERROR AND GENOCIDE IN RWANDA**

### **keith harmon snow talks with Paul Rusesabagina, the ordinary man who inspired the film Hotel Rwanda.**

keith harmon snow  
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“The nickname for my country is ‘the land of thousands of hills,’” writes Paul Rusesabagina, in his autobiography, *An Ordinary Man*, “but this signifies a gross undercount. There are at least half a million hills, maybe more...we are the children of the hills, the grassy slopes, the valley roads, the spider patterns of rivers, and the millions of rivulets and crevasses and buckles of earth... In this country, we don’t talk about coming from a particular village, but from a particular hill.”

Paul Rusesabagina was born into a family of nine children, farmers, on the side of a steep hill, in a home made of mud and sticks. The Rwanda of his youth was green and bright, full of cooking fires and sisters murmuring and drying sorghum and corn leaves in the wind and in the warm arms of his mother. But this image of a happy, quiet youth spent in the quaint hills of some far-off place is not one the western world holds in its modern memory of Rwanda. Instead we are confronted by horror.

The surname “Rusesabagina” was chosen for the young hero of our story by his father when he was born, in 1954. It means “warrior that disperses the enemies.” After a brief encounter with the seminary, Paul landed at the posh cosmopolitan *Hotel Des Mille Collines*, in Kigali, the Rwandan capital city, in 1979.<sup>1</sup> The first 23 years of his life saw great upheaval in Rwanda. The Independence of the country from the brutal colonial enterprise saw massive loss of life. Labels were manufactured—like Hutu and Tutsi—and selectively applied, with structures designed to divide and conquer. In 1959, and again in 1972, genocide occurred in Rwanda. There was no reconciliation, then, and the results of impunity, those years ago, have now been etched—with the blood and skeletons of 1994—in the collective consciousness of humanity.

From the very first impression of Paul Rusesabagina one does not get the sense that they are meeting a warrior in battle, but rather a man disposed to diplomacy and compromise. He is a warm, friendly man with tranquil countenance that belies the horrors he has seen,

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Rusesabagina began working in a low-level service position at the *Hotel des Mille Collines* in January 1979; the date is often misreported numerous times as 1978. The date of his departure from the *Hotel Des Mille Collines* (to work at the *Hotel Des Diplomats* in Kigali) has also been misreported: not 1993, the correct date is November 1992.

and those he has survived. Still waters run deep, indeed, and Paul Rusesabagina is today engaged with an enemy: Paul Kagame, the President of Rwanda.

In October of 1990, the Rwandan Patriotic Army—the military wing of the Rwanda Patriotic Front—invaded northern Rwanda from western Uganda. The RPA was created in Uganda, assisted by Ugandan troops, and led by Paul Kagame. These were Tutsis in exile, refugees, the Tutsi *Diaspora*, men like Paul Kagame who was carried to safety as a three year-old—in 1959—on the back of his mother. But the government of Rwanda called on its allies—French, Belgian and Israeli-trained forces from Zaire—and stalled the invasion.

Exactly one year later, in October 1991, I bicycled through Uganda and down the same road to Rwanda that the invading forces must have taken. I was oblivious to the war, and to the danger. When a man riding in a pick-up truck was shot—an “RPF rebel” they said—it meant nothing to me. I was not shocked, or surprised, or even curious. I merely thought: *this is something that happens in Africa*.

On my mountain bike I crossed the Ugandan border, and directly joined a trek into the green, sunny, terraced hillside. I knew nothing at all about Rwanda, or about insurgency, and nothing about genocide (not even that it had *ever* happened). Paying \$100, I hiked with a group of tourists and heavily armed rangers up the steep slopes of Mount Karisimbi, in the Volcanoes National Park, and there in the lush montane forest I saw a troop of silverbacks: I was interested in gorillas, and that is what took me to *the land of thousands of hills*. I was not interested in guerrillas, and I was not interested in Rwanda, and I left it behind, forever—I thought—and moved on, on my bicycle. But the hills of my Rwanda were tranquil then, as I remember them. They were so quiet that you could hear the wind as it passed over the feathers of a soaring hawk, and the echoes of children playing on the hills across the deep valleys. There were no Hutus or Tutsis in my experience, just a quiet, peaceful, friendly people living on the slopes of those verdant hills.

Paul Rusesabagina can no longer visit his particular hill. He was made famous by the film [Hotel Rwanda](#), a Hollywood story inspired by his actions in the face of inhumanity, but Paul Rusesabagina fled Rwanda on 6 September 1996, after an attempted assassination, and he is today in exile from his own country. Paul Kagame’s agents have tracked him in Belgium, where he now lives, and even in the United States, where he tours and speaks. He has been derided and threatened. In an 7 April 2007 ceremony held in Rwanda to mark the 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the genocide, President Paul Kagame called him a “swindler” and “gangster” who works with other swindlers and gangsters who support him. The speech has raised fears in Rwanda, and amongst the Rwandan *Diaspora* around the world. It was not the slander of Paul Rusesabagina that has upset the Rwandan people, but the other things that President Kagame said, and the way that he said them, in Kinyarwanda. In keeping with the general climate of silence and disinformation about the political realities in Rwanda, Paul Kagame’s words went untold by the Western press.

On 6 April 1994 the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi were assassinated after the plane carrying Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana was struck by surface-to-air missiles as it approached the airport in the capital city, Kigali. Over the next three months the Western media was saturated with stories about meaningless tribal slaughter, unexplained cataclysms of violence, and utter hopelessness descending over the hills of Rwanda. Hutus killing Tutsis, people hacking their neighbors with machetes, the media's message was clear: *that is just something such people do*.

In the film, Hotel Rwanda, the hate radio station of the Hutu Power government blames the presidents' deaths on the Tutsi rebels, and we are left believing that, of course, there is no question that the ruthless, bloodthirsty, Hutu people did it. Paul Rusesabagina is a Hutu whose parents were both Hutu and Tutsi, and the film celebrates the humanity of Paul Rusesabagina in saving the lives of *people*. Paul Rusesabagina did not run away, he stood firm, and he said, "no."

In April of 1994 the Traprock Peace Center in western Massachusetts held a ceremony to remember and honor veterans. The speakers were Lois Barber, founder of *Earth Action*, and *2020 Vision*, and Howard Zinn, author of the book A People's History of the United States. I will never forget the sense of powerlessness we all felt when activist Frances Crowe, who was then 75 years old, asked with dismay: What can we do to help the people of Rwanda? There were no answers. The media had whipped up the specter of ancient tribal animosities, and this—as it always does—had emasculated our sensibilities. *It was just something that happens in Africa*. Some years later—after Rwanda had invaded the Congo—I privately complained to Frances Crowe that no one seemed to care about Rwanda, that there were no vigils, no protests, no willingness to understand. And Frances said to me, "maybe you are the one to be the voice for Rwanda." Well, those words certainly struck me, but it is a job I do not want. One can imagine that Paul Rusesabagina was also given a job that he did not want, but it was a job he did well.

Today—thirteen years after the infamous "100 days of genocide"—the political situation in Rwanda remains widely misunderstood and dangerously volatile. Most people continue to believe, even to spread, the disinformation about Rwanda. People have seen the film, Hotel Rwanda, but they know nothing about the protests in America organized by the Kagame machine. They know nothing about the innocent people imprisoned, tortured or disappeared by the Kagame machine. They know nothing of the kangaroo courts of the ICTR—the International Criminal Tribunal on Rwanda—or the "shenanigans" of the prosecution.

Few people know about the November 2005 assassination of Juvenal Uwilingiyamana, whose body turned up floating naked in a canal in Brussels. And if they have heard of Juvenal Uwilingiyamana, then maybe they think he deserved his fate: he was, after all, a fugitive from genocide. That he had been threatened and intimidated by agents of the ICTR, and yet refused to collaborate to manufacture falsehoods to support the Kagame mythology, few people know.

And while some might recall the 28 February 1999 massacre of eight Western tourists in the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest in Uganda, they have heard nothing about the trials in Washington, where a U.S. judge freed the supposed killers in the fall of 2006: they were obviously tortured, the judge said. Who killed the tourists? Was it the enemies of the RPF, or was it the RPF? Why were the suspects passed through the U.S. military base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba? Was this yet another attempt to extract confessions, under duress, that would serve the Kagame machine and uphold the Victor's Justice dispensed by the ICTR? Answers will never come, when so few are prepared to comprehend the questions. And there are people with answers, people—in hiding—who can reportedly prove that it was the RPF that killed the two Americans, four Britons, and two New Zealanders.

In his 7 April 2007 commemoration of genocide, delivered in Murambi, Rwanda, President Paul Kagame spoke—in the Kinyarwanda language—with the inflection and innuendo of viciousness. He complained that the French should have tasted the RPF's wrath when—*Operation Turquoise*, 1994—the RPF had the chance to inflict and wound them. He complained about all the Paul Rusesabaginas abroad, and their white friends, who malign and slander the good name of Rwanda. And when he complained about the Hutus, there was no mistaking the message—Rwandans say—for the threat that it is. President Paul Kagame said that the RPF Army *made a mistake: that they should have finished off all the Hutus before they fled to Congo (Zaire), and they should have finished off all those who returned, when they had the chance*. Kagame's supporters, both emboldened and embarrassed by his words, issued a sanitized version of this speech; the original has disappeared from public view. Rwanda today is a cauldron of terror. It is not over. For many Rwandans, every day it begins anew.

Below is a candid interview with Paul Rusesabagina given in a Chicago coffee shop. Paul talks about his country, about genocide, about the events of 1994 that occurred *outside* the walls of the *Hotel des Mille Collines*. But most important of all, Paul Rusesabagina speaks candidly about the imperatives of facing and naming reality. Without transparency, with so much impunity, there will be no reconciliation, and no peace. This is the ultimate truth, and it is not about ancient tribal animosity, and it is not even about Rwanda. It is about depopulation, and control, and it is playing out today in Somalia and Sudan and Northern Uganda and Congo. War, terror, assassinations, the disappearing of innocent people—these are not *just something that happens in Africa*.

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keith harmon snow: Paul, what would you say about Rwanda today?

Paul Rusesabagina: Rwanda today, that is a very wide subject.

KHS: Let's stick to the claim by the government of Rwanda that there are people trying to commit genocide against the Tutsis, and therefore they have to institute extreme security measures to defend their country.

PR: Well, Rwanda today, in that sense, [President] Kagame has used the label “genocide” to oppress the majority Hutus, who are 85% of the population. Kagame has got a militia, a new militia called the Local Defense [Forces].<sup>2</sup> The Local Defense are demobilized army guys, who are given weapons, ammunitions. Those guys are not paid. You find them everywhere on the hills of Rwanda.<sup>3</sup>

KHS: They're not paid?

PR: They are not paid.

KHS: Why do they do it?

PR: They pay themselves. And you understand what this means?

KHS: They are robbing and pillaging...

PR: They are pillaging, they are robbing, they are killing...

KHS: Only within Rwanda? You're talking about within Rwanda? Not in the Congo... where the Rwandans are also pillaging and killing.

PR: Within Rwanda. Right now. I am only talking about Rwanda itself, not about the Congo.

KHS: Where do they get their weapons?

PR: From the government; they work for Kagame.

KHS: Are you a friend of Kagame at this point?

PR: Well, to the best of my knowledge, I have never been one. I've never been his friend, because, myself I knew Kagame from the beginning as a war criminal. Why a war criminal? Because, since Kagame came over from Uganda—on his way from Byumba and Ruhengeri in the northeast—what he did was to kill innocent civilians, innocent *Hutu* civilians. This has never been qualified as a genocide, but it is one; until it is qualified as a genocide, me I won't call it a genocide, but it is supposed to be one...

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<sup>2</sup> In the early years of the new millennium the Rwanda government changed the name of the national military from the Rwandan Patriotic Army to the Rwandan Defense Forces (RDF). The “local defense forces” discussed here are semi-formal, organized militia, not the formal government military, the RDF.

<sup>3</sup> As one exiled Rwandan told me: “Every day the local defense forces pass by my father's house looking for me—my father is over 80 years old—and every day my father is afraid.” (Personal communication, April 2007.)

KHS: Critics would claim, and people who support the predominant discourse, what I would call, the mythology of genocide in Rwanda, would claim that you are a Hutu, therefore you obviously have something against the Tutsis, and therefore you are saying that they have committed genocide against Hutus, and Kagame is responsible for, you're saying, terrorism.

PR: I'm not talking for Hutus or for Tutsis. I am talking for all those people who have no voice, who cannot have access to the media. I'm trying to be their voice. But I am not talking for Hutus. I am not talking for Tutsis. Because with Paul Kagame, whoever frustrates him, whoever might raise a voice, whoever talks against him—being Hutu or Tutsi—Kagame sees them as his enemy.

KHS: Kagame will come after you?

PR: Kagame will come after you.

KHS: Or he will have you arrested as a *génocidaire*...

PR: Yes, of course. I will give you an example of Hutus and Tutsis who both have been killed since 1994. You know about Kagame completely destroying the refugee camps in Kibeho?

KHS: Kibeho, Rwanda: the United Nations Assistance Mission to Rwanda [UNAMIR] stood by and watched while 4000 Rwandan refugees were massacred...<sup>4</sup>

PR: You have seen those pictures. Maybe you were not there, you did not experience what happened, but at least you have seen the websites showing how the RPF army destroyed refugee camps with helicopters while soldiers were on the ground with machine guns killing everyone, each and every moving human being trying to flee the camp. So, what can we call that? Is that a *genocide*? Is that a crime against humanity? To me, that is a crime against humanity, which includes genocide and war crimes.

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<sup>4</sup> On a single day, one RPF unit, under the command of Colonel Fred Ibingira, reportedly massacred some 4000 refugees at Kibeho, 80 kilometers south of Kigali; some put the figure at 10,000 killed in one day. New York Times journalist Howard French reported that the United Nations estimated 8000 Hutu killed. Ibingira had previously received “humanitarian” training from U.S. military advisers to the RPF government; he also led the 7<sup>th</sup> RPF Battalion in the U.S. backed invasion of Zaire/Congo. Human Rights Watch charged that the U.N. did not have enough troops to protect refugees who were returning as part of the U.N.’s own repatriation program, *Operation Return*; the small Zambian battalion of U.N. forces was no match for the RPF troops who carried out the massacres. (See: Wayne Madsen, Genocide and Covert Operations in Africa, 1993-1999, Mellen Press, 1999: p. 174-175, 199, 309; and Howard French, A Continent for the Taking: The Tragedy and Hope of Africa, Alfred A. Knopf, 2004: p. 196.)

KHS: The refugees were internally displaced Rwandans—originally forced out of Rwanda by the RPF invasion—and then forced back to Rwanda...

PR: That was April 17th to 20th, 1995.<sup>5</sup> Those were Hutus he [Kagame] was killing. When Kagame followed one of his former Ministers of the Interior, Seth Sendashonga, and he was assassinated in Kenya [16 May 1998], he was killing the Hutu.<sup>6</sup> He followed Augustin Bugilimfura, who was a prominent businessman: he [Kagame] killed him in Kenya.<sup>7</sup> He followed one of his former colonels in the army, Lizinde Theoneste, who used also to be a major in President Habyarimana's army [*Forces Armées Rwandaises*: FAR], and he also killed him [1998] in Kenya. But on the other hand, he also kills Tutsis. Kabera Assiel in the year 2000, he raised a voice, and talked, and he was assassinated trying to get into his house in Kigali, in Rwanda.<sup>8</sup>

KHS: And he was a Tutsi?

PR: He was a Tutsi. And he was the advisor to the Rwandan President Pasteur Bizimungu—who was imprisoned in Rwanda for some years.

KHS: Bizimungu was elected?

PR: No, Bizimungu was not elected, but he was designated by the RPF, the rebels, in 1994.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Wayne Madsen cites the date of the Kibeho massacre as April 22, 1995 (Genocide and Covert Operations in Africa, 1993-1999, Mellen Press, 1999: p. 175).

<sup>6</sup> Sendashonga had asked Rwandan Vice-President and Minister of Defense General Paul Kagame repeatedly to restrain his troops, noting their abuses against civilians, mostly Hutus, in some 600 memoranda addressed to Kagame. After leaving the government, Sendashonga fled Rwanda for exile in Nairobi, and was later assassinated. (See also: Human Rights Watch and the FIDH Condemn Assassination of Seth Sendashonga, 18 May 1998, Human Rights Watch, <<http://hrw.org/english/docs/1998/05/18/kenya1126.htm>>.)

<sup>7</sup> The Rwandan, or Kinyarwanda, use of names offers the family name first, followed by the given name; example: Rusesabagina, Paul. The Rwandan names cited herein may be confused, as written, in the ordering of family name, followed by given name; this is solely due to the confusion of the author.

<sup>8</sup> Assiel Kabera was former presidential adviser to former president Pasteur Bizimungu. (See: The Search for Security and Human Rights Abuses, Human Rights Watch, 2000, <<http://www.hrw.org/reports/2000/rwanda/Rwan004-07.htm>>.)

<sup>9</sup> The case of Pasteur Bizimungu offers a poignant example of how the Kagame regime promotes those they wish to serve their interests, and punishes—arrests, tortures, assassinates—those who stray from the tidy narrative of genocide and victimization. In 1992, Bizimungu, a Hutu, was an RPF representative; he later signed numerous Arusha agreements on behalf of the RPF. In July 1994, with the RPF military victory, Bizimungu was appointed President of a five-party coalition in which the RPF held eight of 17 portfolios, and Hutus were appointed to the other nine; Paul Kagame was self-appointed

KHS: So, you see a clear pattern of—what would you call it? Genocide? Murder? Assassinations? —state orchestrated terrorism that has occurred under the Kagame government since 1994.

PR: What you call, what I call myself, the Kagame “government”—I call it *akazu*.<sup>10</sup> The *akazu* is a small circle of old friends who rule over the country, who do whatever they want. But this *akazu* is a Tutsi circle, ruling over a whole nation, it is not *Tutsi power*: it is a circle of Tutsis.

KHS: There was the *akazu* under Habyarimana’s rule.<sup>11</sup> But now you have a group of very powerful Tutsis who have powerful Hutu businessmen as friends...

PR: Well, have you ever read my book *An Ordinary Man*?

KHS: No, I’m sorry.<sup>12</sup>

PR: Read my book *An Ordinary Man*. Those Hutus, I know they are there, who are trying to buy time. Who are trying to pay each and every now and then. They are the ones

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as Vice-President and Minister of Defense. Bizimungu was attributed with citing a pattern of genocide planning by the Hutu power structure (see, e.g., Arthur Jay Klinghoffer, *The International Dimension of Genocide in Rwanda*, NYU Press, 1998: p. 112.), but he was regarded as a symbol of reconciliation; he was also seen as a figurehead behind then Vice-President Paul Kagame. Bizimungu resigned in March 2000, in protest over what he considered an unwarranted crackdown on dissent; Kagame then assumed the Presidency. Bizimungu was arrested as an enemy of the state in July of 2000 and, in 2004, he was sentenced to 15 years in prison. He was unexpectedly released in March of 2007; early reports are that he has been poisoned and mentally incapacitated.

<sup>10</sup> The term *akazu* was previously used to describe the elite circle of power brokers surrounding President Juvenal Habyarimana, and it was clearly used in reference to the planners of the genocide. Alison Des Forges wrote: “The *akazu*, or “little house,” was a special circle within the larger network of personal connections that worked to support Habyarimana.” It was also described by some as the “Zero Network,” responsible for death squads. (Alison Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda*, Human Rights Watch, 1999: p. 44, 58.)

<sup>11</sup> On 5 July 1973, Major-General Juvenal Habyarimana, then minister of defense, seized power in a military *coup d’etat*. While the *akazu* under Habyarimana served the interests of a narrow group, the Habyarimana era was markedly prosperous. According to genocide expert Philip Reyntjens, “One can say anything about Habyarimana, but not that he was a blood-thirsty dictator. The RPF has created that image with some success in order to legitimate its own war” (*Gazet Van Antwerpen* 31 July 1994). Paul Rusesabagina talks about the control of the Habyarimana *akazu* in his book, *An Ordinary Man*.

<sup>12</sup> At the time of the interview I had not yet read it.



financing each and everything. They do not do it because they want to do it that way, but they are forced to.

KHS: To survive under the Kagame machine.

PR: Yes, to survive what they call today in Rwanda, the *grinding machine*.

KHS: The grinding machine?

PR: Yes, the grinding machine: a machine grinding human beings. You understand what I mean?

KHS: Terrorism, brutality, murder, torture, intimidation, death squads... a reign of terror... And that is the Kagame machine?

PR: Yes, that is the Kagame machine. And to be more specific, the former leader of that grinding machine is today the military attaché in Washington DC. His name is Gacinya, Rugumya.

KHS: And was Gacinya in Rwanda from 1990 to 1994?

PR: He comes from Uganda I think.

KHS: Like Paul Kagame and James Kabarebe<sup>13</sup>... which brings up the question of the Uganda connection to the Kagame machine.

PR: [*Laughing*.] How do you call this—Pilato? —the nickname, you know this one, who condemned all the babies to death when Jesus was born... They used to call Paul Kagame the Ugandan Pilato...

KHS: And why did they call him that?

PR: He was the head of military intelligence in Uganda. Between 1986 and 1990: Kagame was the one condemning people to life or death in Uganda, the one who was deciding people's lives.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Colonel James Kabarebe was the private Secretary and aide-de-camp of Major-General Paul Kagame. He became Commander of the High Command Unit at Mulindi; the unit later became the Republican Guard under his leadership. Kabarebe was the Commander-in-Chief of the Congolese Army Forces (FAC) after AFDL leader Laurent Desiré Kabila took power in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 1997. Soon after, Kabarebe took control of forces determined to overthrow Kabila in Congo's second war—the First War of Occupation (1998-2001). He was later promoted to Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA), now Rwandan Defense Forces (RDF).

<sup>14</sup> Born in Rwanda, Paul Kagame was carried to exile as a three year old, in 1959, and Yoweri Museveni were former classmates at the University of Dar Es Salaam, along with

KHS: Well, Kagame and Museveni have worked together to terrorize Congo, and their own countries right? And this is always with outside military support. But many people don't see, or don't believe, that Paul Kagame has deep connections outside. How do you feel about that? What do you think the reality is?

PR: Well, the reality is that Kagame has got support somewhere. I do not know really whether he gets it from the U.S. military. But Kagame has good support from somewhere. In any case, he does not get that support from France. He doesn't get it really from Europe. But he gets it from somewhere.

KHS: From your point of view—you are the real life hero depicted in the film Hotel Rwanda—what do you think about the movie?

PR: Well, I do not really call myself a hero. I call myself an ordinary man. That is the reason why I call my book, An Ordinary Man: I am an ordinary man who did ordinary things that he was supposed to do. During the more complicated and extraordinary circumstances I remained an ordinary man.

In the movie Hotel Rwanda, it was a true story of what was going on in the *Hotel des Mille Collines* [Kigali, Rwanda] during Rwanda's 100 days of killing. I defined it that way, because me I say three months, because I do not know when they count the 100 days.

The genocide started the sixth of April [1994] when the President Habyarimana was assassinated. And this is, to me, what is called—with a blanket explanation—the genocide. That was supposed to have finished on July 4, when the RPF took over the country.

KHS: And that's the so-called "100 days of genocide" in Rwanda: according to this—which I call a mythology—there was no genocide before 6 April 1994 and no genocide after 4 July 1994 and it was those ruthless Hutus and savage *Interahamwe* who did all the killing in those 100 days.

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Sudan People's Liberation Army leader John Garang. In 1979, Paul Kagame and other Rwandan Tutsi exiles formed the Rwandan Patriotic Front, in Uganda, whose military wing was the Rwandan Patriotic Army. When the National Resistance Army (NRA) of Uganda, led by now President Yoweri Museveni, drove their war into Kampala, Uganda, in January 1986, the 14,000 NRA troops included some 3000 Rwandan Tutsis. After January 1986, the RPF operated freely in Uganda. From November 1989 to June 1990, Kagame controlled the NRA's G-2 (military intelligence) apparatus. The constant RPA assault on Rwanda was back by Ugandan military, with NRA battalions involved in the field in Rwanda, and commanded by Ugandan military commanders such as Museveni's half-brother General Salim Saleh. As Director of Military Intelligence for Museveni, Kagame received training in military tactics and intelligence methods from the U.S. Army's Fort Leavenworth Command and General Staff College, in Kansas.

PR: Yes, it was finished, when it appeared that the RPF rebels took over the country. So, there was no more genocide afterwards. Whatever happens afterwards, they [RPA] take over. When we come back to the film Hotel Rwanda, and in the *Mille Collines*, that is the true story of what was going on during that specific time. And sometimes it [the film] has been made a little bit less violent for an audience to come, sit down, watch and get out with a message.

KHS: Do you believe the message is accurate?

PR: The message is very accurate.

KHS: The message that the Kagame regime, that the current government, that the rebels—the Rwandan Patriotic Army—stopped the genocide, and saved everyone...

PR: No, no, Hotel Rwanda [the film] does not say that...

KHS: But it's easy to believe that from the film.

PR: No, this is where I do not agree with people. Because the film Hotel Rwanda is about what is called the “Hotel Rwanda” [*Hotel des Mille Collines*]. It talks about what was going on between the walls, the four walls, of the building. It does not go outside to define what was going on. You saw the hotel manager going out how many times in the movie? Just twice: once, going out for supplies; the second time with those who are evacuated. That was it. Hotel Rwanda does not talk about what was going on outside. Only, in Hotel Rwanda, the movie shows the rebels as the winners, and they have been the winners.

KHS: Do you feel that the movie leaves people believing that the rebels [RPA] stopped the genocide?

PR: No. No one stopped the genocide. The rebels are still fighting when the movie ends...

KHS: But the movie leaves you believing that the rebels [RPA] stopped the genocide...

PR: No. This is an idea that all Westerners have in mind. This is why a movie is a movie: the movie does not leave people having in mind that the rebels stopped genocide. The movie stops when the rebels and the militiamen are fighting—still fighting—and the militiamen are fleeing, they are running away, and that is how it was.

KHS: Is Georges Rutaganda—the *Interahamwe* leader—the bad guy in the film Hotel Rwanda—a good friend of yours? <sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Accused of responsibility in genocide, Georges Rutaganda was convicted for life by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, in Arusha, Tanzania.

PR: We grew up together. Georges and myself we grew up together. And even before political parties came up, we were very close. And during that time, I remember telling him myself, “Georges, you are making a mistake.” I told him that. We talked about it during the genocide, during the 100 days, or the three months, as I call it. During that three months, I saw Georges many times. He came to the hotel [*Mille Collines*], he came to see me many times at the hotel.

KHS: His lawyers from the ICTR [International Criminal Tribunal on Rwanda] claim that he was portrayed, and he claims that, the movie portrays him unfairly.<sup>16</sup>

PR: I think the movie does not portray Georges unfairly. But rather Georges portrays himself unfairly. He portrayed—in his real life—he portrayed himself unfairly. Why did he portray himself unfairly? Georges was the second Vice-president of the *Interahamwe*. The *Interahamwe* had a President: Kajuga, Robert.

KHS: Was Robert Kajuga a Tutsi?

PR: Yes, Kajuga was a Tutsi.

KHS: How can that be? The *Interahamwe*, according to the common portrayals of genocide in Rwanda, were a bunch of murderous Hutus with machetes...

PR: How could that be? That is a problem. Because Kagame had infiltrated the [Habyarimana’s] army [FAR], and the militias, everywhere; he [Kagame] had his own militia within a militia.

KHS: Are you saying that Robert Kajuga was one of those infiltrators?

PR: Among many others.

KHS: Does that mean that the *Interahamwe* were killing people under the command of Paul Kagame?

PR: Well, not under his command, but Kagame had infiltrated the militias.

KHS: Does that mean that the militias—that the *Interahamwe* who were killing—were killing with the complicity of now President and then military commander Paul Kagame?

PR: Without knowing, for sure. They were not aware, that they were working for him [Kagame]. But most of those guys who were just on the roadblocks [where so much killing was done] were Kagame people.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> See: Georges Rutaganda, [The Unsaid About Georges Rutaganda and the “Hotel Des Mille Collines” During the 1994 Rwandan Tragedy: N. Rutaganda Georges open-statement in regards to the Hollywood movie, “Hotel Rwanda”: the humanity must know the truth.](#)

KHS: When you say, “they were not aware...” Who was not aware they were working for Kagame?

PR: The militias. Me I think that Georges [Rutaganda] was not aware that all of those guys were with him [Kagame]; guys like [*Interahamwe* President] Kajuga, Robert, who was his [Rutaganda’s] president, I’m sure he [Rutaganda] did not know.

KHS: So you then say that Kagame had something to do with orchestrating what people know as “the genocide in Rwanda,” which was those now famous “100 days”—or three months as you call it—of killing.

PR: What do you think? Who killed [President] Habyarimana? [*Laughing.*] Who benefited from Habyarimana’s death? It is Kagame and his people. And if you go back to the region, to the Great Lakes region, between 1990 and 1994, as I was describing, the rebels [RPA] on their way from Uganda—in Byumba and Ruhengeri, in northern Rwanda— they were killing civilians. Today you can go to many former communities which Kagame has completely reshuffled, and changed, every way, upside down. Today if I go to the hill where I was born, he has changed the names.

KHS: They have changed the names of the hills where you were born?

PR: Yes. All the names have been changed. So, killing civilians. If you go there today in Byumba, you will notice that 80% of the population are widows, women, all women. Why 80% of the population, today, is widows? Because rebels [RPA] were inviting their husbands to meetings and killing them.

KHS: This is before 1994.

PR: Before 1994. And their sons were being involved in the rebels [RPA] army and being killed.

KHS: Their sons were lured into the rebel army movement... were they Tutsis? Or Hutus? Or doesn’t it matter?

PR: Kagame at that time was killing Hutus only.

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<sup>17</sup> Recall the scene in *Hotel Rwanda* where the *Tutsi* refugees, having left the Hotel Des Mille Collines, are stopped at a roadblock: the film’s general inference is that such roadblocks were erected and manned by ruthless Hutu *génocidaires* and by Hutu *Interahamwe* militias, because this is the framework of the film, where good-versus-evil is played out by Hutus (evil) versus Tutsis (good); there is never any suggestion that Tutsis connected to the rebel RPF army might have been involved.

KHS: Because you had such an imbalance of power, with so many Hutus in Rwanda—the majority—that he had to depopulate the country, and he did this by any means necessary...

PR: Yes. And then, as a result, by late 1993, early 1994, we had about 1.2 million people surrounding Kigali, coming to beg in town...

KHS: IDPs—internally displaced people—Rwandan people.

PR: Yes, internally displaced people. Coming to beg in town, going to sleep in the open air, without shelter, without food, without water, dying each and every day, by disasters in camps, and also without education for their own children.

By 1993—you remember—in June, a Hutu President was elected democratically in Burundi: N'Dadaye, Melchior. And then he was killed in October [1993] by the Tutsi army [in Burundi].<sup>18</sup> So the whole region was boiling. So now imagine, someone else taking over for N'Dadaye, and then another President from Burundi [Ntaryamira] now killed—also assassinated—with the President of Rwanda, six months later [6 April 1994]. So, that person, who killed President Habyarimana and President [Cyprien] Ntaryamira of Burundi...<sup>19</sup>

KHS: ...and Major-General Nsabimana...the Rwandan Armed Forces [*Forces Armées Rwandaises*, FAR] Chief of Staff who was also on the plane...

PR: Yes, he was the Rwandan [FAR] General, the Chief of Staff. So that person who beheaded two nations, to me, is the one, who is responsible for the death of a million people.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> In 1994 the Tutsi army of Burundi assassinated then President Melchior N'Dadaye, a Hutu; the Tutsi army held power even though a Hutu president had been elected.

<sup>19</sup> On the evening of 6 April 1994, the Dassault Mystere Falcon 50 executive jet (a personal gift to President Juvenal Habyarimana from Jean-Christophe Mitterand) was shot down on approach to the airport in Kigali, Rwanda. Killed in the double presidential assassination of were Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana; Burundian President Cyprien Ntaryamira; Rwandan General Deogratias Nsabimana, Chief of Staff of the *Forces Armées Rwandaises*; Bernard Ciza and Cyriaque Simbizi, two Burundian Cabinet Ministers; and the three-person French crew.

<sup>20</sup> Immediately following the event the U.S. media studiously, and universally, began referring to the 6 April 1994 double presidential assassination as a “mysterious plane crash.” The “plane crash” language proliferated; see, e.g., the use of this language by Arthur Jay Klinghoffer in *The International Dimension of Genocide in Rwanda* (NYU Press, 1998: p. 89). When the shooting down of the plane came under serious scrutiny at the International Criminal Tribunal on Rwanda—with evidence pointing to the RPF—the investigations were abruptly terminated by high-level officials. The most significant investigation into the downing of the Presidential aircraft has been conducted by French judge Jean-Louis Bruguiere on behalf of the families of the French crew killed in the

KHS: Paul Kagame...

PR: Kagame. He pretends that people are not supposed to be angry; because he pretends that he can keep on killing them. Now, who took machetes first? And went down to the streets? All those refugees who surrounded Kigali, who had been angry for four years, who had lost their family members, killed by the [RPA] rebels; they started revenging on everyone... on Hutus and Tutsis.

KHS: On everyone...

PR: On Hutus and Tutsis, all together; on each and every one.

KHS: But that's not genocide as genocide is defined...if both Hutus and Tutsis are being killed... and both Tutsis and Hutus are doing the killing...

PR: Well, we can call it, let's say, we have to call it genocide, because we can never change it. This genocide designation has been decided by the Security Council.

KHS: But the United Nations Security Council is, in effect, a conspiracy of very powerful people...serving very powerful interests...

PR: Yes. But, well, on November 8, 1994, this was the date of the Security Council resolution made to call it a genocide. We have to maybe wait for another resolution, maybe calling it...

KHS: Politicide, or something else...holding all parties responsible... <sup>21</sup>

PR: Not politicide... because to me it is a genocide. We should call it by its name.

KHS: Committed by the Tutsis, the RPF rebels.

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incident. In November 2006, after an eight-year investigation, Bruguiere issued international arrest warrants against nine members of the Kagame government: James Kabarebe, military chief-of-staff; Charles Kayonga, army chief-of-staff; Faustin Nyamwasa-Kayumba, ambassador to India; Jackson Nkurunziza, presidential guard; Samuel Kanyamera, RPF deputy; Jacob Tumwime, army officer; Franck Nziza, presidential guard officer; Eric Hakizimana, intelligence officer; Rose Kabuye, director general of state protocol. Rwanda broke off diplomatic relations with France after the warrants were issued. Kagame has immunity under French law, as head of state, and he has denied involvement in the shooting down of Habyarimana's plane, but has said he does not regret the death.

<sup>21</sup> The term "politicide" applies to politically motivated murder and elimination of a group as a political entity, as opposed to genocide, which is ethnically or racially motivated.

PR: Yes.

KHS: When was the first time you heard the term genocide applied to Rwanda?

PR: In 1994.

KHS: In 1994? You didn't hear it used before that?

PR: Well, it was used before that. That was RPF promotions—that genocide was being committed against Tutsis—that was RPF talking about it on *Radio Muhabura* ...<sup>22</sup>

KHS: Saying that genocide was being committed against the Tutsis.

PR: Saying that genocide was being committed against the Tutsis.

KHS: But Alex de Waal [African Rights, London] came out with a report, and Alison des Forges [Human Rights Watch] came out with a report—and these reports were before April 1994, right? —Saying that the Habyrimana government was responsible for genocide.

PR: Well, I know that many humanitarians, many Western governments, were on the side of the Tutsi [RPA] rebels. The international community Kagame uses the label “genocide”—and he is using the “genocide”—to intimidate each and every one. And the international community is silent. And this has surprised me: that the international community has been silent since ever in Rwanda, and even today.

KHS: Is there any international “community”? Or is this merely another mistaken belief, a mythology... that there is some “community” of concerned people or organizations that do not operate from a profit motive, but from a truly humanitarian motive, for the betterment of the world?

PR: Well, when I say the international community, I'm always speaking about the humanitarian organizations.

KHS: Humanitarian. Such as?

PR: Such as Amnesty International.

KHS: Amnesty International. Is that a “humanitarian” organization? Is that an organization that operates without bias on some principles of truth? Where was Amnesty in 1993? When Rwanda—a sovereign country—was under attack, facing an invasion by

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<sup>22</sup> *Radio Muhabura* was an RPF propaganda station. For a discussion of the RPF propaganda machine, see Jean Marie Vianney Higiroti, “Rwandan Private Print Media on the Eve of the Genocide,” in *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, Ed. Allan Thompson, 2007, < [http://www.idrc.ca/acacia/ev-108186-201-1-DO\\_TOPIC.html](http://www.idrc.ca/acacia/ev-108186-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html)>.



the RPF? Wasn't that a terrorist act? To invade a sovereign country as the RPF did Rwanda? Where was Amnesty then?

PR: Where were they in 1990?

KHS: In 1990...1991...1992, where were they?

PR: Where were they in 1994?

KHS: So, then you ask the question...

PR: They were one-sided. Where were they in 1994, and after, in 1995? Where are they today? We do not see them [in Rwanda].

KHS: What about Alison des Forges [Human Rights Watch]? She's always producing alerts from Kigali about Congo, for example.<sup>23</sup>

PR: Well I believe that Alison des Forges has spoken for the oppressed in a way. There have been some reports, in 1993, talking about the RPF killing civilians [in Rwanda].

KHS: Reports by who?

PR: By Alison des Forges and others from Human Rights Watch.

KHS: About the RPF killings that were going on.

PR: About the RPF killings. She wrote about that in 1993, in a Human Rights Watch Report. And in 1995 and 1996, she did a lot of reports against the RPF. Did you know that at a given time, Alison des Forges became *persona non grata* and was wanted in Rwanda, until 1999, when Americans had the right to go to Rwanda without a visa. That is when she happened to go back to Rwanda under the RPF regime. That much I know.

KHS: So, you think Alison des Forges has been fairly balanced...

PR: Well, she has tried to be balanced.

KHS: Does that mean you don't think she has succeeded?

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<sup>23</sup> Working as a researcher for Human Rights Watch, Alison Des Forges produced the massive post-genocide treatise, Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda, Human Rights Watch, 1999. Cameroonian journalist Charles Onana, author of The Secrets of the Rwandan Genocide: Investigations on the Mysteries of a President, published (French) in 2001, definitively believes that Des Forges has been dishonest. From 1991-1992 Des Forges worked as a U.S. State Department consultant for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

PR: Well, sometimes people try and sometimes they succeed, and some other times they fail, that's life. Sometimes people are informed; some other times people may be misinformed as well.

KHS: Do you see parallels between what happened in Rwanda from 1990 to 1994 and what is going on in Darfur today?

PR: Definitely.

KHS: You went to Darfur [January 2005]. Who did you travel with?

PR: I traveled with Don Cheadle [the actor], who played me in Hotel Rwanda. I traveled with five members of the U.S. Congress.

KHS: Which congressmen and congresswomen?

PR: Well, there was Eddie Royce (R) of California...<sup>24</sup>

KHS: Was there a U.S. Military General with you?

PR: Ah, well, there were some U.S. military generals as well.

KHS: Did you see other U.S. military in Sudan when you got there?

PR: In Sudan? No, they are not any in Sudan.

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<sup>24</sup> Congressman Ed Royce (R-CA), serving in his seventh term in Congress, is a senior member of the House Committee on International Relations. For the 109th session of Congress, Royce was named Chairman of the Subcommittee on International Terrorism and Nonproliferation; Vice-Chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International Operations; and a member of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations. He is involved with the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP), which is supported by USAID, the World Bank, and the Pentagon. Royce is a member of the Africa Society of the National Summit on Africa. He has chaired numerous House hearings focused on genocide in Rwanda; at the 22 April 2004 hearing titled *Rwanda's Genocide: Looking Back*, the expert testimony was provided by Alison Des Forges (senior adviser to the Africa Division, Human Rights Watch), Samantha Power (Pulitzer-prize winning author of The Road To Hell: America in the Age of Genocide), General Romeo Dallaire, and Louise Mushikiwabo, a prominent Tutsi leader in Rwanda <[http://www.uspolicy.be/issues/africa/africa\\_usghearings.asp](http://www.uspolicy.be/issues/africa/africa_usghearings.asp)>. Mushikiwabo is the international coordinator with the *Remembering Rwanda Trust* based in Canada, an affiliate of the American Friends of the Kigali Library Project (AFKLP), which has held fundraisers with Paul Rusesabagina, and a collaborator on documentary films depicting the Rwandan genocide, such as the BBC's "When Good Men Do Nothing," Internews' "The Arusha Tapes," and Barna-Alper's Productions' "The Last Just Man."

KHS: You didn't see any.

PR: No. In Sudan I didn't see any. I didn't see any.

KHS: But you do see parallels between Darfur and Rwanda...

PR: But I do see—I saw a lot of parallels. In Rwanda in 1994, as I told you, before 1994, me, I just consider, what happened before 1994 saw the genocide.

KHS: I'm sorry, you say, “what was happening before 1994”...

PR: Yes, what I was describing—RPA killings in Byumba and Ruhengeri. So, this is what is going on in Darfur. What was going on in Rwanda between 1990 and 1994 is exactly what is going on in Darfur.

KHS: That's impossible! In Darfur, we are told that there are all these Arabs on horses, *Jangaweed*, killing people, just like in Rwanda, where we had the Hutus—the *Interahamwe*—killing people.

PR: No, before 1994, you had Tutsis, the Tutsi army [RPA], killing Hutu civilians on the hills of Byumba and Ruhengeri, on their way to power, fighting for power.

KHS: This is the reality.

PR: The reality is that. And this is also what is going on in Darfur. You have the *Janjaweed* on horses killing civilians in camps. Destroying villages...

KHS: Are you saying there are no rebels involved in Darfur?

PR: There are also rebels involved, but this time it is a militia armed by the government. But also in Rwanda before 1994, the militia *Interahamwe* was also killing civilians.

KHS: What I'm trying to say is that in Rwanda before 1994, in the international press, you didn't see anything about the RPF, they were almost not even there, even though they were invading a country. And today, it's the same with the “rebels” in Darfur.

PR: Because the RPF was smart enough: if you were a journalist not on their side, they [RPF] would just push you away; you were not allowed to cover their zone. Simply you were not allowed.

KHS: So the media coverage was very slanted in favor of the RPF. Don't you think that is happening in Darfur, with the rebels?

PR: No, with the rebels, I don't think so: because we crossed and went on the rebel side.

KHS: Where do the rebels in Darfur get their weapons and their arms?

PR: They get them, of course, from the West. You see, whatever happens, there's always a superpower behind.

KHS: Well, this is what I am saying, no? So who's giving the rebels in Darfur their weapons? Who supports them?

PR: Well, I don't really know.

KHS: The African Union forces have 2,000 of Kagame's men, and these are the same people who have committed genocide in Congo and Rwanda...<sup>25</sup>

PR: Yes, of course. Those are armed by the U.S. This is actually the observers—if you can call it that—because I can no more call them peacekeepers, or peacemakers. They are, to me, they are just observers.

KHS: These are the Darfur A.U. peacekeepers...

PR: No, to me, they are not peacekeepers, they are just observers.

KHS: And what about Roger Winter, today he is the chief of United States Agency for International development [USAID] in Sudan. What can you say about his involvement in Rwanda before 1994? When he was head of the U.S. Committee for Refugees? Wasn't he close with Paul Kagame and the RPF even before 1990?<sup>26</sup>

PR: This is what they say; they say also that he was a good friend to the RPF people since the beginning, since 1980.

KHS: Did you see Roger Winter when you were there [Darfur]?

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<sup>25</sup> The role of Kagame, and General James Kabarebe, and the RPA, in committing genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes against hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of innocent people—refugees and IDPs—has been well documented, though in most cases the information has been systematically suppressed. Examples include the report by Robert Gersony, in September 1994, about the “unmistakable pattern of killings” by the RPA against returning refugees (Gersony estimated some 30,000 people killed by the RPA in the north); the Roberto Garreton reports of RPA killings of Hutus in Congo/Zaire. (See: Howard French, A Continent for the Taking: The Tragedy and Hope of Africa, Alfred A. Knopf, 2004; and Keith Harmon Snow, Hotel Rwanda: Hollywood and the Holocaust in Central Africa, <[www.allthingspass.com](http://www.allthingspass.com)>.)

<sup>26</sup> See: Jean Marie Vianney Higiho, “Rwandan Private Print Media on the Eve of the Genocide,” in The Media and the Rwanda Genocide, Ed. Allan Thompson, 2007; <[http://www.idrc.ca/acacia/ev-108186-201-1-DO\\_TOPIC.html](http://www.idrc.ca/acacia/ev-108186-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html)>, and Keith Harmon Snow, Hotel Rwanda: Hollywood and the Holocaust in Central Africa, <[www.allthingspass.com](http://www.allthingspass.com)>.

PR: No, I didn't see him, because he was supposed to be in Khartoum. He's a representative of the U.S. administration in Khartoum. He's not in Darfur.

KHS: You didn't see him in Darfur. Did you see him in Rwanda in 1990 and 1994? You weren't working at the *Hotel des Mille Collines* in this period were you?

PR: Yes, of course, I was working at *Mille Collines* until November 1992.

KHS: Were you seeing any U.S. military in Rwanda at the time?

PR: Well, the military, the U.S. military, are never in military uniforms. Are they supposed to be in military uniforms? They were mostly in civilian uniforms, just dressed like you and I.

KHS: What role did Canadian General Romeo play? <sup>27</sup> Because it's claimed by ICTR lawyers—for the defense—that Dallaire and the UNAMIR forces closed down half the runway, eliminating one possible approach, which made it possible to shoot down the plane carrying the two presidents. <sup>28</sup>

PR: Well, General Dallaire openly helped the RPF rebels, unfortunately.

KHS: He was working for the RPF...

PR: I couldn't tell exactly who he was working for. For me, what I cannot understand: A Canadian general who came to Rwanda in 1993, who has 2,500 soldiers, and when they are in the genocide [period] and 10 Belgian soldiers were killed, the Belgian government decided to pullout [of Rwanda]. And they [Belgium] had about 350 soldiers in the U.N. [UNAMIR], supported by the United States, and the United Kingdom, and the whole world decided to pull out, and to abandon the whole [peacekeeping] mission, to abandon Rwanda. When they decided to abandon, the General [Dallaire] himself decided to remain, this time not with 2,500 soldiers, but with 200 soldiers. Can you *imagine* a Canadian general commanding 200 African soldiers? That is a big question mark. I can't imagine, a U.S. or Canadian general commanding 200 soldiers, and *African* soldiers... maybe if he was a lieutenant he could have done that...

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<sup>27</sup> General Romeo Dallaire was the commanding officer for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda, UNAMIR, whose mandate in Rwanda commenced in October 1993. Evaluation of the position, and testimony, of General Dallaire, in his appearance before the ICTR, with Canadian military support, and under cross-examination by ICTR defense lawyers, brings to light serious questions and suspicious irregularities regarding Dallaire's role in aiding or abetting the Rwandan Patriotic Front/Army in their ascension to power and overthrow of the Habyarimana government.

<sup>28</sup> Private communication, Christopher Black, defense lawyer, International Criminal Tribunal on Rwanda.

KHS: So you are saying it was highly irregular for a Canadian General to stay in Rwanda at the time and be commanding only 200 soldiers... So the question then arises: what was a Canadian General doing with 200 African soldiers? Was he working for Canada?

PR: No, not as a Canadian, but maybe on his own.

KHS: Not officially for Canada...

PR: No, not officially.

KHS: But he wasn't officially U.N. anymore either, is that right?

PR: But he was still, in the end, he was still supposed to be a United Nations commander. But myself, I don't imagine a Canadian general commanding 200 soldiers. Can you imagine? And knowing, purposely, that he is unable to do anything to protect any one civilian? And with only 200 soldiers for the whole country: you can imagine what it means: nothing, zero.

KHS: Why did he stay?

PR: Why did he stay? That remains a mystery to me. I haven't understood. But maybe if I was in his position—myself, I would have resigned. Because giving me 200 soldiers, that is a humiliation for a general. So resigning, and staying, remaining, knowing purposely that he was not going to change anything... that was a game. Or maybe secretly he [Dallaire] was working for someone else.

KHS: In other words, the only sensible conclusion is that General Romeo Dallaire remained in Rwanda—after the UNAMIR “peacekeeping” mission was aborted—because he was expected to play a role in the overthrow of the Habyarimana government. And he did play a role: he supported the RPF.

PR: Well, that is a big question mark. Dallaire's army, his [UNAMIR] soldiers were bringing RPF soldiers, in their [UNAMIR] cars, from the RPF side, to the CND, the house of the parliament in Kigali.<sup>29</sup>

KHS: You are saying that UNAMIR was transporting RPF soldiers from the RPF side of Rwanda, across the ceasefire zone, to Kigali, and this was before April 1994?

PR: Yes, before April 6, 1994. Initially there were supposed to be 600 soldiers, but in [April] 1994 when the genocide broke out there were about 4000 RPF soldiers.

KHS: And what was the official number of RPF soldiers allowed to be in Kigali? Wasn't there a restriction of RPF soldiers in Kigali according to the Arusha Peace Accords of 1993?

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<sup>29</sup> *Conseil National du Développement* (National Development Council).

PR: Yes. Under the Arusha Accords it was 600 [RPA] soldiers.

KHS: So, officially, only 600 RPA soldiers were allowed in Kigali, but in fact there were almost 4000 RPA. So obviously Habyarimana knew that, but he couldn't do anything about it.

PR: Yes, and that is why he [Habyarimana] was angry against each and every one. He was always upset.

KHS: Did you ever hear anything about the investigations into the shooting down of the presidential plane? The 6 April 1994 event that is always credited with “sparking the genocide?”

PR: Well, I heard about the investigations, and I heard that, at a given time, they had come up with a result. But they couldn't declare the results [at the International Criminal Tribunal on Rwanda], because the prosecutors didn't want the results to appear. And even today, which is still a mystery, the prosecutor does not take the assassination of President Habyarimana into his mission. And yet according to his mission given by his security council, given by the U.N. resolution of 1994, he was supposed to deal with the Rwandan genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes between January 1 and December 31, 1994, the whole year. So he is excluding the most important point of his mission—the investigation of the death of the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi. And he does not consider this, even now: the ICTR IS not concerned about Habyarimana's death.

KHS: Right. It's inside the bounds of the court—the ICTR—what the court is allowed and required or mandated to investigate, but they have ignored it completely, and they are still ignoring it, and they have told you that they will continue to ignore it.

PR: Yes. And myself, I will *never* understand. An International Court for Rwanda, given a mission—a mission of reconciliation—but never talking about a terrorist act. To me—assassinating two presidents—that is a terrorist act. First of all, a peace agreement had been signed between the [RPF] rebels and the [Habyarimana] government.

KHS: The Arusha Accords.

PR: Yes. There was a ceasefire; no one was allowed to fight. Whoever killed, that is a terrorist. So, if someone comes as a tribunal, and this is defined, well defined, in their mission, they are supposed to handle what happens between January 1st and December 31st, 1994. That is the U.N. resolution on Rwanda. So, saying that this double presidential assassination is outside of their boundaries, is unbelievable.

KHS: So this is just another example of how the evidence is hidden, how the RPF is protected, even rewarded, for their military coup. But the RPF has been killing all along, and you have said this, and they are never challenged, because they use the “genocide”

card to manipulate, or silence, or accuse people. And you have said openly that there is a genocide going on in Rwanda now.

PR: I've said openly that if we do not follow up what is going on in Rwanda, if—again—the international community closes eyes, and ears, and turns backs, then another genocide might be committed in the near future.

KHS: By who? And against who?

PR: By who? Who else can commit that? I told you that Kagame has got an army, a very strong army. He's got a militia, and this militia is present all over the country, on each and every hill. They kill whomever they want; whenever they want; however they want. Many people get lost. Whoever says “no,” they kill him. Today, people support no one; businesses have stopped. No one is allowed to sell even beans. Even if you cultivate your beans you are no more allowed to go and sell your own beans on the market. The RPF has taken over everything—even all the markets. They have appointed people who go and buy everything and sell them at their own prices. The RPF controls each and everything.

KHS: You're talking about extortion and racketeering of the kind the RPF have instituted in Congo.

PR: Extortion. So the people are dictated. They have got no more rights, and they are intimidated on the hills. And me, I always say: I fear my fellow Rwandans, when they don't talk, and when they are not allowed to. When they don't open their mouths and say what they think, I fear them.

KHS: Now, already...

PR: Yes. And now they do not talk, because they are not allowed; they are intimidated.

KHS: When you say another genocide, you're saying that the Kagame government will kill off more people to perpetuate and further consolidate its own power.

PR: But it has been doing it. It did it before 1994. It has been doing it. It is still doing it. He [Kagame] did it before the genocide, during the genocide and after the genocide, and he is still doing it, up to now.

KHS: Kagame is still doing it.

PR: Yes.

KHS: But you're saying there will be a continuing escalation.

PR: Yes.



KHS: Because the Kagame government needs to establish control that it is losing.

PR: Well, it is not losing control; it is strengthening, it is always strengthening.

KHS: But people are fighting back.

PR: People suffer. People are keeping quiet. They are going to fight back.

KHS: So when they fight back, who will commit the genocide? Are you saying that the people that fight back will commit it against the Tutsis, the RPF, in power? Or that those in power —Kagame’s machine—will commit it against the people of Rwanda?

PR: No, the people have no weapons; the people have no ammunitions. How can they commit a genocide? It is the government—the RPF—who will do that.

KHS: What about in Congo? What do you think about Kagame's role in Congo?

PR: Kagame's role in Congo was an international disaster. That was an international disaster and it is, *still*, an international disaster.

KHS: Because Kagame still has power in Congo...

PR: Oh yes.

KHS: How do you see that?

PR: You know a certain Nkunda?

KHS: General Nkunda.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Born in North Kivu, Congo (DRC), Laurent Nkundabatware is an agent of the Rwandan government, of Tutsi ethnicity, who has been deeply involved in the military conflagration in Congo (DRC). Nkunda joined the RPA in 1992, worked in military intelligence to gather information on Habyarimana’s army (FAR). Nkunda joined the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire [AFDL] thrust to overthrow Zaire’s President Joseph Mobutu, fighting alongside Laurent Kabila [AFDL], Paul Kagame [RPA] and James Kabarebe [RPA] during the killing, for example, of tens or hundreds of thousands of Hutu refugees in Congo/Zaire. Nkunda was reportedly responsible for assassinating all customary Hutu and Bantu chiefs along the Rwanda/Congo border, to replace them with RPF-friendly Congolese Tutsis, and for surveillance operations against the Hutu refugee camps in eastern Zaire/Congo (see: Tebara Sebahutu, “Nkunda Torpedoes the New Democratic Institutions,” Congo Tribune, 28 December 2006). Throughout the war in Congo, Nkunda has spearheaded massive campaigns involving war crimes, crimes against humanity and acts of genocide, while also insuring Rwandan control over elite networks plundering Congo’s resources (see, e.g., David Barouski, Laurent Nkundabatware, His Rwandan Allies, and the Ex-ANC

PR: General Nkunda. You know about him. So, Kagame is still in the Congo. Kagame never left the Congo. How can one fight, without a battle? When Nkunda was injured, about a month ago, he was evacuated by helicopter from the Congo to Kigali. Where does he get that? He is just in the forest [Congo] in the most completely neglected area. Where does he get weapons? Where does he get ammunitions? Where does he get the men? And Rwanda is still doing a lot of mining.<sup>31</sup>

KHS: Mining where?

PR: In Congo. A year ago [2006] all those mining guys were Rwandans prisoners. It was in a documentary—a special documentary—filmed in Eastern Congo, in the North and South Kivu provinces.

KHS: So coltan, diamonds, gold, niobium, cassiterite...

PR: Yeah, the miners were just Hutu prisoners.

KHS: That was happening a lot a few years back—1999, 2000, 2001—and the world was led to believe that Rwanda pulled out of Congo. But you say its still happening now? You don't think it stopped? So you confirm that this is still happening, in Congo.

PR: Yes. It is still happening today; it is still taking place.

KHS: Forced labor... do they wear the pink jumpsuits that Hutu genocide prisoners wear in Rwanda?

PR: No. Not in Congo.

KHS: How does the government of Rwanda get them across the border if they are prisoners?

PR: Well, there is one thing you do not know: Kagame has got now a navy, on Lake Kivu, and he crosses the borders whenever he wants.

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Mutiny: Chronic Barriers to Lasting Peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Z-Net {e-book}, 28 February 2007).

<sup>31</sup> See, e.g.: keith harmon snow, "Rwanda's Secret War: U.S.-backed Destabilization of Central Africa," World War 4 Report, November 2004, <www.ww4report.com>; keith harmon snow and David Barouski, "Behind the Numbers: Suffering in Congo," Z Magazine, July 2006; see also the numerous versions of the United Nations "Panel of Experts" reports, such as, Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, S/2001/357, April 2001.

KHS: Into Goma...or across Lake Kivu... he doesn't go into town... <sup>32</sup>

PR: No, not to Goma, he doesn't go to town, he doesn't need to. He just goes straight to those villages [under Rwandan mining control in Congo].

KHS: "Navy"—that means what kind of boats?

PR: Well I can't tell but I know he has got a navy.

KHS: Are they boats supplied by the West?

PR: Yeah. In Rwanda we don't make boats.

KHS: How do they get there? They fly them in on C-130's, straight into Kigali...

PR: Of course. Of course.

KHS: Do you think the U.N. is actively *allowing* Nkunda to be there?

PR: The U.N., to me, I do not—I am sorry—I do not care for the U.N.

KHS: After what happened in Rwanda?

PR: After what happened in Rwanda, I do not really trust the U.N. When Kagame killed people in Kibeho, 5000 U.N. soldiers were in the country. During 4 days—17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, of April 1995—he destroyed a refugee camp. Where were they?

KHS: And they did the same thing in Congo: Kagame and [General] James Kabarebe attacked the refugee camps. <sup>33</sup> How do you see that?

PR: As a disaster.

KHS: It's a violation of international law, to attack a refugee camp...

PR: Kagame—I think—Kagame takes himself just as an untouchable guy. He's untouchable.

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<sup>32</sup> The city of Goma straddles the Rwanda/Congo border; the border also passes down the center of Lake Kivu.

<sup>33</sup> In 1996, RPA troops led by Paul Kagame and James Kabarebe launched an attack on refugee camps in Eastern Zaire (DRC). The RPF/A attacks were in violation of international humanitarian law, and the scale and nature of these virulent attacks remain poorly documented. One credible witness has testified that the first rockets launched against the camps emanated from the compound of an international humanitarian agency (private interview, DRC, 2006).

KHS: Who are his most powerful friends? By that I mean his business associates and allies...

PR: Well, I do not know them. His associates definitely are Anglo-Saxons. Because Kagame, he has taken a turn: he's no more going to continental Europe.

KHS: Well, the RPF originally had a very strong base in Belgium. You're saying he's going to the U.S.? And you agree that Rwanda is still putting on this massive—what we could call—a massive psychological operation that continues to convince the world that the Kagame government is besieged by people—Hutus and *Interahamwe* and *génocidaires*—trying to commit genocide against them? Or do you think the truth is coming out?

PR: Kagame has been manipulating the international community, using “genocide” as a passport.

KHS: With the Anglo-Saxon friends behind him?

PR: Not really the Anglo-Saxon friends, but there are some individuals.

KHS: Powerful people in the USA, Canada and England...

PR: There are some individuals, but I think, he has some individual friends. All of the Anglo-Saxons are not his friends. He has got a few individuals who are his friends, who support him, who are in the Western governments, the Anglo-Saxon governments.

KHS: Do you think Clinton is one of those?

PR: Well, I don't think so. I think that Clinton went to Rwanda [1998] for a purpose. He went to Rwanda to help...He apologized, first of all, after the genocide. So, he felt, I think, he felt guilty, after all that took place in Rwanda. And he is trying to change—maybe to clean up—his image, this is what I have in mind.

KHS: From 1990 to 1994 a lot of people were killed in Rwanda and a lot of refugees were forced into Congo. The homes that they left behind, who occupied those homes?

PR: Of course, impunity prevails in Rwanda since history. Around 1959, 1960 and 1961... and so on, all the Rwandans who fled the country, and went away; their homes were occupied by their neighbors. Those neighbors have never been punished. And when those victims came back in 1994, they committed the same crime. They occupied houses they never bought. They occupied land that never belonged to them. They occupied these, and they took over livestock they never bought. So yesterday's victims, became, that time, perpetrators. I want to tell you that, for me, this is one of the biggest troubles: there was impunity, and history has never taught us any lesson.

KHS: And you said that Kagame's people are in charge of everything in Rwanda today. What are the big businesses? Tea? Coffee?

PR: Everything: tea, coffee, land, beans, potatoes; everything in detail. No exceptions.

KHS: What about gorilla tourism?

PR: Everything has been taken over by a group of individuals.

KHS: James Kabarebe? <sup>34</sup>

PR: Kabarebe, his lieutenants, all of those guys—and they are controlling everything.

KHS: As early as 1994 and 1995, did you see, or were you aware, that minerals—gold, diamonds, coltan, niobium—were leaving the Congo and going through Kigali on Sabena [Airlines] planes back to Belgium?

PR: Well, that has ever been like that. This is very plain. This has ever been just like that.

KHS: Was it happening that way under President Habyarimana? With Mobutu's support?

PR: Well, you know Rwanda. Habyarimana was also trucking minerals from Congo [Zaire]. So was Mobutu. And there was no infrastructure in the Congo, so everything was fleeing the Congo by Rwanda. That was very well known. Smuggling minerals, smuggling coffee... Rwanda was producing more coffee than Congo... If you planted coffee over the whole country of Rwanda, you cannot have produced what we were selling outside. That was smuggling.

KHS: Coming from Congo. It was the same under Mobutu and during the Congo war, as now?

PR: Coming from Congo, from Burundi, from Uganda—and going back, crossing Uganda again, to Mombasa [Kenya].

KHS: And you're saying that was true under President Habyarimana and it's also true under Kagame today?

PR: You see, in Rwanda, we say that, we always change dancers, and the music stays the same. Rwanda exports more diamonds and gold, more metals than any other African country. And yet, we do not produce any in Rwanda and we sell so much more than the Congo.

KHS: Even now, in 2007.

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<sup>34</sup> Rwanda Defense Forces (RDF) General James Kabarebe.

PR: Even today.

KHS: So, the Congo pillage is still going on by Rwanda.

PR: So, it is as I told you. That is why General Nkunda is there. Nkunda is on a mission.

KHS: His mission is to make sure the raw materials keep coming into Rwanda.

PR: And also that Kagame controls Eastern Congo. And he does.

KHS: General Nkunda was in Kagame's RPF army in 1994 right? So he was there in the "rebellion" in Congo where the RPF—personally commanded by James Kabarebe and Paul Kagame—killed all those Hutu refugees.<sup>35</sup>

PR: Yes.

KHS: But he wasn't a general then, obviously.

PR: No, he was not that. Those guys called themselves generals, but they are just lords of war.

KHS: And whomever does it best, who ever steals the most, they give them the name "general"...

PR: They can call themselves a "general". Whoever is a leader, they can call themselves general, anything they want.

KHS: What do you think of Philip Gourevitch's book?<sup>36</sup>

PR: I think that if Gourevitch was to write his book today, he would write a completely different book.

KHS: What do you think of the book he wrote at the time?

PR: Well, his book took very much the RPF side. He was more or less like an RPF advocate, if he was writing—him as a journalist I have seen—he would write a different book.

KHS: So, you think it's completely one-sided?

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<sup>35</sup> See note 25.

<sup>36</sup> Philip Gourevitch, We wish to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed with our families, Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1998.

PR: Yes, completely. But that is not only him, but many writers and people writing books on Rwanda at that time. What they wrote, if they were to write today, they would write completely different books.

KHS: If they were honest...<sup>37</sup>

PR: Yes, if they were honest.

KHS: Was it at the time because they were operating like you said, they had to have the support of the RPF, or else they were sidelined?

PR: And I do understand people like Gourevitch, being a Holocaust survivor. I sometimes do understand such people, and what they write.

KHS: Did you ever hear about what the British journalist Nick Gordon reported about crematoriums in Rwanda under Kagame?<sup>38</sup>

PR: No, that one I haven't heard. But we know it.

KHS: You know what?

PR: We know that, we knew, as I told you, we have changed dancers, but the music remains the same. We have changed the players but the rules of the game are exactly the same. Killings never ended, but killers changed. And they have improved their ways of killings. They started tying people [arms] from the back since 1994, when RPF took over, throwing them in [metal transport] containers, leaving them there. Many people died like that. And then, they were taking dead bodies in the night, and burning them, in the Nyungwe Forest, in the south, between Gikongoro and Cyangugu, on the Burundi border.

KHS: Burning them gets rid of the skeleton too...

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<sup>37</sup> Philip Gourevitch's brother-in-law is Jamie Rubin, former assistant secretary of state under Madeleine Albright, and through Rubin and the New Yorker Magazine Gourevitch played a strategic role in producing flak for the Kagame regime. Funding for Gourevitch's book came from the United States Institute for Peace, a U.S. State Department offshoot. In a private interview, New York Times journalist Howard W. French accused Gourevitch of "just sheer intellectual dishonesty." The International human Rights Law Clinic at American University for several years asked students to read Philip Gourevitch on genocide in Rwanda, in preparation for legal work with the International Criminal Tribunal on Rwanda. Professor Melissa Crow, who worked with the Law Clinic, followed her term at Human Rights Watch (1994-1995) by working in Kigali, Rwanda, under the RPF government, working for the Office of the Prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunal on Rwanda.

<sup>38</sup> Nicholas Gordon: author of Murders in the Mist: Who Killed Dian Fossey?, Hodder and Stoughton, 1993.

PR: Burning everything. So, they changed the style but the killings never ended. And another new style, people have been disappearing since 1994. You hear that “so-and-so” disappeared, and for life, forever.

KHS: Why do you think that no one is taking it seriously, what you are saying, and what others have been saying, about Kagame's regime? In other words, there is no action to stop it. And while there is no transparency in the international media, and the truth of the Kagame machine is not reported, there is a problem of impunity.

PR: What I have said is that impunity has ever been a problem in Rwanda. And many people in the international community have been maybe, a kind of, apologizing, whenever Kagame intimidates everyone. Kagame comes to the Western Superpowers and tells them, listen you guys: "When these Hutus were killing us, where were you?" And they keep quiet. He comes to Hutus and tells them: "If it was not for me, my Colonels and Lieutenants might have killed you all." And they keep quiet. And he comes to Tutsis and tells them: "Listen you, you pretend to be survivor. How did you survive? It is us [RPF] who saved your life."

KHS: And you're saying that's not true anyway, that the RPF didn't “stop the genocide” as Kagame always claims...

PR: That is not true anyway; but he pretends; to intimidate everyone.

KHS: So, Kagame uses the popular belief that the Tutsis stopped the genocide—which isn't true to begin with—in any sense—

PR: No it is not true anyways.

KHS: ...and he uses it as a way to manipulate people into supporting the current terrorist program—the illegal commerce, the extortion, the massacres, the disappearing people, the rape and pillage in Congo—or at least being quiet, and apologizing for it in some cases.

PR: Yes. Apologizing.

END