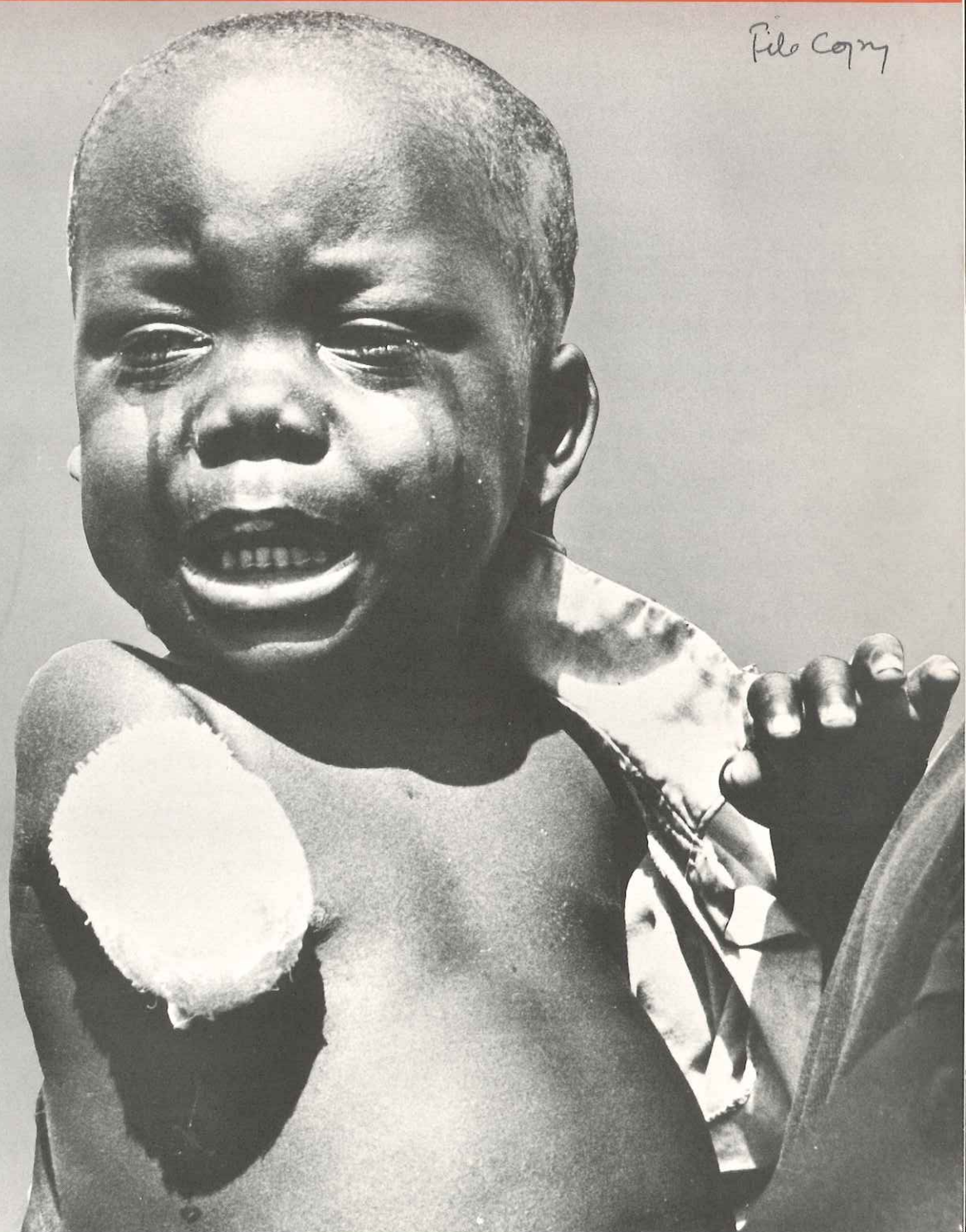


SELECTIVE GENOCIDE IN BURUNDI

Pilo Corgy



Report No 20

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**MINORITY
RIGHTS
GROUP**

The **MINORITY RIGHTS GROUP** is an international research and information unit registered in Britain as an educational trust under the Charities Act of 1960. Its principal aims are —

- To secure justice for minority or majority groups suffering discrimination, by investigating their situation and publicising the facts as widely as possible, to educate and alert public opinion throughout the world.
- To help prevent, through publicity about violations of human rights, such problems from developing into dangerous and destructive conflicts which, when polarised, are very difficult to resolve; and
- To foster, by its research findings, international understanding of the factors which create prejudiced treatment and group tensions, thus helping to promote the growth of a world conscience regarding human rights.

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SELECTIVE GENOCIDE IN BURUNDI

By Professor René Lemarchand
and David Martin

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From the Universal Declaration
of Human Rights,
adopted by the General Assembly
of the United Nations
on 10th December 1948:

Article 1

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 10

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 19

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20

(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

(2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

HISTORICAL NOTE

Rwanda-Urundi (1899-1962)

Burundi and Rwanda became part of German East Africa in 1899, at the zenith of colonial expansion in Africa. In 1916, during World War I, Belgian forces from the former Belgian Congo defeated the Germans and occupied Burundi and Rwanda. In 1923, Burundi and Rwanda became the Belgian mandated territories known as Rwanda-Urundi and were administered as a single unit. In 1946, the territories came under the United Nations Trusteeship Council, with Belgian administration. Limited self-government was initiated, which culminated in the attainment of full independence for Urundi in 1962 – as the Kingdom of Burundi, under King Mwambutsa IV. Between 1963 and 1964, during a succession of short-lived governments, the monetary-customs union with ‘twin-sister’ Rwanda was dissolved, and Rwanda gained her independence from Belgium.

Rwanda and Burundi had been closely bound – economically and otherwise – to the Belgian Congo (now Zaïre), and each was managed and administered during the colonial period by Belgian officials. Events in one country never failed to have serious repercussions in the other. In each country, there has been a long-standing history of violent rivalry between the Hutus and the Tutsis.

In Rwanda between 1955 and 1958, Tutsi extremists, viewing Belgian political reforms as a threat, repressed the Hutu movement; in fact, they murdered several Hutu leaders. In 1959, however, the Hutus struck back and in a bloody revolt overthrew the Tutsi minority. Indeed, Tutsis suffered heavy casualties; it is reported that approximately 120,000 fled to Burundi and other neighbouring countries.

In 1960, leaders of the Hutu Emancipation Movement (PARMEHUTU) established a provisional government. In 1961, Belgium recognized the PARMEHUTU regime, but the United Nations, hoping to preserve the ethnic-economic union of Burundi and Rwanda after independence, ruled it unlawful and ordered free elections. These elections resulted in an overwhelming PARMEHUTU victory, and in 1962 a United Nations resolution ended the Belgian trusteeship and granted Rwanda full independence.

In Rwanda in 1962, the Hutus expelled the Tutsi minority in a successful coup. In Burundi, however, the dominant Tutsi minority has been able to stay in power – in spite of attempted coups by the Hutus – by controlling the police, the military, and other vital organizations of the government.

In 1963, there was an abortive Tutsi invasion in Rwanda, which originated from Burundi with the collaboration of some Rwanda Tutsis. The result was disastrous for the Tutsis. In the massacre that followed, as many as 12,000 Tutsis in Rwanda were killed. A renewed and intensified Tutsi exodus from Rwanda began, and the relationship between Burundi and Rwanda deteriorated accordingly.

It should be repeated that one can understand the factors contributing to hostilities within each country and also between the countries when one bears in mind that each country is controlled by the rival tribal ethnic group – Rwanda by the Hutus, and Burundi, despite the fact that the population is about 85 per cent Hutu, by the Tutsis.

[– William J. Butler and George Obiozor, ‘The Burundi Affair 1972’, *IDOC N. America*, 1973].



SELECTIVE GENOCIDE IN BURUNDI

PART ONE: BY PROF. RENÉ LEMARCHAND

There are few parallels to the human holocaust that took place in Burundi in 1972 in the wake of a tortuous competitive struggle between the country's two major ethnic groups, the Hutu and the Tutsi. Scarcely noticed (let alone understood) by public opinion anywhere, the killings are conservatively estimated to have caused between 80,000 and 100,000 deaths. Approximately 3.5 per cent of the country's total population (3.5 million) were physically wiped out in a period of a few weeks. In comparative terms this is as if England had suffered a loss of 2 million or the United States about 8 million people. To speak of "selective genocide"*¹ to describe the outcome of such large-scale political violence seems scarcely an exaggeration.

What the long-term consequences will be for Burundi society as a whole is impossible to determine. That the country has undergone something of a metamorphosis as a result of these events is nonetheless undeniable. It has become the only state in independent black Africa to claim the appurtenances of a genuine caste society; a country in which power is the monopoly of a dominant ethnic minority (Tutsi) representing less than 15 per cent of the total population. On the basis of cultural and regional criteria alone, this percentage might drop to less than 4 per cent. Racial differences aside, the nearest parallel to this situation is provided by South Africa, Rhodesia and the Portuguese territories of Angola and Mozambique. The pattern of dominance extends to virtually all sectors of life, restricting access to material wealth, education, status and power to representatives of the dominant minority. For anyone even remotely familiar with the relatively open and flexible system of stratification that once characterized Burundi society the transformation is little short of astonishing.

The full story of what is now piously referred to in Bujumbura as "*les événements*" will probably never be known. The chain of events leading to the crisis is as complex as the motives which prompted each community to decimate the other. Sorting out truth from rumour is made more difficult still by the intensity of feelings displayed by participants and observers alike over the atrocities committed by each side, the mixture of fact and fiction conveyed through official statements, and the reluctance of eyewitnesses to report what they saw. Nonetheless, there is enough evidence available to produce a reasonably accurate account of the circumstances that led to the massacre, and in so doing to dispel some of the more prevalent misconceptions about Burundi society and the roots of its recent agony.

The Setting: The Country and its People

Situated in the Central African rift valley, in the very heart of the continent, Burundi is roughly the size of Belgium (11,000 sq. miles). Along with Rwanda, its neighbour to the north, it has one of Africa's highest population densities (185 per square mile in 1955). The growing pressure of over-population on the land, together with the general scarcity of natural resources, lie at the root of the country's economic and social problems. What mineral resources exist, aside from small deposits of cassiterite, have yet to be exploited, and much of the economy consists of subsistence agriculture. With the recent discovery of substantial nickel deposits in the southeast the economic picture may change drastically in years ahead; so far, however, no concrete steps have been taken to tap this otherwise promising industrial potential. Coffee is the main cash crop, generating approximately 80 per cent of the country's foreign exchange (the equivalent of about \$14 million annually), to which must be added such marginal crops as tea, cotton and rice. Agricultural output is as yet incapable of meeting the demands of Burundi's fast-growing population, let alone of yielding the surplus production required for rapid economic growth.

Economic scarcity is of course as much of a reality to-day as it was in precolonial and colonial times, when Burundi was just one of several traditional kingdoms spread throughout the interlacustrine zone.

* For footnotes to Part One see pages 23,24,25

To-day, however, perceptions of economic scarcity are increasingly filtered through the prism of regionalism and ethnicity, thus adding a radically different dimension to the political environment. To appreciate the significance of this transformation, at least passing reference must be made to Burundi's traditional system of social stratification, one of the most complex and least understood in the whole of Africa.

The standard image of Burundi society conveyed by much of the colonial literature is that of an ethnic pyramid in which the cattle-herding Tutsi, representing 14 per cent of the population, held the commanding heights of power and influence; next in rank came the Hutu agriculturalists, forming the bulk of the population (85 per cent); at the bottom of the heap stood the pygmoid Twa, a group of relatively little significance numerically (1 per cent) and otherwise. Presumably reinforcing this hierarchy of rank and privilege were the physical characteristics commonly attributed to each group: Proverbially tall and wiry, the Tutsi have been said to "possess the same graceful indolence in gait which is peculiar to Oriental people";² the Hutu, on the other hand, were seen as "a medium-sized type of people, whose ungainly figures betoken hard toil, and who patiently bow themselves in abject bondage to the later arrived yet ruling race, the Tutsi".³

However satisfying to most European observers, such simplicities can only convey a highly distorted view of Burundi's traditional social system. Not only do they conceal the existence of major differences within each group, but they also tend to exaggerate the depth of cultural discontinuities among them. These distortions are closely connected. Neglect of intra-ethnic cleavages is liable to obscure the basis for cross-ethnic links among each group at the same time that it reduces their respective physical and cultural characteristics to a parody of reality.

Attention must be drawn, first, to the existence of two separate categories of Tutsi — the 'lower caste' Tutsi-Hima group, and the 'higher caste' Tutsi-Banyaruguru, literally, "those who came from the north". Note, however that the term *ruguru* has other connotations, meaning "from above", and hence from regions of high altitude or, figuratively, from high ranking status, i.e. "close to the Court". Outside observers have unduly emphasized the geographical derivation of the term, to the point of equating all Banyaruguru with northern Tutsi, which is far from being the case; the Banyaruguru are found in both northern and southern provinces, and this is also true of the Hima. At the time of writing (1974) the present Governor of the Ruyigi province is a de-frocked Anglican deacon named John Wilson Makokwe, a Hima from Buhiga, a northern locality. To assume that the Hima are inevitably from the south and the Banyaruguru from the north, as many observers have been prone to do, would be a gross exaggeration. The former are said to have migrated into the country from the eastern borderlands in the 17th or 18th century, about two or three centuries later than the Banyaruguru, who generally hold them in deep contempt, supposedly because of their 'upstart' attitudes and innate resourcefulness. Nevertheless it is the 'lower-caste' Tutsi-Hima from the south who are politically dominant, "The Himas", writes Father Rodegem, "seem gifted for leadership and direct action",⁴ a statement wholly consonant with the emergent pattern of leadership in contemporary Burundi: a substantial number of civilian and military elites are recruited from the Hima stratum, and the President of the Republic (Michel Micombero) is himself of Hima origins. The Banyaruguru, by contrast, though represented in the government are virtually powerless.

Cutting across this and other cleavages are different social rankings attached to the various patrilineages (*imiryango*) within each group, Tutsi, Hutu and Twa. The usual distinctions are between the 'very good' families, the 'good' families, those that are neither good nor bad and bad. No less than forty-three different patrilineages thus enter into the Tutsi-Banyaruguru segment, each in turn falling into a specific ranking of social prestige. In this fashion lineage affiliations could substantially rectify the formal rank ordering established through ethnic divisions. The degrees of social distance within the Tutsi stratum, for example, were at times far more perceptible and socially significant than ethnic differences between Hutu and Tutsi. This multiplicity of reference-group identifications within the same broad ethnic stratum has created the basis for potential conflicts among clans, families and lineages; yet the sheer fluidity of such identifications is also the source of considerable ambiguity as to how one ought to be defined in terms of clan or family affiliations. This very ambiguity in turn may help to mitigate intra-group conflict. A case in point is the so-called Basapfu 'clan'. This is how Father Rodegem explains the origins of the Basapfu:

Tutsi of high-ranking status. They initially came from Hima Clan. But for some reason tradition has failed to ascertain, the King one day decided that they should all be exterminated. He entrusted this task to the Abongera clan, who made a clean sweep of the Abasapfu cattle, plundered their crops, set fire to their kraals and killed whoever stood in their way. One of the survivors was a small boy, who had found refuge behind a reed screen (*sapfu*). After the raiders had left, he was discovered by some passers-by who decided to take him to King Ntare. The latter kept him at his court under his protection and called him Musapfu to commemorate his adventure.⁵

Whether the Basapfu are actually of Hima origin is open to doubt. The historical evidence suggests that they may have been of Banyaruguru origin. The significant point is that today the Basapfu identify themselves, and are often identified by others, as being neither Hima nor Banyaruguru. They are just referred to as Basapfu, as if they formed yet another reference-group within the Tutsi stratum. This, and the fact that they are more or less evenly spread throughout the country, is what later enabled some of their representatives to act as the arbiters of regional conflict, and indeed of Hima-Banyaruguru conflict. For if the incumbent elites are largely drawn from the Bururi-based Hima-led faction, within this faction some Basapfu hold key positions within the government and the army.⁶

A final point to note is that neither Hutu nor Tutsi hold traditional claims to authority. The real holders of power in the traditional society were the princes of the blood, or *ganwa*. Because of the special eminence conferred upon them by the accidents of history, they became identified as a separate ethnic group, whose power and prestige ranked far above that of ordinary Tutsi. They formed the core of the political elites and as such held most of the chiefly positions available under the monarchy. Despite or because of this, they never stood as a very cohesive group. Intra-*ganwa* rivalries are indeed a recurrent theme of Burundi's pre-colonial history. Out of the competing claims of rival dynasties bitter feuds periodically broke out among the representatives of different 'Houses', culminating in the middle of the 19th century in a major struggle between the sons of Mwami (King) Mwezi Kisabo (1852–1908) and the descendants of the previous incumbent, Mwami Ntare Rugamba (1795–1852). Temporarily held in check but by no means dissipated by the spread of the colonial pax, the late fifties saw a sudden resurgence of these antagonisms. Even at this late date political conflict did not express itself in ethnic terms, but in the form of factionalism between representatives of opposed unilineal descent groups.

What gave a measure of unity and cohesiveness to this otherwise highly fragmented social order is that below the *ganwa* stratum no single line of cleavage could be said to govern the allocation of social status, wealth or power. Ethnic divisions were largely irrelevant to the distribution of social prestige, and of only marginal significance with regard to wealth. And although power was in theory the monopoly of the princes, the record shows that subchiefs and palace officials were sometimes recruited from among Hutu and Tutsi. What is more, the competitive relationships which developed among the princes made it imperative for them to seek the support of both Hutu and Tutsi, hence substantiating Simmel's observation that "conflict may also bring persons and groups together which otherwise have nothing to do with each other".⁷ In this case, however, Hutu and Tutsi were not nearly as compartmentalized as the foregoing might suggest. Through the institution of clientship (*bugabire*) Hutu and Tutsi were caught in a web of interlocking relationships extending from the very top of the social pyramid to its lowest echelons, with the Mwami acting as the supreme Patron — which in turn underscores the unifying role of the monarchy, both as a symbol and an institution. Through the use of specific symbols, ceremonies and rituals the monarchy imposed itself as a major focus for popular loyalties. No other source of legitimacy was as compelling as the Royal Drum (*Karyenda*) in holding society together.

The point of this discussion is that although the traditional society contained a great many potential sources of conflict, in practice conflict was seldom if ever activated along ethnic lines. To view the recent holocaust as "an extreme case of the old African problem of tribalism"⁸ is indeed difficult to square with the realities of traditional Burundi society. If the term "tribalism" has any meaning in this context it is a very recent phenomenon, traceable to the social transformations introduced under the aegis of the colonial state and the consequent disintegration of those very structures and mechanisms that once gave cohesiveness to society as a whole.

Dimensions of Conflict

In its most acute and devastating manifestations the Hutu-Tutsi conflict was the last in a series that spread over a period of at least twelve years, covering almost as wide a range of potential oppositions as the traditional society had to offer. Grafted onto this were the tensions arising from the introduction of new forms of political self-expression, i.e., parties, trade-unions and parliamentary institutions. Out of this combination of traditional and modern types of opposition developed an extraordinary hybrid and complex polity.

The introduction of the vote in 1956, six years before independence, initiated a process of political mobilization which gradually reached every sector of society, activating one group after another, pitting princes against princes, monarchists against republicans, army men against civilians, north against south, Hutu against Tutsi. At first, traditional cleavages tended to act as so many breakwaters, allowing the political mobilization of one group at a time. In contrast to what happened in Rwanda, where the mobilization of the Hutu masses was greatly facilitated and accelerated by the existence of a sharp, vertical split between the Tutsi aristocracy and the Hutu masses, in Burundi the mobilization of the population along ethnic lines was significantly delayed by the complexity of the traditional social system, and by the fact that the monarchy was relatively free from ethnic bias. Even when ethnic loyalties were stirred into action, this did not eliminate the play of narrower loyalties. One of the most striking aspects of the country's recent political evolution is the extent to which ethnic self-perceptions have tended to coexist with, and at times to become subordinate to, residual attachments to the region or to the clan. As environmental threats shifted from the ethnic to the regional or clan level, corresponding shifts of identification occurred among political actors.

This said, it is only fair to recognize that the seeds of ethnic conflict were planted long before the occurrence of violence. Tempting though it may be to emphasize the traditional dimensions of the recent slaughter, the evidence on this score is very scanty. Meyer's statement that "as long as the Batutsi [sic] are masters in the country, spiritual and cultural progress is impossible for the Burundi people, for it is only the present low position of the Bahutu, kept in seclusion for centuries, that ensures the Batutsi their dominance"⁹ does not seem too convincing as an argument, confusing as it does political and social (or economic) dominance while failing to distinguish between a potential basis for conflict and conflict itself. As we already stressed, although the traditional society offered a potential basis for ethnic conflict, it never experienced such conflict on a scale even remotely approaching what happened after independence.

Of far greater relevance is the process of social transformation set in motion during and after the colonial interlude. The external dimensions of this phenomenon are especially important to bear in mind, in at least two senses. The Rwanda revolution, for one thing, had a decisive psychological impact on ethnic self-perceptions in Burundi. The coming to power of Hutu politicians in Rwanda led many of their kinsmen in Burundi to share their political objectives, in turn intensifying fears of ethnic domination among the Tutsi of Burundi. Thus by giving the Burundi situation a false definition to begin with, a definition patterned on the Rwanda situation, Hutu politicians evoked a new behaviour both among themselves and the Tutsi which made their originally false imputations true. Ethnic conflict thus took on the quality of a "self-fulfilling prophecy".¹⁰

The next point is in the nature of a qualification to the foregoing: in some respects the Burundi situation had already been defined by the Belgian colonizer as one approximating to Rwanda, with the result that something of a caste structure had already begun to emerge during the colonial period. Long before aspiring Hutu politicians sought to emulate the goals and strategies of their ethnic brothers across the border, Belgian policies in Rwanda served as a model for colonial administrators in Burundi. It was both simpler and more efficient to view Burundi as consisting of a Tutsi aristocracy and a Hutu peasantry and pursue a policy of indirect rule that would maintain the dominance of one over the other. Few efforts were made during the colonial period to extend educational facilities to the Hutu masses, or for that matter to provide them with what few opportunities were available for a political apprenticeship. Student enrolment at the *Ecole des Frères de la Charité* (better known as the "Groupe Scolaire" of Astrida) between 1946 and 1954 shows a clear predominance of Tutsi over Hutu — a disproportion which becomes even more striking of course in the case of Rwanda (see table over).

Table 1

Ethnic Distribution of Student Enrolment at the Groupe Scolaire (1946-54)				
Year*	Tutsi	Hutu		
		Rwanda	Burundi	Congolese
1946	44	1	8	
1947	42	2	10	
1948	85	2	11	2
1949	85	5	9	
1953	68	3	16	
1954	63	3	16	3

*Enrolment figures for 1950-52 unavailable; the data above is drawn from the enrolment records of the Groupe Scolaire at Astrida (now Butare).

Likewise, the conciliar organs set up in 1962 at the countrywide and district (or *territoire*) levels, known respectively as the *Conseil Supérieur du Pays* (CSP) and the *Conseils de Territoire* (CT), were largely dominated by Tutsi or *ganwa* elements. A study published in 1959 gives the following ethnic breakdown for each set of institutions:

Table 2

Ethnic Distribution of Seats in CSP and CT: Burundi and Rwanda (1959)				
Representative Institution*		Ethnic Distribution		
		Tutsi (or <i>ganwa</i>)	Hutu	Total
CSP	Rwanda	31	2	32
	Burundi	30	3	33
CT	Rwanda	125	30	155
	Burundi	112	26	138

*CSP: Conseil Supérieur du Pays; CT: Conseils de Territoire. Source: Aloys Munyangaju, *L'Actualité Politique du Ruanda-Urundi* (Bruxelles: 1959), p.20.

The result is that on the eve of independence relatively few Hutu could claim the status of a modern élite, and those who did were all the more anxious to translate their egalitarian commitments into reality. Yet precisely because of the nature of their commitments, their access to positions of authority could only be viewed with the greatest suspicion by the Tutsi minority. Extension of the vote, on a *per capita* basis, evoked similar apprehensions. Just as social equality spelled the end of Tutsi supremacy, majority rule for many Tutsi was seen as synonymous with Hutu rule.

Even in its most restrictive sense (implying equal representation of ethnic interests in key governmental and bureaucratic posts) equality never became a reality of post-independence politics. A mere glance at the ethnic distribution of top civil service positions in 1965 shows the extent of Tutsi predominance in the political system (see Table 3 following).

Table 3

Ethnic Distribution of Top-Ranking Civil Service Positions, July 1965

Ministries and Directions*	Ethnic Distribution				Ministries and Directions	Ethnic Distribution			
	Ganwa	Tutsi	Hutu	Other		Ganwa	Tutsi	Hutu	Other
Prime Ministership					Justice (Secretariat)				
Director General (DG)			1		DG			1	
Directors (D)	2				D		3		
Deputy Directors (DD)	1	1			DD		4	1	
Total	3	2			Total		7	2	
Finance					Information				
DG	2				DG			1	
D	1	2			DD			1	
DD			3						
Total	3	5			Total			2	
Economic Affairs					Social Affairs				
DG	1				DG			2	
D	2	1			D		2	2	
DD	1				DD		2	1	
Total	4	1			Total		4	5	
Agriculture					Foreign Affairs				
DG	3				DG		1		
D	4	1			D		3	1	1
DD	2	1			DD		2	1	
Total	9	2			Total		6	2	1
Public Works					Sûreté (Special Branch)				
DG	1				D		1		
D	1	1			DD			1	
Total	2	1			Total		1	1	
Public Health					Communications				
D	4	2			DG			1	
DD			2		D		1		
Total	4	4			DD			2	
					Total		1	3	
National Education					Transport				
DG	1				DG		1		
D	4	1			D		3		
DD	2	3			DD			1	
Total	7	4			Total		4	1	
Interior					Special Appointments (Fonctionnaires Détachés)				
DG			1		DG		2		
D	3	4	3		D		1		
DD		18	5	2	DD		2		
Total	3	22	9	2	Total		5		
Gendarmerie (Secretariat)	1				Grand Total				
					DG		12	7	
					D	3	36	14	1
					DD		35	22	3

*The nearest equivalent in UK would be the Secretariats attached to each Ministry; in the listing above the term *secretariat* refers to those sectors of government that were brought directly under the jurisdiction of the Crown, in 1963.

As the figures above suggest, the years that followed independence (1962) saw a widening of the gap between the level of aspiration of Hutu élites and their actual share of political responsibilities. Their sense of frustration stemmed from being denied the share of power to which they considered themselves entitled, and from their perception of a vast disproportion between their numerical importance as a group and their very limited access to material rewards. But it also expressed their repeated failures to tip the scales of power to their advantage, and the severe penalties they suffered as a consequence of their abortive efforts. As long as the policies of the Crown aimed at excluding both Hutu and Tutsi from the decisions of the Court (as happened to be the case in the years immediately following independence) Hutu grievances could be kept within manageable bounds. What brought their grievances to the point of exasperation were the repressive measures to which they exposed themselves time and again in their efforts to alter the *status quo*, and their ultimate realization that through their own political ineptitude, they unwittingly played into the hands of their opponents. To grasp fully the significance of this historical dimension, let us turn briefly to a consideration of the main sequence of events leading up to the crisis.

The Stages of the Crisis

For purposes of analysis at least four distinctive phases may be distinguished in the recent history of Burundi, each corresponding to a different line-up of political forces:

Phase I (1957–1961): *Bezi vs. Batare* — The years preceding independence (1962) can best be seen as a continuation of precolonial rivalries in the guise of nominally modern political parties. The main protagonists at this stage were the *Parti de l'Unité et du Progrès National (Uprona)* and the *Parti Démocrate Chrétien (PDC)*, each dominated by a specific group of *ganwa* personalities, the former by the Bezi and the latter by the Batare family. Led by Mwami Mwambutsa's eldest son, Prince Rwagasore, the *Uprona* rapidly asserted itself as the more dynamic of the two, scoring a decisive victory in the legislative elections of September 1961. With 58 seats in the National Assembly out of a total of 64, as Prime Minister designate Rwagasore could presumably turn to the task of nation-building free from major opposition. Fate, however, decided otherwise. With the death of Rwagasore, in October 1961, the party lost both leadership and dynamism. His assassination at the hands of a Greek gunman in the pay of the Batare family sealed the fate of the PDC and its leaders (the latter were publicly hanged in Gitega on January 14, 1962); but it also had major consequences on the destinies of the *Uprona*. Not only did it constitute an irreparable loss of leadership for his party but it also destroyed whatever measure of unity the *Uprona* leader had managed to achieve during his brief apotheosis as prince and politician.

Phase II (1961–1965): *Crown vs. Party* — With the passing of Rwagasore Burundi politics moved into the next phase, one in which power began to gravitate more and more into the hands of the king and his courtiers, converting the *Uprona* into an appendage of the Court. From a constitutional monarchy the political system transformed itself into an absolute rulership. Although the trend was strenuously resisted by the *Uprona* leadership, at times internal splits within the party seemed more paralyzing than the opposition between itself and the Crown. As the bases of conflict shifted along ethnic lines, creating similar tensions within parliament and the civil service, an ideal situation emerged for the Crown to move into the breach and further consolidate its hold on the political system. Consistently playing one group (Hutu) off against the other (Tutsi) the palace soon asserted itself as the only significant source of power. If there were any doubts as to where power really lay, these were rapidly dispelled by the events following the legislative elections of May 1965. Although the Hutu emerged in the National Assembly with 23 seats out of a total of 31, they soon discovered what many already suspected — that parliament was little more than a rubber stamp. News of the appointment of a famous *ganwa* (Leopold Biha) as Prime Minister on 13 September 1965, made clear Mwambutsa's intention to refuse, in his own words, "to subscribe to a subterfuge of language that would deprive [him] of all control, of all authority, and of all possibilities to extend [to his people] the benefit of [his] protection".¹¹

Phase III (1965–1966): *Crown vs. Army* – The next phase began with a coup, and ended with another. The first, on 18 October 1965, is better described as a coup *manqué*. Triggered by a mutiny of Hutu army and gendarmerie officers, it led to the physical liquidation of every Hutu leader of some consequence – and to the near collapse of the government machinery built around the palace. The panic-stricken Mwami Mwambutsa fled to Europe, never to return. Mwambutsa, however, refused to abdicate. In these circumstances responsibilities for the tasks of day-to-day administration fell into the hands of a mixed assemblage of civil servants, army men and *jeunes*,¹² most of them of Tutsi origins. In the classic tradition of *ganwa* politics, they began to seek to use Prince Charles Ndizeye, Mwambutsa's youngest son, hoping that if the succession crisis were settled in his favour they might secure a fresh entree into the political arena. This is precisely what happened. The seemingly endless manoeuvrings ushered by the abortive, Hutu-led coup of 1965 culminated on 8 July 1966 with the proclamation of a new Head of State: on that day Prince Charles told his people that in order “to bring to an end four years of chaos and anarchy” he had decided to take over the destinies of the kingdom.¹³ The next day he called upon Captain Micombero to form a new government, and on 12 July, Prime Minister Micombero presented the members of his cabinet to the man who was soon to become king. On 1 September, 1966 Charles allowed himself to be formally proclaimed Mwami of Burundi under the dynastic name of Ntare. His reign proved short-lived. The following months saw a rapid deterioration of the relationships between the new king and the king-makers. On 28 November 1966, while attending the first anniversary celebrations of Mobutu's military take-over, in Kinshasa, Ntare learned over the radio that the army had deposed him and proclaimed the Republic by way of a coup similar to that which he happened to be celebrating! Thus ended the last and briefest interregnum ever recorded in the annals of the kingdom.

Phase IV (1966–1972): *The Road to Violence* – Even though the coup that brought the army to power appears to have been instigated by Hima elements, it did not transform the army or the bureaucracy into Tutsi – or even Hima – dominated institutions. The new government formed by Micombero on 12 December, 1966, gave the Hutu five ministerial chairs out of a total of thirteen, the remaining eight almost evenly divided among Hima-Tutsi and Banyaruguru-Tutsi. Although the Presidency of the Republic was assumed by Micombero, only two ministries went to army officers. Regional affiliations were equally diversified, yet at least four of the incumbents came from the Bururi province.

Regional ties were to play an increasingly important role, however, in shaping group loyalties, so much so that by 1971 new self-perceptions had emerged within the Tutsi stratum, some being identified as Banyabururi (the people from Bururi) and others as Banyaruguru (the people from the north). Unlike the latter term, “Banyabururi” is a very recent and somewhat artificial label. It has no precise ethnic or historical referent, and is primarily used to designate those Tutsi elements who claim Bururi as their province of origin. Among the Banyabururi are Hima elements (like Micombero), yet to argue that *all* Banyabururi are by definition Hima, as is sometimes claimed by outside observers, would be grossly inaccurate. Besides the fact that a great many Hutu could qualify as Banyabururi, so could a number of Tutsi elements of non-Hima origin. The essential point to grasp is that as a result of this regional self-consciousness a new basis of solidarity was created among the Tutsi of Bururi which also served as a basis of conflict in relation to those Tutsi who came from different regions, and more specifically from the northern provinces, the so-called Banyaruguru.

Nonetheless, regional allegiances never developed to the point of dissipating clan loyalties, let alone ethnic loyalties. In this situation the interplay of clique and factionalism emerged once again as the moving force of Burundi politics, with Micombero seeking to maintain his hold on the system by constantly playing one group off against the other.

Two major types of political conflict developed during this period—first, an intra-Tutsi conflict, involving a complex mixture of ideological and intra-mural rivalries, with the latter increasingly focussed on clan and regional differences; secondly, an ethnic conflict between Hutu and Tutsi. Until the holocaust of 1972, clan, regional and ethnic loyalties have constantly tended to interact with each other, causing the bases of conflict to shift back and forth from one level to another depending on the circumstances. The greater the prominence of Hutu threats, the lesser the impact and visibility of intra-Tutsi differences; the more salient these latter differences were, the more tempting it became for Hutu elements to turn the situation to their advantage by playing one group of Tutsi off against the other.

In this extraordinarily fluid and complex environment, a distinctive group of Tutsi politicians emerged whose policies were to have a decisive impact on the political destinies of the country. Consisting of a mere handful of individuals (most of them of Basapfu origins), the leading personalities in this group were Albert Shibura, Arthémon Simbaniye and André Yanda. By early 1971 they controlled several key positions in the government and the army – the first as Minister of Interior and Justice (as well as the highest-ranking officer in the Burundi armed forces); the second as Minister of Foreign Affairs, Co-operation and Planning; the third as Minister of Information and Secretary General of the *Uprona*. They owed part of their success to their wide range of potential identifications and their ability to redefine their ‘identity’ in the manner best suited to meet the exigencies of the moment: not only were they of Basapfu origins, but they all came from Bururi and could thus pose as members of the Bururi lobby; moreover, their distant connections with the Hima also enabled them to pose as *bona fide* Hima against the Banyaruguru; above all, they were Tutsi and hence could crystallize ethnic solidarities against Hutu elements whenever this proved to their advantage. But they also owed their rapid rise to power to their adeptness at spreading false rumours with a view to casting discredit upon their opponents. The aim, in essence, was to conjure up threats designed to enlist the support of one group against another – Banyabururi against Banyaruguru, and ultimately Tutsi against Hutu.

Their success becomes all the more remarkable when one considers that less than a year after the seizure of power by Micombero they had all been eliminated from governmental positions. Following what Micombero described as a “foolish attempt of a small group of irresponsible personalities to seize control of the Republic”,¹⁴ the leading lights of the Basapfu clan were either dismissed from office or incarcerated. Having failed in their initial attempt to use the party and the *jeunes* as a source of leverage against the army, they proceeded to transform the army into a court of ultimate appeal to enforce their hegemony upon both Hutu and Banyaruguru. But first the army had to be purged of all ‘deviant’ elements. Their first move was to get rid of all Belgian military advisers in order to evade whatever control they previously exercised on the recruitment of officers. This was carried into effect in July 1968, when eight Belgian officers acting as technical assistants were suddenly thanked for their services and sent back to Belgium, presumably because of their unwarranted interference with ‘normal’ recruiting procedures. The second step was to eliminate as many Hutu from both the army and the government as was politically feasible. This was done by bringing trumped-up charges against Hutu elements in the government and the army so as to justify ethnic purges in both. The third step was to turn against the Banyaruguru, again through the time-honoured technique of fabricating false accusations against specific figures in the army and government.

Disclosure of a plan for a Hutu-led coup for the night of 16–17 September 1969, was the pretext invoked to ‘deal’ with the Hutu problem. It led to the arrest of some thirty Hutu personalities, most of them in army and government, followed by the imprisonment and subsequent execution of scores of Hutu soldiers. Among those arrested and subsequently executed were Charles Karolero, a second-lieutenant and member of the General Staff; Barnabé Kanyaruguru, the Minister of Planning and Economy; Jean-Chrysostome Mbandabonya (executed in 1972), formerly the Minister of Social Affairs in the first Micombero government; Cyprien Henehene, a former Minister of Health (said to have died “under questioning”); and Joseph Cimpaye the director of personnel of Sabena Airlines in Bujumbura (executed in 1972). All were brought to trial on charges of conspiring against the security of the State. On 18 December, twenty of those arrested were condemned to death and executed two days later. Some say that a total of about 100 executions took place in December. Although there were still a few Hutu left in positions of responsibility within and outside the government, the trend toward Tutsi supremacy was clear: seven out of twelve cabinet ministers, including those in charge of foreign affairs, defence and security, and the interior were of Tutsi extraction, and six of eight provincial governors were Tutsi. What still remained unclear was whether this trend would lead to Banyabururi or Banyaruguru supremacy.

By 1971 the Basapfu clique had gained enough ascendancy over Micombero to force the issue in favour of the Banyabururi, with whom they now began to identify themselves. In July 1971, acting in co-operation with the Chief of Staff of the Burundi army, Thomas Ndabemeye, they decided to bring charges of conspiracy against a number of civilian and military personalities of Banyaruguru origins – three of who had at one time or another served as Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lazare Ntawurishira, Libère Ndabakwaje and Marc Manirakiza. All three were subsequently tried and condemned to death. The scenario adopted in 1969 to eliminate the core of the Hutu opposition was now replicated with

a view to eliminating all Banyaruguru elements of any standing in the army and government. Now as before the court proceedings turned out to be a parody of justice. On 14 January, 1972, the military tribunal set up for this purpose issued nine death sentences and seven life sentences. Upon hearing the verdict of the tribunal, the *Procureur Général*, Nduwayo, though himself of Basapfu origins, decided to resign as the evidence obviously did not justify so harsh a sentence. On 4 February however, under the combined pressure of national and international opinion the death sentences were commuted to life imprisonment, and five of the defendants previously sentenced to serve prison terms were set free. Meanwhile, on 20 October, 1971 faced with an unmanageable situation within his own government, Micombero set up a *Conseil Suprême de la Révolution* (CSR), an advisory body made up of 27 army officers.

Besides bringing into the open the enormous tensions that had been building up over time between Banyabururi and Banyaruguru, the immediate consequence of the political trial was to create an atmosphere of pervasive fear throughout the country. The proceedings were given full publicity from start to finish; the radio and the press carried word-by-word accounts of pleas and counterpleas. Never before had public opinion been so deeply sensitized to the issues involved; never previously either had such divisive issues been aired in public. The consequences were almost immediately felt on the hills. Rival factions sprang up over night in a number of localities. It was in this climate of obsessional fear, saturated by tensions of all kinds, that on 29 April, 1972 Micombero suddenly decided to dismiss all members of his cabinet. A few hours later the Hutu rebellion started, and was soon to be followed by a ruthless repression.

Was the Hutu rebellion an attempt on the part of the few remaining Hutu leaders to exploit intra-Tutsi differences to their own advantage? Could it be attributed to a tactical alliance between Hutu and Banyaruguru, designed to evict all Hima or Banyabururi from the seats of power? Or was it the result of a calculated provocation on the part of the Bururi elites? The answers are anybody's guess. The most one can do, given the state of our ignorance, is to speculate about the most likely of these explanations. But first let us take a closer look at the patterns of violence brought to light by the insurgency.

The Anatomy of Violence

The attacks began between 8.00 and 9.00 pm on 29 April, and were carried out nearly simultaneously in Bujumbura and in the southern provinces of Rumonge, Nyanza-Lac and Bururi. In these provinces the assailants consisted of Hutu and "Mulelists"¹⁵ operating in small bands of 10 to 30 people. In Bururi alone the so-called Mulelists numbered between 1,000 and 1,500. It is worth mentioning in this connection that approximately 25,000 Zaïrian refugees, most of them Babembe, lived in southern Burundi at the time of the initial risings; though culturally distinct from the local Hutu populations, they nonetheless shared many of their grievances against the "Bururi Group" and were therefore highly receptive to the incitements of the rebel leadership.¹⁶ The hard core of the rebel forces, however, reportedly came from bases located in Tanzania near the Burundi border. Armed with small automatic weapons, machetes and spears they proceeded to kill and mutilate every Tutsi in sight, including women and children as well as those few Hutu who refused to join them. All in all it is estimated that about 10,000 rebels, both Hutu and Mulelists,¹⁷ took part in the initial risings. They quickly overran the provincial capitals of Nyanza-Lac and Rumonge. According to official reports they even organized a "people's republic" in the Bururi region, and held on to the "liberated" enclave for two weeks before being routed out. Among the victims of the slaughter in Bururi were Micombero's brother-in-law, the provincial governor, and some 40 provincial administrators. In Bujumbura, meanwhile, some 100 rebels launched co-ordinated attacks against the radio station and the military camp, but were almost immediately repulsed. In its initial stage the rebellion is said to have cost at least 2,000 lives, with Bururi claiming by far the heaviest losses.

The early pattern of violence bore striking similarities with what was observed in Zaïre during the 1964 rebellion. In Burundi as in Zaïre rebel tactics showed a heavy reliance on the use of drugs and magic; in each case the attacks were conducted in the most indiscriminate fashion, and were accompanied by senseless cruelties; and in each case violence took place within a very rudimentary organisational framework. Like the *simbas* in Zaïre, many of the Burundi rebels sought sustenance in hemp smoking, and invulnerability to bullets through resort to magic. Some were identified as "wearing white saucepans stained with blood as helmets, their bodies tattooed with magic signs as immunity against attacks."¹⁸ If we are to believe Micombero's testimony "witch-doctors played an important role . . . Mulelist trainers would shoot blank bullets at a man to show his immunity and then shoot a dog or a cat with real bullets to show that the animal had died because it did not cry out the words that conferred protection."¹⁹ Here again the parallel with the Zaïrian rebellion is striking, as were the deliberate cruelties inflicted on the victims. In each case the rebellion owed its initial success to the receptivity of the milieu within which it developed rather than to the solidity of its organisational apparatus.

By contrast the pattern of counter-violence initiated by the government and the army was more systematic and hence more 'efficient' in terms of human destructiveness. The counterattacks began on 30 April. On that day the army and the *jeunesses* began to co-ordinate their efforts to exterminate all individuals suspected to have taken part in the rebellion. Martial law was proclaimed throughout the country, and a dawn-to-dusk curfew enforced. Meanwhile Micombero approached the Zaïrian authorities with a view to securing troop reinforcements and air support, both of which arrived on 3 May. With Zaïrian paratroopers in charge of defending the airport the Burundi army moved in force into the countryside. What followed was not so much a repression as a hideous slaughter of Hutu populations. According to Martin Howe of the *New York Times*, "the revolutionary youth brigades (JRR) took the lead in what is widely described as arbitrary arrests and killings. These were aggravated by personal acts of revenge, with people being denounced as plotters because of disputes over land or a cow."²⁰ In Bururi the army attacked all Hutu more or less indiscriminately. In Bujumbura, Gitega and Ngozi all 'cadres' of Hutu origins — including not only local administrators but chauffeurs, clerks and skilled workers — were systematically rounded up, taken to jail and either shot or beaten to death with rifle butts or clubs. In Bujumbura alone an estimated 4,000 Hutu were loaded up on trucks and taken to their graves. According to one Tutsi witness "they picked up almost all the Hutu intellectuals above the secondary level",²¹ and many more, one might add, below that level.

Some of the most gruesome scenes took place on the premises of the Université Officielle in Bujumbura, and in secondary and technical schools. Scores of Hutu students were physically assaulted by their Tutsi *confrères*; many were beaten to death. Meanwhile groups of soldiers and *jeunesses* would suddenly appear in classrooms, call the Hutu students by name and take them away. Few ever returned. At the Université Officielle about one third (120) disappeared in these circumstances. The Ecole Normale of Ngagara, near Bujumbura, lost more than 100 students out of a total of 314; of the 415 students enrolled at the Ecole Technique de Kamenge-Bujumbura, 60 are believed to have been killed, while another 110 fled; out of 700 students enrolled at the Athénée (secondary school) of Bujumbura, at least 300 have since disappeared, some killed and others fleeing to avoid being killed; at the Athénée of Gitega some 40 students were killed, raising the total of missing students to 148; at the Institut Technique Agricole, also in Gitega, 40 students out of a total of 79 are currently missing, of who 26 are said to have been executed. The Ecole Normale Supérieure and the Ecole Nationale d'Administration also suffered heavy losses. The list also extends to confessional schools, both Catholic and Protestant. Not only the Hutu elites but nearly all potential elites were thus physically liquidated (See Appendix II).

Nor was the Church spared. According to Howe, "12 Hutu priests are said to have been killed, and thousands of protestant pastors, school directors and teachers. In the Bujumbura hospital six doctors and eight nurses were arrested and are believed to be dead."²² No sector of society was left untouched. The repression took on the qualities of a "selective genocide" directed at all the educated or semi-educated strata of Hutu society.

What kind of explanation can one give for such massive violence? Before turning to this question several preliminary observations must be made. Attention has already been drawn to the prominent role played by Mulelists in the early stages of the rebellion, and to the remarkable similarity between their tactics and those employed by the Zaïrian rebels in 1964. Just as the instigators of the attacks

in the south were of mixed origins, so were the victims of the repression. But what needs to be emphasized here is that the victims were not only Hutu and Mulelists but Tutsi as well. Moreover, it is not unreasonable to assume that among the Tutsi killed during the reprisals some were refugees from Rwanda. We shall return to this point in a moment. Suffice to note that about 100 Tutsi were executed in the provincial capital of Gitega on 6 May. On that day, according to Jeremy Greenland, "war councils met in the provincial centres and the guilty were executed the same evening. A Congolese driver, working in Burundi for an Italian firm was ordered out that night to excavate two large holes outside Gitega. He dumped 100 fresh corpses in them and swears that the victims were mainly Tutsi". This, adds Greenland, "is unique evidence of *Tutsi* being killed in the repression".²³

Yet another element to bear in mind has to do with the circumstances surrounding the return of ex-king Ntare to Burundi, in March 1972, and his subsequent execution in Gitega, on 29 April. The return of the ex-king Ntare to Burundi was negotiated between President Idi Amin of Uganda and Micombero shortly after his arrival in Kampala on 21 March. On the strength of the verbal and written guarantees of safe-conduct given by Micombero, Amin allowed Ntare (who was now once again known as Charles Ndizeye) to return to Bujumbura on 30 March. "Just like you" wrote Micombero in his letter of 28 March to Amin, "I deeply believe in God . . . Your Excellency can be assured that as soon as Mr. Charles Ndizeye returns back to my country he will be considered as an ordinary citizen and that as such his life and security will be assured".²⁴ No sooner had the ex-king landed in Bujumbura, however, than he was immediately taken to Gitega under military escort and placed under house arrest. The news of his death reached Bujumbura via an official radio broadcast announcing that the ex-king had been killed in the course of rebel attacks against his residence. Later, however, Micombero admitted that he had been tried for plotting against the government and executed on the night of the attacks, on 29 April. Official allegations were that Ntare tried to invade the country with the aid of foreign mercenaries.

The official position of the Burundi authorities is that two different sets of actors were plotting against the government. On the one hand there was ex-king Ntare, who, according to Micombero, "tried to trap him",²⁵ presumably with the complicity of foreign mercenaries; on the other hand there was a Hutu plot, involving top-ranking personalities in the army and government. The first plot was quickly nipped in the bud, and turned out to be of relatively little consequence, except of course for Ntare himself. The Hutu plot, however, was a much more serious one. Indeed the entire rebellion is officially described as the outcome of a gigantic conspiracy aiming at the physical liquidation of all Tutsi.

Phrased in these terms neither explanation is entirely satisfactory. Can one imagine for a moment that Ntare could single-handedly prepare the ground for an invasion of foreign mercenaries, or indeed that he himself thought he could do so? Or can one really believe that on the strength of his own limited charisma he could spontaneously rally the Hutu masses around himself and promote peasant uprisings throughout the land — all this in the name of a monarchy that had long ceased to exist?

The notion of a master plot concocted by Hutu officials, though far more plausible, also leaves a number of questions unanswered. If it is true that — according to the official version given by the Burundi authorities — a number of Hutu officials had given financial aid to the rebels, that thousands of machetes were discovered at the home of the Hutu Minister of Public Works, that a map showing areas of Tutsi concentration had been found at the home of the Hutu Minister for Post and Telecommunications, why has no evidence been produced to substantiate these charges?²⁶ If there is any truth to the allegations that two million Burundi francs, along with quantities of arms and ammunition, were seized at the home of 2nd Lieut. Ndayahoze, and that Ndayahoze himself was intended to become President of a Hutu Republic, where is the evidence? Again, where is the proof that lists of Hutu conspirators were found in possession of some rebels? What is the explanation for the abrupt dismissal of the cabinet by Micombero on 29 April? Moreover, since the Hutu leadership had been reduced to a skeleton of its former self as a result of previous purges, can one really believe that a mere handful of Hutu officials would be bold enough to organise a major rebellion against an army largely dominated by Tutsi officers? It is not impossible to imagine that a few Hutu officers and non-commissioned officers were in fact plotting against the government: what is impossible to imagine is that the plot involved as many individuals in the government and the army as was subsequently claimed by the Burundi authorities.

Two other alternatives need to be considered: either the rebellion was the result of a deliberate provocation by the Bururi 'lobby', intended to provide a "final solution" to the Hutu problem — and a provisional one to the Banyaruguru problem; or else it was the outcome of a tactical alliance between Banyaruguru and Hutu elements. The first of these alternatives seems rather implausible, if only because of the enormous risks it entailed. Moreover, one is led to wonder whether the few hours that elapsed between the dismissal of Micombero's cabinet and the outbreak of the rebellion were sufficient to allow some of the dismissed cabinet members to organise such a rebellion. One must also note that the area most hard hit by the rebellion, and where the initial uprisings were most devastating, was in fact the stronghold of the Bururi 'lobby'. That some of the dismissed cabinet members should have deliberately instigated a rebellion in the area where their position was most vulnerable is difficult to conceive. A more reasonable interpretation, suggested by Jeremy Greenland,²⁷ is that Micombero must have had some advance knowledge of a Hutu plot, and that he dismissed his ministers in order to have a free hand to deal with the uprising when it came. The strongest evidence in support of this explanation, which also shows how little awareness Micombero and his advisers had of exactly when or how the blow might fall, is that on 29 April the whole Tutsi administration of the Bururi province accepted an invitation to a party at Rumonge — only to discover that the invitation was in fact a ruse to assassinate them. All the guests were killed, except Shibura and Yanda.

If the idea of a plot has any plausibility in this context it did not involve a tactical alliance between Hutu and Banyaruguru as much as a precarious coalition of interests between Hutu and Mulelists on the one hand, and possibly between some Banyaruguru and Rwanda refugees on the other. What, exactly, relationships were between each group is difficult to ascertain. The Mulelists, as noted earlier, were heavily concentrated in the southern provinces; the Rwanda refugees, at least until 1965, were found primarily in the north, where the Banyaruguru were the most numerous. In spite of fundamental ethnic and cultural differences between them, each group of refugees shared somewhat similar experiences. They both fought side by side during the Zaïrian rebellion, in 1964–65; they both shared specific grievances against the Micombero regime, the Mulelists for being denied the support they needed to continue their struggle against the Zaïrian authorities, and the Rwandese for having been denied the opportunity to fight their way back into Rwanda. Of Tutsi origins for the most part, the Rwanda refugees (also known as *inyenzi*) made their way into Burundi from Zaïre, in 1965, after fighting at the side of the Mulelists and being pushed back by the counter-offensive of the Zaïrian army. Although they came into the country at the request of certain Tutsi personalities in government as a 'guarantee' against a possible Hutu uprising, they were subsequently disarmed by the joint efforts of the Burundi and Zaïrian armies. Yet, no matter how real their grievances against the Micombero 'clique', their grievances against Hutu elements were greater still. In these conditions the idea of a tactical alliance of Mulelists and *inyenzi* seems far-fetched; even more far-fetched the idea of a parallel alliance between Banyaruguru and Hutu. What seems to have developed is more in the nature of a temporary concurrence of interest between each group of refugees and those domestic factions with whom they had most in common culturally and politically, the Mulelists with the Hutu and the *inyenzi* with the Tutsi. Rather than each group of refugees working hand in hand with the other, each group became a tributary to its domestic ally. In view of the ethnic context within which the initial uprisings occurred, one can see why at first neither the *inyenzi* nor the Banyaruguru had any inclination to jump into the fray, preferring for the time being to let the Banyaruguru and the Hutu (and Mulelists) destroy each other. That these were included among the motives attributed to the Banyaruguru by the Bururi authorities finds partial confirmation in the killings of Tutsi elements in Gitega on 6 May, 1972. This, as Greenland noted, was unique evidence of Tutsi killing Tutsi.

It may be that in the minds of some Banyaruguru the Hutu uprisings would in time be deflected from their original target through the propitious intervention of Ntare — with the rebellion then transforming itself into a "carrier movement" destined to restore both the monarchy and Banyaruguru hegemony. In the absence of solid evidence, however, this can only be presented as a very hypothetical proposition.

Regardless of who the plotters were, involvement in violence clearly stemmed from very different motives. For the Mulelists the rebellion expressed more than just an accumulation of grievances against the Bururi lobby; it also expressed a displacement of aggression from one target (the Zaïrian authorities) to another (the Tutsi authorities) — their victims in effect serving as a "substitute target" for their Zaïrian enemies. Not only culturally and ethnically but in terms of their behaviour and motiva-

tions the Mulelists formed a radically different group from the locally recruited Hutu insurgents. Among the latter some joined the rebellion out of fear, others out of opportunism, others still because of their genuine hatred of all Tutsi regardless of clan or region. Between the rural activists and the Bujumbura "plotters" the contrast is equally striking. Assuming that something in the nature of a plot was hatched by Hutu officials in the army and the government, their *modus operandi* and ultimate goals had relatively little in common with those of the local insurgents, Hutu and Mulelists. The aim of the rebellion in Bujumbura was not to kill every Tutsi in sight but to gain control of the radio station and military camp as a preliminary step towards a formal seizure of power. Again, assuming that the Banyaruguru had hoped to seal a tactical alliance with Ntare, possibly to use him as a symbol of legitimacy to "recuperate" the rebellion, this was evidently for motives quite different from those actuating Hutu insurgents in Bujumbura and Bururi.

Behind the orgy of counter-violence triggered by the repression one can also detect a variety of motives. Fear of an impending slaughter of all Tutsi, men, women and children – reminiscent of what happened in Rwanda in 1959–1962, and again in 1964²⁸ – certainly played a crucial part in carrying the repression to the extremities noted earlier. Personal animosities, individual hatreds of local Hutu elites, and the anticipation of the material gains that might be derived from seizure of the victims' property (his cows, his land, his bicycle, his hut, or even his bank account, as the case may be) also fed into anti-Hutu violence. But none of these factors are sufficient to account for the systematic purges that followed the uprisings. Indeed the most astonishing feature of the repression is the rapidity with which it transformed itself into a genocidal-type operation aiming at the physical liquidation of nearly every educated or semi-educated Hutu. This is how Jeremy Greenland²⁹ describes the logistics of the operation:

Local Tutsi, sometimes soldiers, sometimes civil servants, arrived and motioned Hutu teachers, churchleaders, nurses, traders, civil servants into Landrovers with their guns. Bands of Tutsi combed the suburbs of Bujumbura and carted away Hutu by the lorryload. Throughout May and half June 1972, the excavators were busy every night in Gitega and Bujumbura burying the dead in mass graves. In secondary schools teachers stood helpless as many of their Hutu pupils were removed . . . Those arrested were usually dead the same night, stripped and practically clubbed to death in covered lorries on the way to prison, then finished off there with clubs at nightfall. Using bullets would have been wasteful.

"Prophylactic violence" thus became a major element in the strategy of counter-insurgency adopted by Tutsi authorities to deal with the Hutu problem. The aim was to decapitate not only the rebellion but Hutu society as well, and in the process lay the foundation of an entirely new social order.

From the drastic surgery performed during the repression a new society has in fact emerged, in which only Tutsi elements are qualified to gain access to power, influence and wealth; what is left of Hutu society is now systematically excluded from the army, the civil service, the university and secondary schools. The four Hutu holding ministerial positions are virtually impotent, their sole function being to mask the fact of Tutsi domination. Tasks formerly performed by Hutu are now the privilege of the Tutsi, as are virtually all other positions in the modern economic sector. (The reimposition of school fees in September 1973 has had the effect of further reducing the number of fatherless and other Hutu children in primary and secondary schools; as one missionary put it "having dealt with the 'elite' fathers, the potentially 'elite' children are now excluded from education"). Hutu status has become synonymous with an inferior category of beings; only Tutsi are fit to rule, and among them none are presumably better qualified than the Banyabururi.

What Next?

The annihilation of the Hutu elites has effectively eliminated all potential threats to Tutsi hegemony from the Hutu, at least for the next generation; but it has by no means eliminated all sources of conflict. One of the unintended consequences of the slaughter has been to create the conditions for further conflict within the dominant stratum. Now that Hutu threats are no longer perceived as significant by the Tutsi minority, the focus of inter-group conflict is likely to move back once again to intra-Tutsi divisions, pitting north against south, Banyabururi against Banyaruguru, radicals against moderates. So far the Bururi 'lobby' has proved remarkably adept at exploiting the Hutu-Tutsi conflict to its own advantage, using violence as a resource to consolidate its position vis-à-vis both Hutu and Banyaruguru; but the latter (unlike the Hutu living in Burundi) are unwilling to give up their claims to power. In these conditions the continued exclusion of Banyaruguru elements from positions of responsibility within the army and the government may well become a source of increasing tension in years ahead within the Tutsi stratum, possibly leading to new confrontations. Another source of tension lies in the mutual hatreds generated among Tutsi as a result of the excesses committed during the repression. Conscious as most Tutsi were of the threats posed to their collective interest, indeed to their survival, by an impending Hutu takeover, many have since come to realise the enormous disproportion between the nature of the threat on the one hand, and the scale and arbitrariness of the repression on the other. Many are the Tutsi who lost Hutu friends, domestic servants and clients at the hands of the army and the jeunesses, knowing full well they were innocent. This forceful and unnecessary severance of the few remaining bonds of personal friendship and loyalty between themselves and their Hutu neighbours is what a great many Tutsi in the rural areas are as yet unable to comprehend or forgive. Nor are they likely to forget the share of responsibility borne by the Bururi elites in this and other matters. Thus it would be grossly misleading to conceive of the dominant minority as being all one politically and otherwise. Beneath the monolithic surface of Tutsi hegemony one can discern a variety of potential sources of conflict – some rooted in cultural and regional antagonisms, others in basic disagreements over the scale of the brutalities committed during the repression, others still in the frustrations experienced by specific groups of individuals as a result of their differential access to the rewards of office.

Whether intra-Tutsi tensions can be effectively mitigated by their awareness of future Hutu threats to their security is difficult to say. Internally, the ruling elites have no reason to anticipate further challenges from the Hutu community: lacking all potential sources of leadership, decimated and deeply traumatized by the terrible vengeance visited upon them, the Hutu living in Burundi are neither willing nor able to instigate further revolts. Entirely different, however, is the attitude of the Hutu refugee community in exile. The slaughter of 1972 has generated a massive involuntary migration of Hutu populations into Rwanda, Zaïre and Tanzania (approximately 150,000), creating in each state a kind of "privileged sanctuary" for the launching of refugee-led guerilla operations against the Burundi government. This situation is made all the more explosive by the occasional 'spill-over' of anti-Hutu raids into neighbouring territories – and the possibility that the raids might miss their intended targets, killing civilian populations. Judging by the extreme seriousness of the diplomatic incident triggered by the mistaken strafing of a Tanzanian village by helicopters of the Burundi National Army in the spring of 1973,³⁰ one can see why these retaliatory moves might lead to unintended hostilities between Burundi and any of its neighbours. Yet another element of uncertainty concerns the attitude of the Rwanda government vis-à-vis both the Hutu refugees from Burundi and the Burundi government: can the Rwanda government exercise effective control over the refugees and prevent both guerilla attacks and retaliatory raids? Can it prevent a tactical alliance between the Hutu refugees from Burundi and the Hutu opposition – an alliance presumably designed to create border conflicts which each partner might then seek to exploit to its advantage, the refugees to fight their way back into Burundi and the domestic Hutu opposition to recapture power? There are no precise answers to these questions. What does seem reasonably clear is that the capacity of the Bururi 'lobby' to maintain itself in power will depend to a large extent on its ability to cope with the conditions of chronic instability arising from the spread of anti-regime (i.e. Hutu) forces into neighbouring political arenas. (See following pages).

Even more fundamental in the long run are the amounts and kinds of assistance which the Micombero regime can expect from foreign powers within and outside Africa. Burundi's strongest allies, for the time being, are Zaïre and France, each for very different reasons. In the light of the ominous threats faced by the Zaïrian authorities during the 1964 rebellion it is easy to see why the Mulelist component

of the Hutu rebellion should have produced a quick and positive response from Kinshasa — in the form of military assistance. The rapprochement brought to light during the crisis is more than a conjunctural phenomenon. A crucial element militating in favour of continued close relationships between Kinshasa and Bujumbura is the presence of a substantial number of Tutsi elements (most of them refugees from Rwanda) in specific sectors of the Zaïrian civil service — primarily in Agriculture and Education — as well as in top decision-making positions. The second most powerful figure in Kinshasa is none other than a former Tutsi refugee from Rwanda. In a way ethnicity is part of the social cement that makes for potentially close relationships between the two states, above and beyond the convergence of short-term interests.

The case of France is more difficult to explain, involving as it does a mixture of ignorance and opportunism, and a fetish-like attachment to the presumed virtues of *francophonie*. That 100,000 francophones, or potential francophones, happen to be massacred in the name of Tutsi supremacy makes little difference as long as France's brand of *francophonie* — meaning in effect the promotion of French, as distinct from Belgian, cultural values — stands to profit. Nor does it matter if in this case Tutsi supremacy should contradict the fundamental principles of 1789. What matters ultimately is the expansion of France's sphere of influence in black Africa, culturally and politically. And since the Tutsi as a group are being viewed as having a greater nimbleness of mind and greater expressional skills than the Hutu, and on the whole more willing to do business with the French, they are generally viewed as a better "investment" by French diplomats.³¹ These considerations are essential to an understanding of the supporting role played by French military assistants during and after the rebellion. As one knowledgeable observer put it: "French military assistants flew and are still flying the regime's helicopters. This airborne was crucial in routing out the rebels in the south . . . Frenchmen were holding the helicopters steady while Burundi soldiers were machine-gunning Hutu rebels out of the side windows, and Frenchmen were at the wheel of the same helicopters in the incursions into Tanzania, in the course of which numerous Tanzanians were killed".³² Under the cover of a *Société de Transports Aériens du Burundi* (whose initials, STAB, convey a more realistic appraisal of its role) French pilots and helicopters supply the Micombero regime with minimum guarantees of security against further rebel attacks.

The prominence of the French presence in Burundi, not only at the military level but in cultural, educational and technical spheres, has meant a corresponding loss of influence for Belgium, thus removing all credibility from the threats of economic sanctions raised in Brussels during the 1972 events. While Belgium was making a last-ditch effort to make sure that the educational component of its aid programme would not be used for discriminatory purposes, the French promptly offered to make up for whatever aid Belgium might withdraw! Such being the case one wonders whether there is any point in laying blame on the United States for its failure to act in any decisive way during the crisis. In a recent sponsored report by the Carnegie Endowment the suggestion is made that since the US buys approximately 80 per cent of Burundi's coffee (representing 60 per cent of its foreign earnings), the State Department possessed sufficient economic leverage to induce a basic change of attitude on the part of the Tutsi authorities.³³ This is extremely dubious, however. When ethnic hatreds reached the point where people slaughter each other by the thousands, how much do they really care about the long-range implications of a reduction of coffee exports? Nor is it a foregone conclusion that this form of economic sanctions would in the long run produce the expected results. The Hutu masses would probably suffer just as much as the Tutsi elites from the consequences of this policy. But perhaps the basic flaw in the argument advanced by the authors of the Carnegie report is that it assumes that the United States enjoys a position of economic omnipotence in Burundi. It would be very surprising indeed if, in the event of an American decision to bar coffee imports from Burundi, alternative buyers did not materialise.

To bring effective pressure to bear upon the Burundi authorities would have required a concerted action on the part of all Western powers accredited in Bujumbura. Only in these conditions and through pressures involving not only moral persuasion but continued threats of economic sanctions, was there a chance of limiting the scale of the massacre, and perhaps initiate a more liberal trend in the sphere of Hutu-Tutsi relations. At the time of the crisis, however, there was little agreement among Western diplomats as to what should or could be done. In fact some of the key figures in the Western diplomatic corps were not even on speaking terms with each other. The rift was even more conspicuous in the case of Communist powers. Whereas North Korea and China were the only powers outside Africa to officially support the regime, the Soviets showed no compunctions about signing the Western note of protest,

in part because differences of opinion among Western diplomats made the note sound platitudinous, if not downright hypocritical. With the exception of Belgium, the dominant impression one gains of Western diplomacy during the crisis is one of almost total indifference in the face of an unrelieved tragedy.

Just as astonishing is the silence of the UN and the OAU, and the total inability, or unwillingness, of either organization to register any kind of effective protest. In the case of the OAU this passivity is sometimes justified by the argument that since the Burundi crisis was a purely domestic matter (which it most emphatically was not), it was clearly outside the jurisdiction of the OAU. Perhaps a more realistic explanation is that most African states are, to a greater or lesser extent, potential Burundis. No African state wishes to establish a precedent that might prevent it from dealing with such crises by means of its own choosing. Even so, the wording of the resolution adopted at the OAU Summit in Rabat in late June strikes one as little short of astounding, amounting in effect to a message of support for Micombero: "The Council of Minister is convinced that, thanks to your saving action, peace will be rapidly re-established, national unity consolidated and territorial integrity preserved".³⁴

These considerations are equally relevant to an understanding of the striking indecision displayed by the UN. According to the Carnegie report, Washington had apparently banked on UN observers constituting what one official described as 'a foreign presence that would be likely to halt the massive killings'. But when the two missions (sent by the UN) were limited to only five persons, that expectation evaporated. "We had no illusions about what the UN could accomplish", admitted a high US official later.³⁵ The fact which emerges with striking clarity from the record of UN involvement, or non-involvement in Burundi is that the latter ranked far too low in the scale of international priorities to justify anything more than a *pro forma* intervention. To put the matter crudely: as long as the killings involved only Hutu and Tutsi the crisis could be regarded as lying essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of the state of Burundi; only inasmuch as Hutu and Tutsi could be identified as being respectively pro-Western and pro-Communist (which was no longer the case in 1972), could the matter conceivably be viewed as a "threat to peace" by Western powers. Only then could a rationale be established for intervention, and a criterion made available for discriminating between 'friend' and 'foe'. In the spring of 1972 the UN clearly lacked a rationale for intervention; yet, judging from the use made by the Burundi authorities of UNICEF trucks during the repression, the field agencies of the UN were by no means at a loss for identifying 'friends' and 'foes'. As Greenland tersely puts it, "the UN said little, even when their own vehicles were requisitioned and used to take Hutu to their deaths. It was ironic to see Landrovers marked UNICEF being used for this purpose . . ."³⁶ This is perhaps the reason why, until his death in Geneva earlier this year, the Head of the UN Development Programme in Bujumbura, Marcel Latour, was one of the two most highly regarded Western officials in Bujumbura, the other being his long-time friend, war comrade and compatriot, Henri Bernard, the French Ambassador.

Reflecting on the appalling events of 1972 one journalist was prompted to ask: does an international conscience exist?³⁷ The answer given by a Western diplomat sums up the dilemma: "Nobody wants to start up another fuss in a faraway country if personal interests are not involved".³⁸ Insofar as it can be detected at all, what goes by the name of an "international conscience" is the expression of convergent national interests, not of a global commitment to moral values. How else is one to explain the blissful indifference of world opinion to what must be regarded as one of the most brutal massacres in the history of any single state? How can one otherwise explain the commotion produced in Africa and Europe (and particularly in England) by the alleged massacre of 400 Africans in Mozambique by Portuguese security forces, and the fact that the far larger killings in Burundi went almost unnoticed? The sad truth is that Burundi is too "far away", too "exotic", too small, in short too marginal in terms of the priorities set by international diplomacy to elicit concern or compassion among Westerners. Thus the death of scores of Africans at the hands of the Portuguese colonialists is viewed as an intolerable scandal by white liberals (as it should); the Burundi killings, by contrast, are seen as a mere statistic.

The crux of the dilemma concerning Burundi's future is whether further periodic massacres can be instituted without triggering conflicting moves on the part of its neighbours, Rwanda, Tanzania and Zaïre. The latter two in particular, by virtue of their geographical position and political weight, have a vital role to play, not only in influencing President Micombero towards more moderate policies, but in preventing the occurrence of a 'client war' in which Rwanda would side with Tanzania and Zaïre

with Burundi. The most one can hope for the time being is for the three states that once made up Belgian Africa to evolve a common framework of co-operative relations with a view to maximizing their chances of economic viability while at the same time reducing the risks of confrontation and hostility at the domestic and international levels. If neither the UN nor the OA were able to influence the course of events in 1972, one would hope that they might at least try to mobilize world opinion in support of initiatives aiming at preventing the recurrence of these events in the foreseeable future.

FOOTNOTES TO PART ONE

- ¹ The phrase is borrowed from an Intelligence Memorandum circulated within the US State Department, quoted in a Special Report of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Passing by: The United States and Genocide in Burundi, 1972* (hereafter quoted as *Passing by*), p.6.
- ² A. F. Duke of Mecklenburg, *In the Heart of Africa* (London, 1910) p.44.
- ³ *Ibid.*, p.47.
- ⁴ F. Rodegem, "Burundi: La Face Cachée de la Rébellion", *Intermédiaire* 15 June, 1973, p.15.
- ⁵ F. Rodegem, *Onomastique Rundi* (Bujumbura, 1965; mimeo.) p.155.
- ⁶ The prominence of Hima elements in government is shown by the recent reshuffling of cabinet posts (March 12, 1974): the Ministries of Justice, Finance and Public Works have been entrusted, respectively, to Philippe Minani, Major Samuel Nduwingoma, and Major Edouard Nzambimana, all three of Hima origins. Meanwhile the influence of the Basapfu appears to be receding: Major Albert Shibura, once the leading figure of the Basapfu "clan" is currently serving as Ambassador to Peking; André Yanda, who once held the post of Secretary General of the *Jeunesses Révolutionnaires Rwagasore* (of which more later) before acting as chargé d'affaires in Peking (from February to September 1973), is currently Ambassador to Tanzania; Longin Kanuma, ex-Governor of Bururi Province and subsequently Minister of Public Works, was dismissed from this post on 12 March, 1974; Prime Minister Nyongabo, at one time Directeur de Cabinet in the Prime Minister's Office, lost his job in March 1971. Among the Basapfu who still retain influence in government are Gilles Bizamubute, Minister of Education, Pie Kanyoni, Mayor of Bujumbura, and possibly Artémon Simbananiye, Minister of Foreign Affairs (the latter is sometimes said to belong to the Banyakarama rather than to the Basapfu clan).
- ⁷ G. Simmel, *Conflict*, trans. by Kurt Wolff (Glencoe, 1955), p.98.
- ⁸ Roger M. Williams, "Slaughter in Burundi", *World*, 21 November, 1972, p.20.
- ⁹ H. Meyer, *Die Barundi* (Leipzig, 1916), cited by Jeremy Greenland in "Black Racism in Burundi", *New Blackfriars*, October, 1973, p.444.
- ¹⁰ For further elaboration on this point see, R. Lemarchand, *Rwanda and Burundi* (London, 1970), p.344.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.414.
- ¹² Officially known since 1967 as the *Jeunesses Révolutionnaires Rwagasore* (JRR), and until then as the *Jeunesses Nationalistes Rwagasore* (JNR), the movement was created in Lubumbashi (then known as Elizabethville) by Prime Nyangabo and Gilles Bizamubute, both of whom were at the time attending the Université Officielle du Congo. As the youth wing of the *Uprona* party, the JNR emerged as the most powerful pressure group in Burundi politics. In fact the worst abuses committed during the 1972 slaughter have been attributed to JRR militants. For further details on the early history of the movement, see my *Rwanda and Burundi* (London & New York, 1970), p.347 ff.
- ¹³ Lemarchand, *op. cit.* p.428.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.453.
- ¹⁵ This is the generic term commonly used to designate the rebel forces operating in the Congo (now Zaïre) in 1964-65, after the late Pierre Mulele, key organizer of the rebellion in his home province of Kwilu in western Zaïre. In this context, however, the term is a misnomer. The Kwilu maquis was located hundreds of miles away from the Burundi border and few if any of Mulele's followers became involved in the eastern rebellion. In this case the so-called "mulelistes" were in fact followers of Gaston Soumialot, the man primarily responsible for organizing the insurrection in eastern Zaïre. Most of them were drawn from the remnants of Soumialot's rebel army, the so-called *Armée Populaire de Libération* (APL).

¹⁶ Given the predominance of Babembe elements among the refugees it is significant to note that a substantial proportion of Soumialot's *Armée Populaire de Libération* (APL) happened to be recruited among the Babembe populations of Fizi and Albertville, in eastern Zaïre, (whereas most leadership positions within the APL were entrusted to Tetela-Jusu elements). The Babembe formed the shock troops of the APL during the capture of Kasongo and Kindu in July 1964, and they also participated in the capture of Kisangani. Their courage became proverbial, and since at first many of the witch-doctors employed by the APL were of Babembe origins their military prowess was generally attributed to the quality of their magic (*dawa*) and the efficacy of their initiation rites. It is easy to see, in these conditions, why the presence of Babembe elements in Burundi should have acted as a major contributory factor to the spread of rebel activities. For further details on the role of the Babembe during the 1964 Congo rebellion, see Benoit Verhaegen, *Rébellions au Congo*, Vol. 2 (Brussels, 1969), *passim*.

¹⁷ Interestingly, among the Mulelists who took part in the Burundi risings was a certain Martin Kasongo, in Charge of Information, Press, Security and Justice in the rebel government set up in Albertville in the summer of 1964, and widely known for his unpredictable and volatile dispositions. Verhaegen does not hesitate to refer to him as a "clown" (*Rébellions au Congo*, Vol. 2, p.454). He ended up being the object of considerable distrust on the part of Soumialot who, utterly exasperated by Kasongo's shenanigans, decided to send him "on mission" to Burundi in early August 1964. On his return to Burundi a few weeks later Kasongo was charged with embezzlement; in September 1964 he was arrested in Stanleyville at the request of Soumialot and brought back to Kindu under military escort. By 1966 he was reported to be living in Kigoma (Tanzania), a few miles away from the Burundi border. The foregoing lends substance to Micombero's statement, in an interview with Marvine Howe of the *New York Times*, that "Kasongo had stolen 4 million Burundi francs at Nyanza-Lac and had disappeared". "I want his head", added Micombero, "declaring that Mr. Kasongo deserved the death sentence for having organized the massacre". See *The New York Times*, 11 June, 1972; for further details on the role played by Kasongo during the Congo Rebellion, see Benoit Verhaegen, *Rébellions au Congo*, Vol. 2, pp. 453-459.

¹⁸ Martin Howe, "Slaughter in Burundi: How Ethnic Conflict Erupted", *New York Times*, 11 June, 1972. The use of drugs and magic by Mulelists has been acknowledged by the number of eye witnesses mostly missionaries; for further evidence see Father Antonio Falaguasta, "Burundi: Lotta per la Sopravvivenza", *Da Nigrizia*, 1 June, 1973, p.16.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*; according to Greenland, "the Protestant Churches appear to have suffered proportionally more severe losses than the Roman Catholic Church. The Anglicans lost 15 of their 35 ordained men. Of 138 Catholic Abbess, 18 were killed. As a Catholic spokesman has pointed out, more Burundi priests were killed during the summer of 1972 than have died of natural causes since the first ordination in 1925 . . . Over recent months every single Hutu candidate to the priesthood at the Grand Seminary has fled the country because their bishop, a Tutsi, would not guarantee to protect them if a new wave of persecution broke out. There will be an almost tribal priesthood to match a tribal army". Greenland, *op. cit.*, pp. 447-8.

²³ Greenland, *op. cit.*, p.445.

²⁴ *Uganda Argus*, 5 April, 1972

²⁵ Martin Howe, *op. cit.*

²⁶ Greenland, *op. cit.*

²⁷ In a personal communication to this writer; see also Jeremy Greenland, "Black Racism in Burundi", *New Blackfriars* (Oxford), October 1973, p.446.

²⁸ In November 1959 Rwanda became the scene of widespread rural violence, instigated by Hutu elements against Tutsi, ultimately prompting the Belgian administration and the local Catholic clergy to throw their weight behind the insurgents. Thousands of Tutsi were massacred between 1959 and 1962, their property looted or confiscated. Two years after independence, in 1964, an abortive raid of Tutsi refugees from Burundi triggered a massive killing of Tutsi elements still living in Rwanda. For further information, see my *Rwanda and Burundi*, *op. cit.*

²⁹ Greenland *op. cit.*, p.447.

³⁰ For further details, see *Tanzania Daily News*, 26 and 30 March, 1973.

³¹ As one French diplomat confided to this writer, in the summer of 1973, "si nous devions nous appuyer sur les Hutus, nous aurions devant nous une kyrielle de Bokassas; de cela nous ne voulons pas". ("If we were to seek the support of the Hutus we'd be confronted with a whole batch of Bokassas; we don't want that".) This tendency to attribute innate behavioural characteristics to ethnic groups has a long pedigree in the colonial histories of Rwanda and Burundi. Just as the Belgians saw in the presumed astuteness and intelligence of the Tutsi further justification for a policy of indirect rule, much the same kind of prejudice colours the official attitude of the French in contemporary Burundi.

³² Jeremy Greenland, in a personal communication.

³³ *Passing by*, *op. cit.*, pp.13-17. Despite the reservations one may have about the prescriptive side of the Carnegie report, and indeed the accuracy of its descriptive sections, one must nonetheless congratulate the authors for bringing within the consciousness of the American public the dimensions of the Burundi tragedy, and the scale of American indifference in the face of this tragedy. Especially revealing in this respect is the content of the exchange between Robert Yost, a career officer nominated to succeed Ambassador Melady in Bujumbura, and Senator Fulbright, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, on 23 June, 1972, *Ibid.*, pp.35-37. As the authors point out, "the transcript of that hearing, against a background of enormous human suffering, might be required reading for all those concerned with the failure of the (American) Congress to meet its responsibilities in foreign affairs". The hearing, too long to be reproduced here, sounds like the captions of a comic-strip.

³⁴ Quoted in *Passing By*, *op. cit.*, p.9.

³⁵ *Ibid.* p.11.

³⁶ Jeremy Greenland, "Black Racism in Burundi", *op. cit.*, p.450.

³⁷ Frederic Hunter, "Burundi and World Conscience", *Christian Science Monitor*, 11 April, 1973.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

* * *

Professor Lemarchand would particularly like to thank Jeremy Greenland and Professor J. P. Chrétien for commenting on the draft of his report.

APPENDIX I

Political Benchmarks in the Recent History of Burundi

- October 13, 1961: Assassination of Crown Prince Louis Rwagasore, Prime Minister-Designate and leader of *Parti de l'Union et du Progrès National (Uprona)*.
- July 1, 1962: Burundi becomes independent as a separate entity from Rwanda; the administrative unit born of the amalgamation of Rwanda and Burundi (the United Nations Trust Territory of Rwanda Urundi) is formally dissolved.
- January 15, 1965: Prime Minister Pierre Ngendandumwe (Hutu) assassinated by Tutsi refugee from Rwanda; succeeded by Joseph Bamina (Hutu).
- May 10, 1965: First post-independence elections to National Assembly resulting in Hutu majority.
- September 13, 1965: Léopold Biha (ganwa) is appointed Prime Minister by the Court, in defiance of the Hutu majority in the National Assembly.
- October 19, 1965: Putsch by Hutu military personnel thwarted by army loyalists under Captain Michel Micombero; Prime Minister Biha seriously wounded by putchists; reprisals against Hutu follow.
- November 2, 1965: Mwami (King) Mwambutsa leaves for Europe, never to return.
- March 24, 1966: Mwami confers substantial powers on his son, Crown Prince Charles Ndizeye.
- July 8, 1966: Crown Prince deposes his absent father, dismisses the Biha government and suspends the constitution.
- July 11, 1966: Defense Minister Micombero forms government.
- September 1, 1966: Crown Prince installed as Mwami Ntare V.
- November 28, 1966: Micombero deposes Mwami, proclaims the Republic.
- September 17, 1969: Disclosure of a plan for a Hutu-led coup result in the arrest of about thirty Hutu leaders, all of whom are subsequently executed.
- July 12, 1971: Disclosure of an alleged plot of Banyaruguru elements (of Tutsi origins) against the government, leading to the arrest and trial of several leading Tutsi personalities in the army and the government.
- October 20, 1971: President Micombero sets up the "Supreme Council of the Republic" (Conseil Suprême de la République), consisting of 27 officers; the functions of this junta-type organization of 27 officers; the functions of this junta-type organization are to "counter all tendencies likely to endanger national unity and peace . . . to give its opinion on the selection, maintenance in office or replacement of persons responsible for the stewardship of public affairs and to insure discipline in all State organs".
- January 12, 1972: Nine of the personalities brought to trial in connection with the anti-government plot of July 1971 are condemned to death; seven others receive life sentences.
- March 30, 1972: Ex-King Ntare returns to Bujumbura. He is immediately arrested and sent to Gitega.
- April 29, 1972: Micombero dismisses all members of his cabinet. A few hours later, between 8.00 and 9.00 pm, co-ordinated attacks by Hutu and Mulelists are reported in Bujumbura, Gitega, Bururi and Nyanza-Lac. Thousands of Tutsi are exterminated. In order to forestall a monarchist coup ex-King Ntare is executed in Gitega during the night of April 29-30.
- May 3, 1972: Zairian troops arrive in Bujumbura. The Burundi army, assisted by *jeunesses* groups, moves into the countryside to conduct the repression.
- May 6, 1972: 'War councils' meet in provincial centers to organize the repression. According to one observer, "throughout May and June the excavators were busy every night in Gitega and Bujumbura burying the dead in mass graves". An estimated 80,000 Hutu lost their lives during the repression.

APPENDIX II

Estimated Losses of Hutu Students in Secondary Schools and University, as of 2 July, 1972:

Institution	Students Killed	Total Losses*	Total Enrolment before losses
1. State Schools and UOB			
Université Officielle de Bujumbura (UOB)	60	120	350
Ecole Normale (Ngagara)	8	140	314
Ecole Normale Supérieure (Bujumbura)	20	55	135
Ecole Technique (Kamenge-Bjumbura)	60	170	415
Athénée (Bumumbura)	Unknown	300	700
Athénée (Gitega)	ca. 40	148	380
Institut Technique Agricole de Gitega (ITAG)	26	40	79
2. Private Schools (Catholic and Protestant)			
Collège du St. Esprit	4	4	Unknown
Ecole Technique Moyenne (ETM) of Gihanga	27	27	Unknown
Ecole Normale (Gitega)	8	8	Unknown
Collège de Gitega	7	Unknown	Unknown
Ecole Moyenne Pédagogique (EMP) of Musenyi	33	Unknown	Unknown
Collège de Ngozi	26	Unknown	Unknown
Ecole Médico-Sociale (Gitega)	10	Unknown	Unknown
Collège de Matana	32	40	212
Ecole Normale of Kiremba	ca. 100	ca. 125	335
EMP (Kivoga)	44	60	Unknown
EMP (Kibimba)	6	Unknown	Unknown
EMP (Buhiga)		30	Unknown
Total	ca. 511	ca. 1,277	

Note: Excluded from this appendix are several institutions about which no figure whatsoever could be obtained. Furthermore, in a number of cases the only figures available were for students killed, thus leaving out those students reported to have fled the country or gone into hiding. Hence the totals listed must be viewed as highly conservative. According to some school authorities a total of at least 650 students were killed during the repression; a minimum of 1,450 are said to have disappeared (i.e. killed or in flight). The higher forms (*enseignement du cycle supérieur*) were the hardest hit by the repression, with one student out of every 5 or 6 reported to have been killed.

(*) Includes the number of students killed and those reported to have left the country.

PART TWO: BY DAVID MARTIN

Any attempt to assess Burundi's future must be measured against events in that country and neighbouring Rwanda during the past 15 years, and even then there is no glib or ready prediction which can be made with absolute safety. Like the minorities of Southern Africa today, the ruling Tutsi of Burundi feel threatened. In Rwanda they have witnessed their fellows displaced and slaughtered. At home they have survived several attempts to overthrow their domination and on 29 April 1972, they came perilously close to the downfall they had long feared. These threats from the Hutu have been ruthlessly crushed but this has only served to deepen ethnic hatred and exacerbate the Tutsis' own fears about the fate that they will one day face.

Even after the Hutu attempt to seize power in 1972 and the vicious reprisals of the ruling Tutsi not many people in the world were aware of the realities of the situation in Burundi. Press interest in the West has been minimal and I was the only British reporter to go to Burundi at that time when upwards of 80,000 Hutu were being systematically slaughtered. It is perhaps hard to understand the mute and seemingly complacent indifference with which the world viewed – or ignored – events in Burundi during those weeks. The country was of no strategic importance and at that time of little economic consequence. It was not English-speaking, nor a member of the Commonwealth and was very remote geographically and emotionally from Europe.

Even Burundi's neighbours like Tanzania and Zaïre at that point did not understand what was happening. President Michel Micombero struck the right chord with Zaïre's President Mobutu Sese Seko when he claimed that he was fighting a Mulelist invasion, and the Zaïre leader sent him troops and planes to help. Tanzania's President Julius Nyerere sent at least 17 tons of small arms and ammunition, and so unwittingly aiding the repression of the Hutu. Today international awareness of the realities of Burundi is greater – but so too is the potential for further large-scale violence in the future.

It is useful to try to understand the scene in Bujumbura and the surrounding countryside late in May of 1972 in order to understand the feelings at that point of the Tutsi. With two American correspondents at the home of the United States *Chargé d'Affaires* I spent over two hours interviewing President Micombero about what was occurring in his country. Carefully he followed the official Government statements that there had been a joint Mulelist-Hutu attempt to overthrow his Government in which at least 50,000 Tutsi had been slaughtered.¹ The only consequential deviation from the official line was his admission that King Ntare had been executed at Gitega and not killed by the "invading" force as the Government had hitherto claimed. To anyone who had not known what in fact had occurred and what was still then occurring, it would have been an impressive and generally convincing performance. He concluded by agreeing to lend us his helicopter on the following day to tour parts of the country to see for ourselves what had happened.

From about 30 kilometres south of Bujumbura through Rumonge and onwards to the Tanzanian frontier, we found village after village deserted. Huts had been burned and amidst the ruins lay the blackened cooking pots and other items which had survived the flames. Along the lake edge near Rumonge lay the bleaching and swollen bodies of people who we presumed had tried to escape the carnage and had been hunted down in the thick reeds between the town and lake. Our pilot (a Tutsi Colonel) insisted that all the bodies were Tutsi, but there was no way of telling whether this was true. Some had obviously been lying there for over three weeks and we were left with the feeling that the Tutsi needed to show us this macabre public exhibition in order to relive the nightmare they had survived and psychologically to justify their own vengeance. Flying inland towards the west the picture was the same: deserted, burnt out villages, and fields and livestock untended.

Back at Bujumbura bulldozer tracks could clearly be seen from the air near the main airport where victims had been buried in mass graves and open trenches were waiting for more bodies. To be educated – albeit only to primary level – or to have a job, was a death sentence for a Hutu. Diplomats were hiding their cooks and gardeners at their official residences. The banks in the capital said they had lost

* For footnotes to Part Two see pages 33,34

over 100 Hutu employees from clerks upwards, all of whom were believed to be dead. At the cable office, where before the uprising and repression twenty-five Hutu had worked, only two were left. One large Belgian company said that every single Hutu employee had disappeared and almost all of them were thought to be dead. One of the few surviving Hutu employees I spoke to in Bujumbura said that he had tried to escape but had been stopped at a road block, beaten up and told to go back. He had not been involved in the uprising so could not understand why they should do anything to him. He knew many of his friends who had also not been involved but had been killed. Subsequently I learned he too had disappeared.

Statistics as to the number who died are at best approximations and in some cases wild guesses. It is safer to err on the side of conservatism and I personally believe that the figures compiled by the churches seem most likely to be near the mark. In the wake of the uprising and repression the churches were putting the figure of Tutsi dead in the first phase at about 1,500, and the Hutu dead in the reprisals at over 80,000. "Double genocide" was the description of one missionary and this is very apt, for there can be little doubt that the Hutu initially slaughtered the Tutsi men, women and children whom they found — although it should not be forgotten that they also killed some Hutu; and that in the repressive phase the Hutu were the indiscriminate targets of Tutsi revenge, although the brunt of this fell on the employed and educated with the clear intention of leaving the Hutu as leaderless serfs. European teachers watched helplessly as Hutu children were taken from their classes and killed; in the army the Hutu met a similar fate and at the University Tutsi students beat up their Hutu class-mates.

One could continue *ad infinitum* describing the details of what occurred but this serves little purpose in terms of understanding Burundi's agony or trying to prevent a repetition in the future. The United States in particular has been singled out for criticism for not bringing economic pressure to bear in order to prevent the slaughter, but in my view it was the United States which was largely responsible for the all too little publicity at the time. Given the mood of Tutsi in the wake of the Hutu uprising it is highly questionable whether any international weapon short of actual intervention could have dissuaded them from the revenge they took.

Burundi's export earnings depend largely on coffee, of which the United States is the largest purchaser and in 1972 this was the only real area where economic pressure could be applied. At that time Burundi's international quota was 17,000 tons and President Micombero's Government was living on credit, having already used up all but 7,000 tons of the coming season's quota through sales from the previous year's crop and having sold only 1,000 tons on the non-quota market to the Soviet Union at approximately half the quota market price. The Burundi Government intended to ask the International Coffee Authority to increase the quota in 1972 because of the country's need to reconstruct as a result of the devastation which followed the April 29 uprising. Here in fact was a potentially important pressure point which could be used by the international coffee producers and purchasers.²

Although views are divided on the response this sort of pressure might have received it is in my view highly problematic whether, given the Tutsi fears at that time, it would have worked. It has been argued that to block the sales of Burundi coffee would have hit the Hutu peasant growers hardest, but this is a thesis of dubious merit if one considers the amount that the grower receives compared to the amount that goes into the coffers of the almost exclusively Tutsi establishment. It is undoubtedly true that the grower would be affected but he would not starve. The Government on the other hand would have been deprived of its main source of income, yet even so one cannot assume that this would have drawn the required response. It is even possible the end result would have been counter-productive, eroding what little influence those involved were able to bring to bear; and if at that point Burundi had severed relations with the United States and its Embassy in Bujumbura had closed, the main source of news of what was happening in the country would have been ended.

If the United States must shoulder any of the blame for the silence which cloaked the slaughter, then the Organisation of African Unity which met in Rabat during May 1972 and which totally ignored the killing must be adjudged even more guilty by default. The Organisation continuously insists African problems must be solved by Africans but in the case of Burundi, as well as Uganda, it remained silent and in both cases has made little or no effort to intervene diplomatically. On the contrary the former OAU administrative secretary-general, Mr Diallo Telli of Guinea passed through Bujumbura on his way north from Zaïre during the slaughter and not only accepted the official and untrue Burundi Government version of events but went on to voice it as a fact.

The questions of Uganda and Burundi raise disturbing moral issues. One of the former Ministers of Uganda's President Amin wrote from exile in a memorandum to African leaders that whereas Africa annually marked the Sharpeville massacre when white South African police shot dead Africans, they ignored the much more massive killings in Uganda. Was genocide, he asked, an internal matter or a matter for all mankind? African nations by speaking out about what was occurring in Burundi and Uganda could have brought much more pressure to bear than white Western nations whose statements would tend to be dismissed as "imperialist propaganda". A greater sense of responsibility in the future on a continent which talks of brotherhood and unity could be an important pressure point. The question of the sale of arms to Colonel Micombero's Government and the military training of Burundi personnel raises complex issues. The cynicism of countries such as France over arms sales is well established in both independent and white-dominated Africa. Although France has officially denied it, there can be little doubt that a French pilot flew one of the two helicopters which attacked villages several miles inside Tanzania in 1973 when a number of people were killed, huts burnt and crops destroyed.³ Many of the dead were Hutu refugees who had fled the repression, and Burundi was finally forced to admit responsibility for these attacks and agree to pay compensation. It is a question of morality whether arms should continue to be sold to President Micombero's Government and military training given to his exclusively Tutsi army. It can be argued that the Tutsi must be given the means to defend themselves against continuous Hutu threats to depose and slaughter them. But equally the weapons and training they are given are directed against the Hutu, innocent and guilty alike.

The need to de-fuse the situation on Burundi's borders by removing the thousands of Hutu refugees is argued by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees.⁴ Just how many Hutu refugees are living in neighbouring countries is uncertain but the official figures are about 40,000 in both Tanzania and Zaïre and a further 20,000 in Rwanda. But it must be stressed these are official figures and only include those people moved some distance away from Burundi's frontier — in the case of Tanzania, to camps near Tabora. There are undoubtedly many thousands more still living in the frontier areas particularly along Tanzania's remote and mountainous border with Burundi, and as long as they remain there they pose a continuing threat to bi-lateral relations as well as increase the likelihood of incursions across the frontier which could lead to more bloody repression. With the Hutu living on either side of the Burundi-Tanzania frontier, it is easy for the refugees to move in with relatives and friends in Tanzania and to integrate into society as Tanzanians. There is no doubt that some of the people who took part in the 1973 attacks on southern Burundi when Nyanza Lac was overrun did cross from northern Tanzania and the bulk of these people are still in the frontier area. It is not that Tanzania is not aware of the problem and not prepared to do anything about it. On the contrary. But the problem lies partially in the remoteness of the area and rounding up those refugees who do not register, partly in the limitations of Tanzania's resources to re-settle them away from the frontier, and finally in the fact that with a liberation war going on on her southern border with Mozambique, and with uncertainty on her north-west border with Uganda, the Tanzanian army is already at full stretch.

What can the international community do to help here?⁵ Insofar as the border control and removal of the refugees from the frontier is concerned there is probably very little that can be done. But large-scale international assistance to a Burundi refugee re-settlement programme well away from the frontier would remove some of the present financial burden from Tanzania, and in turn act as an incentive for the refugees to move to better conditions as well as for the Tanzanians to make them do so. Refugees are already involved in tobacco schemes near Tabora, and a positive programme for re-settlement publicised among the refugees in the frontier area could act as a magnet to draw them away and thus help to reduce future potential trouble.

One major problem however that remains and seems likely to give fuel to future uprisings is that during the 1973 attack on Nyanza Lac the Hutu are believed to have captured over 220 rifles and several thousand rounds of ammunition. Reports from southern Burundi today, where much of the countryside is now deserted, say that a guerrilla training camp has been set up with some 250 men, and leaders of this group have been known to have crossed into Tanzania where some local officials and missionaries are far from unsympathetic towards them. One of these leaders did approach an Embassy in Dar es Salaam for support, which the Embassy says was refused, and a Western diplomat met the same man in a hotel on the shores of the Tanzanian Lake Victoria town of Bukoba. Some of the White Father Missionaries on the Tanzanian side of the frontier make little pretence about their sympathy for the Hutu and appear to have advance knowledge of their plans. On the part of some of the missionaries there seems to be little attempt to discourage further incursions which can only lead to increased bloodshed.

Those giving aid to Burundi today must take considerable care that they are not just aiding the Tutsi.⁶ Where educational institutions are almost exclusively Tutsi, should teachers be seconded from overseas?⁷ Where agricultural, irrigation or health schemes are aimed almost exclusively at the Tutsi should foreign donors go ahead? This same question should be posed insofar as all future aid to Burundi is concerned, for the way to ultimate ethnic harmony does not lie in cementing the position of a minority. Rather in the long term this is only likely to exacerbate ethnic conflict.

But pressure on the Tutsi must be subtle. The Government of Colonel Micombero can today have no credibility among the Hutu; and yet it is hard to imagine how it can be changed short of further blood-letting or another military *coup d'état* by those who feel that he has still not been tough enough in dealing with the Hutu in order to preserve Tutsi dominance.

In the final analysis there is no single means to deal with the problem of Burundi. Rather the answer must lie in a related series of approaches aimed at removing the immediate threat of further uprisings and repression while endeavouring to create a different climate within Burundi.

In the first place efforts must be made to keep the international press informed about the situation in Burundi. A continuous barrage of hostile publicity will not help, for this will only have the effect of making the ruling Tutsi more withdrawn. But if a further crisis occurs, immediate, wide and informed press reporting would act as vital pressure. It is my belief that when the media finally got round to drawing attention to what was occurring in May and June 1972 this did to some extent act as a deterrent force on the Burundi Government. But tragically by then it was too late for tens of thousands of people. Thus a small group of concerned – but not hostile – people keeping continuously in touch with events in Burundi, able to brief European and North American editors, leader-writers and political correspondents (as well as politicians) would be very important. In my view, except in the case of further large-scale bloodshed, this should be done as confidentially as possible with church, diplomatic and other contacts established in Burundi and neighbouring countries where off-the-record information and sources would be protected.

Recent important discoveries of minerals in Burundi⁸ could well mean the first large-scale outside investment and development, and here again efforts must be made to dissuade investors from employing only Tutsi in senior jobs or having no staff higher training schemes or scholarships for the Hutu. This may not be easy, but pressure can be brought to bear in Europe and North America at least through reports in the press of the countries concerned.

In many ways the single most important man in terms of bringing pressure to bear on Colonel Micombero is President Nyerere, for landlocked Burundi relies almost exclusively on Tanzania for her trade routes to the Indian Ocean via Lake Tanganyika, Kigoma and on to Dar es Salaam. The effect of this somewhat blunt weapon was amply demonstrated in 1973 after Burundi troops had attacked Tanzania for the second time but denied responsibility. Dock workers at Dar es Salaam and Kigoma, with clear backing if not active encouragement, from the Tanzanian Government, boycotted Burundi goods. Colonel Micombero was finally forced to attend a meeting in Tanzania with President Nyerere and President Mobutu acting as mediator where the Burundi leader has to admit responsibility and agree to compensation before the boycott was called off. Although President Nyerere early in May 1972 was unaware of the realities of Burundi he is under no illusions today and can be expected to be responsive to any quiet initiatives to resolve future immediate or long term problems.

International bodies such as the United Nations⁹ or the Organisation of African Unity are notoriously unresponsive to attempts to bring matters like the Burundi repression before them, and because of so many skeletons in so many cupboards are inclined to fall back on the well-worn argument of not interfering in the internal affairs of other states. A further problem is that it is usually many months (and even years) before a report such as this can be submitted and some members may feel little purpose is served by a diplomatic crisis over something which is, so to speak, dead and buried. However if informed lobbying groups can be created in various countries these could bring pressure on their Governments to support any necessary action, in an effort to prevent a repetition of this tragedy.

FOOTNOTES TO PART TWO

¹ "Despite overwhelming evidence that the killing proceeded along ethnic lines and was aimed mainly at the Hutus, the government denied that there was any ethnic basis to the conflict. In what amounted to an incredible inconsistency, the June 6, 1972 official government white paper from the New York office of the Burundi U.N. mission spoke of 'Hutu-attempted genocide against the Tutsi ethnoses.' In attacking the press for emphasizing tribalism in explaining the Burundi crisis, the white paper asserted:

If tribalism is to be mentioned, think of the one you have dissipated into our society. You craftily took advantage of the naivete or cupidity of certain of our citizens. In a few years you destroyed the secular product of our ancestors. You distinguish between the Burundese citizens, labeling them as Hutu and Tutsi. You did not stop there. You convinced Hutu of the necessity of massacring Tutsi. All this with the best interests in mind, in the name of democracy! Oh! Democracy, how many crimes have been committed in your name; but providence is not democratic, nor is the massacre of the Tutsi minority by the Hutu majority which failed in 1960-1961, in 1965 and in 1969, and finally again in 1972.

From the above, one cannot help but conclude that the government has completed a full circle, from its first denying the ethnic origins of the conflict to its confirming its significant role in the 1972 upheaval in Burundi."

— William J. Butler and George Obiozor, "The Burundi Affair 1972", *IDOC N. America*, 1973.

² For a full analysis of "the coffee question" see Morris, R., *Passing By: The United States and Genocide in Burundi 1972*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington DC, 1973.

³ Burundi's tiny civilian airline, STAB, seems recently to have been disbanded. The aircraft, a few DC 3s, formerly maintained and piloted by French civilian personnel, have been taken over by the Burundi army and are now maintained and piloted by French "military" personnel. As a reward for these services rendered, it is believed that Air France will shortly commence direct flights to Bujumbura.

⁴ Aid to refugees from Burundi in Tanzania in 1974 will have to be increased by nearly one million dollars as a result of the sudden expansion of the population of the Katumba settlement early in 1974 from 10,000 to nearly 40,000 people.

⁵ "The international community has an obligation to some of these new states, which in most cases it helped to create. It is probable that the tendency of the governments of the new states to become authoritarian is caused not by hatred of democracy or democratic principles. For in most cases, there is neither an economic base nor a democratic tradition. Most or all of the new states were products of colonial administrations which were anything but democratic, in fact, and whose preference for one ethnic group over the other depended upon to whom they could "safely" hand over power upon independence. If the Belgians had established a democracy in Burundi, perhaps the Hutu majority might have been in power; at the very least, it might have been represented in the government and consequently represented in the nation's armed forces in proportion to its numbers."

— Butler and Obiozor, *op. cit.*

⁶ It must be noted that the Burundi régime does not consider wives and children of Hutu killed in the 1972 events to be "victims of oppression". In official parlance the thousands of Hutu killed were "rebels" whose guilt was "proved" when their names were found on "lists of plotters". All the personal property of these "rebels" (bank accounts, cars, clothes and even furniture in some cases) was legitimate booty for those who killed them, and very little has ever been restituted.

The International League of Red Cross Societies made several efforts to ensure that its humanitarian aid went to both Hutu and Tutsi victims but withdrew from Burundi when the regime made this impossible (see [Red Cross] Final Report 28 March 1973). The Red Cross also declined to serve as a channel for UN aid when requested to do so.

For a full analysis of the voluntary agencies and aid, see Weinstein, W. *Humanitarian Aid and Civil Strife: Politics versus Relief in Burundi*, paper presented to the Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, November 1973.

⁷ The people need education for citizenship, education for technical skills. For example, the illiteracy rate in Burundi is 90 per cent; life expectancy is 39 years.

⁸ Vast nickel deposits were recently discovered in Burundi. The US embassy pressed the State Department to restore normal relations with the Burundi régime on the grounds that such normalisation would provide "opportunities for American corporations that are interested in exploiting the major new mineral discovery". (US State Dept. memorandum, quoted by Anderson, J. "Nickel Politics" *New York Post* 13 March 1974) Such normalisation would also preclude comment on and publicity of Burundi's internal affairs. According to Meisler (*Los Angeles Times* 8 April 1973) the US embassy in Burundi demanded that its counterpart in Kenya stop briefing the American press on the atrocities.

See also Morris, R. "The Triumph on Money and Power" *New York Times* 3 March 1974.

⁹ The U.N. has been involved in Burundi since 1946, when it inherited it from the League mandate administered by Belgium, to its full independence in 1962. The U.N. has provided substantial amounts for relief purposes in several of Burundi's uprisings — through the office of the High Commissioner for Refugees in 1965. The U.N. also sent observer teams to Burundi during the 1972 upheaval to investigate cases of genocide, relief problems, and so forth.

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The following documentary films are also available:

Telco number

- 721648 "Ruanda Burundi." 30 minutes, colour.
Shows everyday life in these two states and their growing dependence on oil. Producer-B.P., Britannic House, Moor Lane, London EC2. Mr. A. R. Turner, Films Department.
- 722463 "Refugees From Burundi." 13 minutes 16 seconds, colour.
Several thousand Hutus managed to escape the Watutsi massacres in Burundi in 1972. They fled to Tanzania and film shows aerial shots of Burundi, new refugees arriving in the port of Kigoma, interviews with nurses and refugees at Camp Pangales, Tabora Region, Tanzania. (English, French and Swahili interviews. International sound track and English text available). Producer AVRO/Holland. Distributor NOS, Postbus 10, Hilversum, Holland. Telex 11320 Pohl.
- 734654 "Burundi: Two Races, One People" (*Burundi: Deux ethnies pour un seul peuple.*) 38 minutes, colour.
Film includes interviews with soldiers, the President of Burundi, the education minister and foreign minister on the feud between the Tutsi and the Hutu and the possibility of co-existence. Broadcast 25 October 1973 Swiss French TV in "Temps présent". 20 Quai Ecole de Medecine, 1200 Geneva, Switzerland. Telex 27701.
- 724755 "What Happened in Burundi?" 17 minutes 22 seconds, colour.
Claude van Engeland interviews two Belgian technicians, one of whom will return to Burundi, the other who will not. Situation report by Production le 60. Broadcast 29 September 1972 RTB in "9,000,009". Services de la Télévision, Cité de la Radio-Télévision, Schaerbeek-Linthout, Brussels 4, Belgium. Telex 21437.

Details of the above films supplied by Richard S. Clark, Television Co-ordination Services, North Orbital Road, Denham, Uxbridge UB9 5HE, Middlesex, U.K.

Professor René Lemarchand has travelled extensively in the former Belgian territories of Central Africa, and is the author of *Rwanda and Burundi* (London, 1970).

David Martin has until recently been the *Observer* correspondent in Dar-es-Salaam. He was in Burundi at the time of the 1972 killings.

Professor Lemarchand writes:

"In view of the lavish hospitality I received from the Burundi authorities, including President Micombero, during the summer of 1973, it may be that this report will be seen as a shocking violation of the law of reciprocity, of the time-honoured custom of giving and returning the equivalence. To those who might have expected this report to be a form of *ingorore* (a gift offered as a token of gratitude), I wish to make it clear at the outset that this is emphatically not the spirit in which it has been written. The motives which impelled me to write it are perhaps better expressed in the old kirundi proverb — *umugabo amira intore ntamira ijambo*, a man swallows his food but not his words — or, more loosely translated, gifts are not enough to buy a man's silence. Ultimately, my hope is that in shedding light on the circumstances which lie in the background of the tragic events of 1972 this report may make a small contribution toward preventing the recurrence of similar tragedies in the future. Only in this sense does it claim the quality of an *ingorore*."



The cover photograph is by Ms. Sarah Errington. The map was drawn by Mr. Radovic.



This report was first published in July 1974



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