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The New York Times

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1994 WLNR 3556865

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September 28, 1994

Section: A

U.N. Stops Returning Rwandan Refugees

RAYMOND BONNER,

GENEVA, Sept. 27 In a sharp reversal of policy, the United Nations has stopped encouraging Rwandan refugees to return and is refusing even to assist those who wish to go home because of a report that the new, Tutsi-dominated Government in Rwanda has killed thousands of members of the Hutu ethnic group.

The report, which has been prepared by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees but has not been released, has set off a bitter dispute within the world organization and led the Secretary General to demand that United Nations officials refrain from discussing it.

The report concluded that there was "an unmistakable pattern of killings and persecution" by soldiers of the Rwandan Patriotic Front, the victorious rebels who now form the Rwanda Government, "aimed at Hutu populations."

What is not clear is the extent to which the killings described in the report occurred during the Rwandan civil war, as opposed to the period since the new Government came to power in July.

In an effort to quell the controversy and to protect against the possibility that the Rwandan Government, which has reacted angrily to the report, might expel all United Nations forces from the country, Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has ordered a "thorough investigation" into the allegations made in the report and has issued "strict instructions" to all United Nations officials not to discuss it.

According to the refugee agency, the report was based on a five-week investigations that included interviews of some 300 Rwandans in 41 of Rwanda's 145 communes and at nine refugee camps.

"I'm disappointed that other U.N. organizations won't accept these reports and say this is something that needs to be examined, instead of trying to undermine their credibility," Daniel Spiegel, the United States representative to the United

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Nations in Geneva, said in an interview today. "There doesn't need to be this type of acrimony between U.N. agencies."

The report, which has not been shared with other United Nations agencies, has dealt a severe blow to efforts to persuade more than a million Rwandans who fled to Zaire and Tanzania to return home.

Repatriation efforts are further hampered because the United Nations has been slow in getting human rights monitors to Rwanda. A primary mission of the monitors is to deter, by their presence, the kind of abuses described in the report.

The United Nations has said that 147 monitors are needed in Rwanda. Only 20 are there, however, and they have no vehicles of their own and no communications equipment. Of the \$10 million that the United Nations has requested for the human rights program in Rwanda, only \$2 million has been pledged.

"Until human rights monitors are in the provinces, there won't be any massive repatriation," Mr. Spiegel said today. He said that most of the delays in getting the monitors in place are attributable to "inexperience" and bureaucracy.

Privately, however, some United Nations officials are saying they doubt there will ever be 147 monitors in Rwanda. A former Peace Corps volunteer in Rwanda has put together a list of more than 40 other former volunteers ready to act as monitors. Their applications are now being considered by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, but some officials expressed frustration that approval is taking so long.

Though officials at the human rights agency said that the list of potential monitors is not being given to the Rwandan Government for their approval, the Government has reportedly vetoed at least two monitors, according to United Nations officials.

Publicly, United Nations officials are doing their best to keep the feud over the report out of the public eye. "We are one house," the spokeswoman for the United Nations Commission for Human Rights, Therese Gastaut, said at a news briefing this morning. But in the corridors and when speaking on background, United Nations officials are bitter in their recriminations of the refugee agency.

Much of the criticism stems from concerns that in issuing a human rights report, the refugee agency is infringing on the mandate of other United Nations organizations. "There are turf questions, which are unfortunate," Mr. Spiegel said.

But Mr. Spiegel and officials of the High Commissioner for Refugees said the agency set out to establish the mechanisms for returning Rwandans to their country, not to investigate human rights abuses.

The author of the report has not been publicly named, but United Nations officials and American diplomats confirmed that he is Robert Gersony, an employee of the United States Agency for International Development who is on loan to the high commissioner's office.

In the mid-1980's, Mr. Gersony documented human rights abuses by the Renamo, the

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guerrilla group in Mozambique, and his report had a major influence on the international view of that organization. A few years later, he issued a report on Government killings in Somalia.

In Kigali, the Rwandan capital, an official with the United Nations Emergency Office, criticized the refugee agency report as being based on "uninvestigated rumors."

---- INDEX REFERENCES ----

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October 4, 1994

Issue 2

Section: EtrangerETR

RWANDA&G Un rapport confidentiel faisant état de la mort de 30 000 Hutus &G La
controverse persiste sur les allégations du HCR (RAPPORT GERSONY)
VICHNIAC I

GENÈVE

de notre correspondante

Le rapport confidentiel du Haut-Commissariat des Nations unies pour les réfugiés (HCR), faisant état de 30 000 Hutus tués au Rwanda (" Le Monde " du 30 septembre), est toujours l'objet de controverses. Chargé exclusivement des réfugiés, le HCR n'est en effet pas présent au Rwanda. Ce rapport repose donc uniquement sur des témoignages de réfugiés dans les pays voisins.

Nombreux sont ceux, dans les milieux internationaux de Genève, qui sont quelque peu irrités de n'avoir encore pas eu accès au " rapport Gersony " sur la situation au Rwanda. Ce document avait été remis à Mme Sadako Ogata, haut-commissaire des Nations unies pour les réfugiés. Celle-ci l'avait transmis à Boutros Boutros-Ghali, secrétaire général de l'ONU. Or ce dernier a prié le HCR de ne plus fournir à la presse aucun renseignement sur ce qui se passe au Rwanda tant que ne seront pas connus les résultats d'une " enquête approfondie " sur les allégations de cet organisme (le Monde du 30 septembre).

Le rapport en cause a été rédigé par Robert Gersony, un consultant américain du HCR, qui avait été chargé en son temps de faire une étude pour procéder à des rapatriements accélérés au Nicaragua. Il fait état des observations d'une équipe de 3 personnes qui ont recueilli des témoignages au cours de plus de 300 entretiens dans nombre de sites où sont rassemblés des réfugiés. Il conclut qu'au moins 30 000 civils hutus ont été massacrés depuis la conquête du pouvoir par le Front patriotique rwandais (FPR).

Ces massacres ne seraient pas des actes de vengeance isolés mais l'effet d'une politique délibérée consistant à vider des villages entiers de leur population, dans certaines régions, pour que les Tutsis qui avaient

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été exilés en Ouganda puissent se réinstaller au pays.

C'est à la suite des conclusions alarmantes du rapport Gersony que le HCR avait décidé d'interrompre les opérations de rapatriement de réfugiés, la situation ayant été jugée trop grave pour le moment.

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TO: KHAN, UNAMIR, KIGALI
FROM: ANNAN, UNATIONS, NEW YORK
DATE: 5 AUGUST 1994
NUMBER: UNAMIR 2465
SUBJECT: Informal consultations of the Security Council

1. Mr. Gharekhan briefed members of the Council today, and answered their questions raised by them yesterday, using the information received from you. He also said that he would provide the Council with additional information after you report on your meeting with the Prime Minister.
2. The Representative of France again referred to incidents which were reported in the New York Times today (copy attached) concerning harassment of returnees by members of the RPA, and said that "where there is smoke, there is fire". He also added that according to French military sources, there had been no broadcasts by Radio Milles Collines since 19 May 1994.
3. Other speakers, including New Zealand and the United Kingdom, reaffirmed the necessity of deploying human rights monitors to Rwanda and expressed satisfaction with Ayala Lasso's public concurrence with the idea, even though \$ 2 million from extra-budgetary sources would be required. Both representatives also referred to the Secretary-General's report on Rwanda (copies in English and French are being sent under separate cover), and indicated that the Council should consider a new operational mandate for UNAMIR. Both representatives also pointed out that the Council should make known what the international community expects from the Transitional Government.

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4. The President of the Council then referred to a letter dated 29 July, addressed to the Secretary-General by Foreign Minister Ndagiyimana, regarding new credentials and a request that Rwanda's term as SecCo President be postponed. Council members agreed to discuss this matter on Monday, 8 August.

Best regards.



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Rwandans Say the Victors Kill Many Who Go Back

Accounts Are Blow to Efforts to End the Crisis

By RAYMOND BONNER
Special to The New York Times

KADUHA, Rwanda, Aug. 4 — For weeks, tens of thousands of Hutu, forced from their homes by the war, have been struggling to survive here in one of the harshest regions of Rwanda, selling cattle and clothes to buy small amounts of food and receiving minimal aid from international relief organizations. Recently, hearing from the new Government in Kigali that it was safe to go home, some have tried.

And now they are coming back to the wretched refugee camps with reports that some Hutu returning to their villages are being killed by Tutsi villagers and soldiers of the Rwandan Patriotic Front, the Tutsi-dominated organization that is now the Government.

"I saw so many dead bodies," said Charles Murera, 43, who told how he had escaped from a mud-brick house where he and 16 other Hutu men were detained by soldiers from the Rwandan Patriotic Front.

Mr. Murera, who returned to Kaduha today, said that as he entered

his village of Gisare, in Ntongwe district, he had been seized by six Tutsi, who tied his arms behind his back and led him to a military base about half a mile away.

Mr. Murera rolled up the sleeves of his filthy, torn shirt to show festering scabs on the inside of both elbows. He said the wounds had been caused by the ropes.

In separate interviews, other Hutu men and women in this remote refugee camp in the hills of southwestern Rwanda, where the French have established a security zone, gave similar accounts of men being tied up and led away by Patriotic Front soldiers and of men, women and children being killed when they returned to their villages in southeastern Rwanda.

There have been persistent rumors of atrocities by the Patriotic Front but no confirmation until now. But two reporters who spent several hours today in separate interviews with refugees found their accounts credible.

It is impossible to know whether these are isolated incidents by some Patriotic Front units out of control or whether they reflect broader activities.

"I saw with my own eyes," said Louis Nywandi, 25. "I am not telling lies." He made a partial list of the women, children and men who he said were killed in his village at the end of July.

His father was among them. "I witnessed with my own eyes," he said. "They beat him on the head with a hoe."

Mr. Nywandi said the soldiers rounded up a large group of men. "They tied us with ropes, like this," he said, putting his arms behind his back. On the insides of both elbows were distinct marks that he said were rope burns.

He said the men were led to a military camp, where the soldiers began shooting the Hutu villagers. Mr. Nywandi said that in the confusion, he and 16 other men escaped, running with their arms tied behind their backs.

The accounts of Tutsi atrocities will deal a serious blow to efforts of the United Nations and international relief organizations to cope with the refugee crisis caused by the civil war, which ended with victory for the Patriotic Front in mid-July.

This is important because United Nations officials acknowledge that when the French troops pull out of the area — on Aug. 22 if their presence is not prolonged — there could be a huge new exodus by the 500,000 or so Rwandans, mostly Hutu, in the secu-

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Rwandans Tell of Killings by Victors

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city zone. The French are supposed to be replaced by a United Nations force drawn from African nations, but this force has yet to be assembled. If not persuaded to go back to their homes, the refugees could pour into Zaire, adding to the crisis there.

In the final days of the war more than a million refugees moved into the Goma area of Zaire, where thousands have died of cholera, dysentery and other diseases. As the relief organizations go about building what amount to rudimentary cities in the area, laying water pipes and trucking in hundreds of tons of food, they acknowledge that the only real solution is for the refugees to return home.

The office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has said that it is safe for the refugees to go home. But within the agency there has been a debate about how aggressive to be in encouraging a return. There have been fears of incidents like those the villagers here recounted today.

Horror Stories Circulate

In the camps near Goma, northwest of Rwanda, there has been an organized campaign by partisans of the former Rwandan Government to persuade refugees not to go back home. Stories are circulated that returning Hutu have had their eyes gouged out and worse. There has been no confirmation of these accounts, nor any eyewitness reports of killed refugees in the north being killed.

French military officials and relief workers say they will not allow any propaganda efforts among the displaced in the security zone. They say that for the most part, the former Rwandan militia and Government soldiers have been chased out of the area by the French.

There are an estimated 500,000 displaced people in the security zone, but very little food aid has arrived. At the makeshift refugee village here, 40

Now the reports are of Tutsi attacking Hutu.

percent of the children under 5 are malnourished.

"The situation is deteriorating fast," said Jack Soldate, director of operations in southwestern Rwanda for CARE, which was distributing food to refugees at Kaduha today.

Mr. Soldate said that about 10 days ago, it was thought that the displaced would begin trickling back to their villages, that they would then send back reports that all was well, and that greater numbers would then return home. But that has not happened, he said.

Behind the Refugees' Fear

The villagers' accounts explain the refugees' fear.

Colette Mukandamutsa went back to her village, a two-day walk east of here, a week ago with her husband, two of their children, 12 and 9 years old, and a large group of others. Along the way they met Patriotic Front soldiers, who said it was safe.

But when they reached their village, in Ntongwe district, they found several bodies, Mrs. Mukandamutsa said. And three times at night during the week she remained, soldiers searched houses.

Mrs. Mukandamutsa, who sat on the grass near the hospital here today holding a black umbrella to shield her from the sun, said that she saw men taken away and that they did not come back.

One day a man came to her house and asked for her husband, she said. "Let us hide ourselves," her husband said, and that night they hid in a banana grove. About 9 P.M., a group of about 15 men came to the house; they had flashlights and a few had guns, she said. She said that her husband ran and that she had not seen him since.

Four Men Don't Return

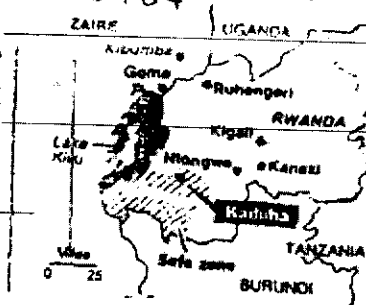
Another peasant farmer, 26-year-old Gakwandi — he was never baptized and so has no first name — is from a different village in Ntongwe district.

He went home last Friday and stayed only three days. "I wanted to see how the situation was," he said. He said he saw six men, one of whom was in a military uniform and carried a gun, seize four village men and take

them away. "They had their hands tied behind their backs," Mr. Gakwandi said. He said the men never returned.

Mr. Gakwandi said he also saw another man, named Nyandwa, taken from his home by several men, led to a bridge and killed with a hoe.

It was in another village, Gisari, that Mr. Murera, the man with the bad rope burns on both arms, was seized. "We left this camp for our village because the R.P.F. told us we could return home and regain our houses," Mr. Murera said. He lived in a mud house and cultivated two acres



Rwandans at a camp in Kaduha describe reprisals against Hutu who tried to return home.

of land, with 660 coffee trees.

He said he had wanted to make sure it was safe before returning here to get his six children, 6 to 16 years old. He said he had not seen his wife since they first fled Gisari in May.

Mr. Murera arrived back in Gisari last Saturday, after walking for a day, with two of his brothers and another brother's wife. When they saw a group of Tutsi in the village, they grew frightened and ran.

"They were younger," Mr. Murera said, explaining why the others had escaped. "I could not run like them." He said that the men who seized him were all Tutsi and that they had no weapons. He said that he did not know any of the men, but that he knew the father of one of them. His name was Biraro, Mr. Murera said.

Escape Is Described

He said his arms were tied behind his back and he was taken to a Patriotic Front military camp at Kanazi, where he was put in a mud-brick house with 10 other men.

Mr. Murera said the men untied each other, using their teeth. He said they then managed to make a small hole in a wall by removing a few bricks. Mr. Murera, a short, slight man, said it was only big enough for him and two other men to crawl through.

When he was crawling away, he saw other bodies. "I could not count them," he said. "I had lost my head."

