

Surviving the Genocide: An Interview with Jean-Christophe Nizeyimana.

Surviving the Genocide: An Interview with Jean-Christophe Nizeyimana.

June 23, 2007

By **Jean-christophe Nizeyimana**

[Skip to [pt. 2](#) / [pt. 3](#) / [pt. 4](#)]

"I have been through Hell, have known horror, and now that I have escaped, I want to testify in the name of all the men and women who did not have my luck and who died in Hell." - Marie BÂ©atrice Umutesi. ("Surviving the Slaughter." Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press. 2004.)

1. Introduction

On the night of 27 June 2006, it was warm and dry in Kigali, the capital city of Rwanda. A typical day since it wasn't rainy season. It was nearly 18:30 and the sun had already settled down below the horizon. Gratefully, the temperature would soon cool down a bit. I rolled out of the bed in my hotel room and trudged up the long winding staircase to the dining room, where Hotel Okapi serves a famous (and delicious) breakfast buffet every morning beginning at 06:30. On this particular evening, I went outside to make a phone call on my portable (cell) phone because the reception emitting from the Mobile Telephone Networks' (MTN) tower was very difficult to pick up from inside my room.

I strolled casually past the front desk and the internet cafÃ© connected to the hotel. Behind the front desk on the bleach white wall hung a framed official presidential picture of Paul Kagame. Sometimes, I got a strange and irrational sensation the picture itself was watching me as I would walk by. I later learned every business in Rwanda was required to have a framed picture of President Kagame on display. I was also told those who were less enthusiastic about his regime would often put the picture back in the manager's office instead of in a public place. In contrast, one of the primary schools run by Ibuka¹ that I visited in Kigali proudly displayed a very large and regal portrait painting of him over the headmaster's desk.

As I stepped outside the hotel, I immediately turned around to face the hotel, which was opposite the street. Hotel Okapi is a relatively small hotel near the city center next to a plot of land that was boarded off by wooden planks because it was designated to be the site of a new housing complex, one of many already under construction all over the city. Behind the wooden planks was a labyrinth maze of mud homes with aluminum foil roofs where the poorest people that I encountered in the city lived. They all resided on the bottom of the hills that slope away from the city.

I made my call and began talking, oblivious to the environment around me. The streets of Kigali were virtually barren after dark every day. One night, I ventured out after dark and walked south of the hotel down the hill. I only encountered two people along the way. Both of them gave me a nervous glance as they swiftly walked past me in the opposite direction. I later learned that this

behavior has been the norm since the Arusha Accords were signed in 1993.

As I spoke on the phone, I casually noticed a small red dot appear on the wooden posts. It wasn't long before it began moving around erratically. It reminded me of those low-power laser pens and key-chains I have seen in the United States (U.S.). Sometimes, young kids use them to drive their teachers crazy in school (but not me of course). Some university professors in the U.S. use them to point things out on overhead projectors during a lecture or presentation. It seemed so grossly out of place that I initially ignored it as an oddity caused by my state of being overly tired. After about ten seconds or so, it disappeared. "See," I thought, "It was just my imagination."

I continued conversing for a few minutes before I finally turned around to face the street. After I finished turning around, I lifted my gaze and stiffened instantly. Directly across the street in front of me was a black Toyota Landcruiser without any license plates. All its windows were tinted black. I knew instantly it was a government vehicle from the Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI). I quickly shifted my eyes to glance from left to right without turning my head to see if there was anybody else around. A quick survey revealed the street was completely vacant. No one came running out of the shadows to ambush me. I was alone in a standoff with the vehicle's occupants.

Then, from the passenger-side window facing me (the left-hand side of the vehicle facing the front of the jeep), the same red laser beam shined out brightly and quickly swept across my eyes, blinding me very briefly. It was in that moment I realized it wasn't my imagination after all. The laser rotated back around and settled squarely on my sternum right where my heart is. It held there steadily in position for several long seconds, and then it blinked out of existence.

Suspecting the situation might escalate dramatically if I tried to run away; I kept talking in a normal tone of voice on the phone and did not alert the caller for the time being. I paced back and forth outside the front of the hotel for a few more minutes while keeping a watchful eye on the vehicle. The laser did not appear again and the vehicle had both its engine and headlights turned off. The vehicle's occupants did not make any moves.

I hung up the phone and walked back into the hotel at a normal pace past the front desk and sat down in the dining room at the back of the hotel for several minutes to try and absorb what had just happened. Meanwhile, nobody working at the front desk, in the restaurant, or the internet caf   said a single word to me the entire time. It was like nothing ever happened. I did not see anyone particularly suspicious in the hotel at the time nor did I hear the vehicle drive off quickly with screeching tires. I slowly went back by the front door and peered outside. The vehicle was gone. It slipped off quietly into the night and I did not see it again that night.

Afterwards, I refused to flee the country. Roughly a week after this incident, I attended the Liberation Day ceremony at Amahoro Stadium on 4 July 2006, where President Kagame came and made his annual speech to the crowd. As was to be expected, the Presidential Guard was stationed at the stadium's entrances to screen everybody before allowing them passage inside. Their weapons reminded me of the CAR-15s some U.S. Special Forces units used to use. Unmistakably mounted on each Presidential Guard's rifle was a laser-sighted scope.

Though I was only in Rwanda for a very short time, I was able to catch a glimpse of daily life under the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) and its leader Paul Kagame. I experienced a portion of the same oppressive environment described by Jean-Christophe Nizeyimana (or "Chris" as he is known to his friends), who lived in this climate of oppression for several years. Chris is a proud umuhutu who is not an active politician, ex-soldier, or former militia member. Instead, he is a self-proclaimed "free thinker" who rejects the RPF's authority and refuses to accept Paul Kagame's genocide dogma and the "official" version of what happened in 1994. He is also what the RPF would call a "Hutu intellectual." That is to say, he is a multilingual Hutu who attended a university overseas, where he earned a master's degree in economics at Moscow University.

Chris is a survivor in every sense of the word. Not only did he survive several RPF massacres carried out in the north of his country in 1993-1994, he also survived the Zairian² refugee camps near Goma and in Mugunga and is an eyewitness to the horrendous crimes committed in the RPF-controlled zone. Though he is originally from the Jenda (Nyabihu District) of the Ruhengeri

Prefecture,³ one of the areas hit hardest by the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA),⁴ he lived in Gisenyi during 1993-1994, where he was a professor at the High Institute of Management and Computing. This town, across the border from Goma, Zaire, was an area where journalists and United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) peacekeepers did not go during the genocide.⁵ Today, he lives exiled from his homeland. He was once called to testify at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) but decided to refuse the summons. Now, for the first time ever, he is going public with his testimony.

Chris has two general themes in this interview. One is a harrowing personal account of the things he experienced and witnessed in Rwanda and Zaire. The other is a unique insight into the broader issues affecting Rwandans and the Diaspora community as a whole. In providing this testimony, Chris aspires to dispel the many widely disseminated lies and disinformation surrounding his country's genocide and the RPF's admonishment of innocent Hutu for their own political gains.

He implores the international community to uphold the standards of law and prosecute all those who have committed grave criminal acts against humanity in Rwanda. It is only through this act that he feels all the traumatized people of Rwanda can truly begin a national reconciliation and healing process. Chris rejects the RPF's one-sided version of events and wants the international community to facilitate an independent, rational, and impartial investigation of the Rwandan genocide.

Lastly, Chris wants this interview to serve as a memorial to all the forgotten victims of the RPF's crimes and dedicates this testimony in their beloved memory, particularly the many members of his family that were lost. Contrary to popular media depictions, it was not just the Tutsi who lost everything in the genocide. Untold thousands of innocent Hutu and Tutsi were victims of the horrendous violence that engulfed Rwanda beginning in 1990.

I would like to dedicate my efforts in this endeavor not only to all the innocent Rwandan, Congolese, Burundian, Ugandan, and Tanzanian victims, but also to Chris for his bravery in coming forward with his story and his humbleness in sharing such trauma openly with me. A special thank you also goes out to A.F. and T.H. Hopefully I will be able to thank you properly someday.

The following interview is a transcript of a four-hour interview recorded in early May 2007. It was supplemented with clarification questions delivered through several subsequent correspondences with Mr. Nizeyimana. Since English is not Mr. Nizeyimana's first language, I changed some verb tenses and the plurality of certain words to make the manuscript more readable. Therefore, the transcript is not verbatim. Mr. Nizeyimana reviewed and approved the final draft to ensure the intended meaning of all his words was intact and the native Kinyarwanda words and names were spelled correctly. It is also important for the reader to understand the RPF changed the names of the prefectures, communes, cells, districts, and streets across most of the country. Chris has deliberately chosen to use the old names so as not to confuse anyone who decides to investigate his claims.

2. The Testimony of Jean-Christophe Nizeyimana.

David Barouski (DB): I'm going to start from the beginning and try to progress chronologically. I'd like to start at the beginning of the Rwandan War (1990-1993). In 1990, when the RPF invaded Rwanda from Uganda, what was it like in your country? Did the Rwandans know the RPF were going to invade?

Jean-Christophe Nizeyimana (JCN): Tutsi first fled the country in 1959 to Uganda mostly, but also to other neighboring countries like Burundi and Zaire. This was during the so-called "Hutu Revolution" after the Tutsi monarchy was removed. It wasn't because they (Tutsi) didn't accept the country. No. The Tutsi left because they didn't accept living under a republic regime where the people who were their slaves during the monarchy (Hutu) are now free to choose their own destiny and hold political office.

So, in 1979, a political party was formed by the Tutsi in exile.⁶ Most of the members were in (Yoweri) Museveni's administration in Uganda because they helped the NRM (National Resistance Movement)⁷ take power in Uganda. They were fighting in Mozambique with Museveni, where cruelties, vandalism, torture, and rape became their daily job.⁸ Those people who made up the RPF leadership: General Fred Rwigema, (Chris) Bunyenyezi, and (Peter) Bayingana...all of them were there and when they came back to Uganda and took power, Museveni appointed them into his administration. That's where Paul Kagame started his career as the Chief of the Ugandan Internal Security and Intelligence Service where he interrogated, tortured, and killed Ugandans who were real or imagined opponents of the NRM.

After Museveni took power, he promised he would help the Tutsis take back Rwanda. That's why, in the late 1980s, they (RPF) started spreading propaganda against President Habyarimana to prepare for war. The RPF created a radio station called Radio Muhabura that they used for propaganda and spreading rumors. They also printed newspapers in Kampala and used RPF infiltrators to sell the papers in Kigali to spread these lies and rumors with the intent of inciting riots against Habyarimana so that later, lynching would take place throughout the country.

The aggression officially started on October 1st, 1990, in the north of my country near the region I was born, where Rwanda has its border with Uganda. The aggression was aided by the same pro-RPF press and radio stations I mentioned that were sponsored by RPF backers, including the U.S., U.K. (United Kingdom) and Belgium. They told the world at the beginning of the war that the RPF was only fifteen kilometers from the Kigali to create panic and confusion. Their propaganda aimed to hammer the international community with lies. The propaganda also spread the idea that it was not an aggression from an outside country, but a civil war.

DB: So it was covering up the illegality of the war, the fact members of the Ugandan army had defected and were invading a sovereign nation.

JCN: Exactly. Exactly. What was important, the RPF had to plan something like this carefully. It had to be labeled a civil war. If it was about foreign countries, a war between foreign aggressors and Rwandans, it was going to be really difficult to say Hutu extremists planned the genocide in advance. That's why, for the RPF, the genocide was planned at the beginning the war. They started by admonishing and prejudicing Hutus through their propaganda. They used all kinds of harsh words to create a rift between Hutu and Tutsi while also dividing the north and south of the country as part of their main strategy.

DB: Are you saying you believe the RPF planned to incite genocide and began to do so back when they invaded in 1990?

JCN: Yes, because the final aggression that started on April 6th was the final attack, but since the beginning, they had planned to seize power and in order to seize power it was not in their interest to join a transitional government because they would eventually lose the elections anyway. Imagine any country, anywhere you go, the United States or any country from Europe, Asia...you can't find a minority ruling the country. The only way for the RPF to do this, they had to find a shortcut that could help them seize and retain power and they have to use force and fear to maintain it. They also had to get support from all the countries that had their own interests in the region.

When the aggression started, the RPF told the world they wanted to bring back democracy to Rwanda. This was a smokescreen to hide their real agenda: minority rule. They got financial aid, advising, and military training from the U.K. and the United States through Uganda.

DB: Do you know who specifically was financing the RPF in the beginning, regardless of if they are foreign nationals or Rwandans?

JCN: U.S. and U.K. multinationals supported the RPF so that they could get access to loot Central Africa's mineral resources, particularly in Zaire. To reach this goal, the RPF had to be connected to the Clinton Administration because they were the most influential in the U.N. There were also organizations that supported the Tutsi refugees based in the United States. Can you imagine the shameful attitude of the U.S. administration's representative Herman Cohen against the Rwandan

nation? He said that President Habyarimana's body, the state symbol of Rwanda, would be dragged through the streets of Kigali and his government would be tried by a special tribunal.⁹

DB: When did he say this?

JCN: Before the 6th of April. It was incredible to hear that. As a U.S. representative, you know, he had to justify what was going to happen within one month, two months, three months, and so on. Also, the aggression was an opportunity for U.S. multinationals linked to the Bush (George Herbert Walker) administration to get access to Congolese and Rwandan mineral resources. For more information, just refer to my website¹⁰ and you will find out who those multinationals were that kept busy by looting in both countries during RPF aggressions in Rwanda and the Congo as well.

To get an idea of the scope of the war, it is very easy to get information and details in Addis Ababa, where you will find people who were hired to fight for the RPF. They will tell you that the U.S. Embassy in Ethiopia recruited foreign fighters for the RPF.¹¹ These soldiers came from Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and South Sudan to fight against the Rwandan Government. Obviously, there is no need to say that the 1990-1994 war was a civil war as it was described before and after the RPF seized power. Even today there are Somalis living in Rwanda with full Rwandan citizenship and still others who were disappointed and left for Europe. That is why, at the end of the day, the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) said Paul Kagame was linked to Al-Qaeda without giving more detailed information.¹² Many of those guys fighting with the RPF were actually terrorists, but that label was not used with those countries at that time because it was before September the eleventh, 2001!

DB: So they fought along with the RPF? What year did this happen?

JCN: Just after the assassination of President Juvenal Habyarimana, on April 6th, 1994, when the final aggression was launched. There were Somalis, Ethiopians, Eritreans, South Sudanese, you know, and also there were soldiers from the Burundian Army under the command of Colonel Bikomagu attacking from the south of Rwanda and Tanzanian soldiers were occupying part of the eastern region of Rwanda.¹³ You remember that the Tanzanians fought with Museveni to get rid of Idi Amin.¹⁴ Yet, the campaign was still to talk about civil war in Rwanda, which was not true.

DB: So Somali fighters were helping the RPF?

JCN: Yes, and as I said before, many of them are still there. Also, some are back in Ethiopia today and if you ask them, they will openly tell you they have been fighting in Rwanda.¹⁵

DB: Let me ask you this. Now, as you probably know, the United States military was in Somalia, in Mogadishu and in October 1993, 18 U.S. military members were killed and the U.S. withdrew. Later, while the genocide was already underway and the Clinton Administration knew about it because of reports from the State Department and satellite photographs,¹⁶ President Clinton created PDD-25 (Presidential Decision Directive),¹⁷ which essentially said the United States could not participate in any peacekeeping operations unless there was a geostrategic interest. When the U.S. failed to reinforce the United Nations (U.N.) peacekeeping mission and eventually reduced its size, PDD-25 was later used as an excuse because the U.S. supposedly had no strategic interests in Rwanda.¹⁸

JCN: That's not true.

DB: You don't believe that at all?

JCN: No, I don't believe that because the people who said that are the same people who supported the RPF through financial aid and military support, the same ones who said they had no interest in the region. When President Clinton decided not to send help to Rwanda...you know you can browse on the Internet or ask people who were linked to the U.S. administration and you will find out that Bill Clinton knew exactly what was happening in Rwanda but decided not to intervene due to a hidden agenda. A U.N. intervention would have stopped the fighting and cut off the RPF's main objective: to seize power and keep it by force.

DB: Do you believe they (Clinton Administration) purposefully decided not to intervene in Rwanda

and not to allow the U.N. to have a meaningful intervention?

JCN: Yes, but not because it was like you explained to me. A peacekeeping force meant an end to hostilities against Tutsi civilians and thus the RPF rebels could not seize power by force because they told the world they were fighting to stop Hutus from killing Tutsis. There is no denying that after they (Americans) refused to intervene, they aided the RPF by using mass media committed to copying and pasting the same chosen images and the same information to support Paul Kagame as he was fighting "to stop the genocide" perpetrated by Hutu militias or "extremists" as the press called them.

DB: When the genocide broke out, there were people in the Security Council who said, you know, we need... General Dallaire was asking for five thousand five hundred troops, I believe. After a number of delays by the U.S., the RPF, and the U.K., it was proposed to create a safe zone in the north of Gikongoro, I believe. It was going to be an operation similar in planning to Operation Turquoise, which was created later by the French. The U.N. was wanted to let all civilians to gather in a neutral zone where the U.N. soldiers would protect them and let the Rwandan Government negotiate a ceasefire with the RPF while the civilians were out of the way and could not be harmed. Now what happened was, first of all, General Kagame told General Dallaire that any U.N. force deployed in Rwanda would be taken as aggressors and therefore would be attacked by the RPF. He told Dallaire that too his face during a meeting, the same meeting he said the RPF would not cooperate with the U.N. if Booh-Booh remained in the country.¹⁹

JCN: That's what Kagame said.

DB: And Rwanda had a seat in the Security Council at the time.

JCN: I remember. But also remember that, at that time, we had the so-called "La Baule" meeting where French President François Mitterrand asked African nations to accept democratic values. This demand also went to President Habyarimana and Rwanda. The opposition parties in Rwanda that formed were used by the RPF to divide the country and they used the opportunity to talk about democracy while the RPF and its allies were busy planning regime change. They had to create an impractical situation so that the parameters to urge the war to resume would be available. In this context, the U.N. Special Representative, the guy you just mentioned...

DB: Jacques-Roger Booh-Booh.

JCN: Yes, Jacques Roger Booh-Booh tried to be neutral in the conflict. He tried to get a ceasefire, but at the same time, General Romeo Dallaire did whatever he could to hide RPF operations during the calm period right after the Arusha Accords were signed. Ongoing killings and awful massacres committed by the RPF in the north were not reported to the international community and no investigation ever started by UNAMIR was finished. The RPF continued its preparations for war in the demilitarized zone whereas strict controls were enforced in the government zone.

DB: If I can back up a bit, you mentioned the propaganda war the RPF started in the late 1980s. Can you provide details on how this worked?

JCN: Well, the radio broadcast into Rwandan territory while the newspapers and magazines were printed in Uganda and sent by infiltrators to Kigali and other parts of the country.²⁰ How this was done was actually very easy. After the Arusha Accords, it was agreed that an RPF division of six hundred soldiers would be stationed in Kigali at the parliament building. Instead of having six hundred, they eventually had—as people will tell you—thousands of RPF infiltrators in Kigali. They were escorted by UNAMIR forces in Kigali and other parts of the country, especially in the Kibuye Province. General Romeo Dallaire told the Rwandan Government that RPF transports from Kigali to Mulindi²¹ and from Mulindi to Kigali were for water provisions! This claim has nothing to do with reality. They were delivering ammunition and supplies. Once the troops and infiltrators were in place, they organized the RPF fronts and supply lines in Kigali, from Mulindi to the CND (Conseil National de Développement) parliament building, and from the CND to different districts of Kigali.

DB: Were they were in civilian clothes?

JCN: Yes and other infiltrators were, of course, hiding inside the Parliament building where nobody else was allowed to go in. There was no control at all; no mechanisms in place to allow both parties equal rights to check each other's positions. What is very dramatic is that only the Rwandan Government was checked for violations of the Accords. We can't forget that the U.N. was supposed to come to Rwanda as a neutral party, a party to help Rwandans reach and enforce a peace agreement. Unfortunately, the U.N. commander, Mr. Dallaire was totally under RPF sway, control and command.

DB: That's quite a claim. How could you say that?

JCN: The Bangladeshi and Ghanaian representatives who were there can always testify to what I say.

DB: The UNAMIR soldiers?

JCN: Yes. They described how RPF military officers always held meetings with Mr. Dallaire.

DB: Were they private meetings?

JCN: They were at UNAMIR headquarters and the RPF used the HQs for their own military means.

DB: What was said at these meetings?

JCN: They shared maps so the RPF would know exactly where Rwandan Government soldiers were positioned in the country. It was to keep track of their movements. Always after such meetings, there were attacks on the Rwandan Government's side of the demilitarized zone by the RPF attachment, the one inside the FAR (Armed Forces of Rwanda) zone. It was very easy for the RPF because there were different units-including UNAMIR-that had to go and check both sides for violations of the Arusha Accords. However, instead of doing their job, they gathered information to give to the RPF.

DB: Let me be clear, you're saying that General Dallaire frequently shared military intelligence with RPF officers?

JCN: Precisely.

DB: Which RPF officers did he meet with?

JCN: There were many different people, but I can mention Charles Kayonga. That one I know for sure because he commanded the RPF Advance Military Division stationed at the Kimihurura Parliament Building. French journalist and investigator Pierre Pean gave more details on this issue.

DB: Why would General Dallaire do such a thing?

JCN: Because it was his commitment. His reasons are known by those who financially and militarily supported the RPF. He was committed to this because he was sent by the French-Canadian Government, the U.K., and the U.S. He had to cover up RPF crimes and do whatever he could to let the RPF seize power in Rwanda. He was committed to help the RPF rebels by all means including the sharing of details about the Rwandan Government policies and the FAR positions. He also allowed RPF ammunition and fighters to infiltrate Kigali.

DB: Did General Dallaire know the genocide was going to happen?

JCN: As part of a pre-arranged agenda, he knew he had to talk about plans for mass killings of Tutsis before the genocide started so that the RPF could seize power in Rwanda. This could also be used by the U.S. and U.K. as an explanation for their support of the RPF because if they tell the public the RPF stopped the genocide, everybody thinks their country gave military aid to the good guys. As I told you before, without such a massive crime committed by the other side in the conflict, the RPF would have been unable to seize power through democratic elections where both ethnic groups would have representatives to supervise the elections. Dallaire himself even said that he cannot

believe a genocide against the Tutsi were planned.²²

Many people remember General Dallaire said he had information a genocide was being planned according to a controversial fax he said he sent to U.N. headquarters. Later, that fax could not be found anywhere. It was a lie when he said he sent a fax to the U.N, he knew there was no fax. The Canadian Government adopted a strategy of protecting him from prosecution when he became a Canadian senator. If you need more information about that, please read the findings of Cameroonian journalist Charles Onana. Let me say again, Romeo Dallaire never sent that fax to the U.N.

DB: That fax, they called it "The Genocide Fax," and a copy of it was later sent over to a reporter at the New Yorker named Phillip Gourevitch. He wrote a number of articles on it and it really launched his career. He got a book deal out of it.

JCN: Yeah, I remember the name. He was the only public person at the time to have the information on the fax!²³

DB: The person who gave the information contained the fax, which talked about Hutu militias' plans to kill Tutsis and Belgian peacekeepers, was an acquaintance of Faustin Twagiramungu,²⁴ correct?

JCN: He was an RPF infiltrator by the name of Jean-Pierre Turatsinze.²⁵

DB: Yea, that's the name I have too. What can you tell me about him?

JCN: The guy was Twagiramungu's informant. Faustin Twagiramungu had no idea the guy was working for the RPF. The informant told him Interahamwe²⁶ are going to kill Tutsi. He said that he was one of the core members of the Interahamwe youth organization of the MRND (National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development),²⁷ so he knew about everything they were planning. He said he knew the ruling government was going to kill Tutsis and I believe, according to Twagiramungu's statement, the reality was that this wasn't true. He was being manipulated by the RPF.

After that, people found out Dallaire did not send that fax. It was actually sent by a military officer from the U.K. The fax that Dallaire did send to the U.N. was never found as I said before. Later, they did find a fax at U.N. headquarters, but the fax said the sender's name was a U.K. military officer and not General Dallaire.

DB: Do you know his name?

JCN: I cannot tell you right now, but I will find it.

DB: So was Mr. Turatsinze an Interahamwe or was he an RPF infiltrator?

JCN: Obviously, he was an infiltrator. He was not working for the MRND. He tried to convince Twagiramungu that he was not just an ordinary militia member, but a well-informed and high-ranking member. Twagiramungu himself said he was manipulated by this man. Why did the informant come forward at a time the country was talking about adopting democratic values and ending the war? Once the fax was sent, nobody was talking about the peace process. It was about the preparations for genocide now. The information in the fax changed the focus of the international community, it disrupted the peace process. Since Mr. Turatsinze was an infiltrator, he was killed by the RPF after he talked to Twagiramungu because he knew too much information and his job was finished. As you yourself know, the RPF kills people who know too much information when they are done using them. This is Paul Kagame's policy.

DB: Sorry, but I have to back up a bit. We were talking about those people from the Horn of Africa.

JCN: The Ethiopians, Somalis, Eritreans...

DB: Yea. How did that relationship come about with the RPF? Is there a cultural or ethnic link to the

Tutsi refugees in Uganda?

JCN: People say all of them, Ethiopians, Eritreans, and Tutsi came from the same Hamitic race. However, pro-RPF philosophers argue that there are no Bantu, Hamitic, or Nilotic races. The point of this philosophy is to say there are no ethnic groups in Rwanda, only Rwandans. The president, err, the Prime Minister of Ethiopia...Meles Zenawi, and the other one, the President of Eritrea...President Afwerki, together with President Kagame were all hailed to the world as the new leaders of Africa by Prime Minister Tony Blair at the U.N. The reality is that these guys were chosen because there was political conflict between western countries and France in Africa at the time. These three were backed by western powers against France. These so-called `leaders`, in reality, are criminals that are ready to serve their backers' interests at any cost. The only way they can stay in power is to have a U.S.-backing, so they do whatever is necessary for the U.S. administration even if their own people die.

DB: Now, I have to back up even farther now, to 1990. In 1990, Paul Kagame was not leading the RPF when they first came into your country. It was General Fred Rwigema. Did Rwandans know Paul Kagame was in the United States and if so, what did they think of that?28 How did that make Rwandans view him? Did it change anything?

JCN: Ok. At the beginning of the war in 1990, Rwandans heard on the radio that the RPF was headed by Rwigema. After about the 4th of October, he was killed and they said that he was replaced by Paul Kagame, who was in the U.S. Kagame came back to Uganda to replace him and supervise all RPF military operations, but ordinary RPF soldiers did not want him to lead.

DB: Why was that?

JCN: Because they knew him as a criminal. Referring to his background as the chief of Uganda's Security and Intelligence Division before the invasion of Rwanda, he was the one who tortured and killed many Ugandans, as I said before.

Also as I said before, when Kagame returned to Uganda and brought the RPF back into Rwanda, the aggression was not shown as a Ugandan invasion, not as an outside aggressor, though these men were all from the Ugandan Army. There is no way you can talk about that as a civil war because those Tutsis fought for the Ugandan Army for many years. What is also difficult is the fact that the ICTR has, up-to-now, never shown any real proof that Habyarimana planned a genocide. I believe the definition of the word "genocide" was negotiated to support the RPF leadership because the U.N. Security Council said that deciding on the definition of genocide was the ICTR's decision even before the trials began. This meant the U.N. said there was a genocide, but it was a genocide that had yet to be defined by the ICTR! In my understanding, the conclusion made on the definition had to be given after the chief judge declared that a genocide was committed in Rwanda. One or two years ago, RPF backers asked the ICTR to decide, without sufficient evidence, that the genocide was committed only by Hutus against Tutsis! I totally disagree.

DB: Do you personally believe there was a genocide?

JCN: I believe, I still believe that the RPF planned for mass killings of civilians and they also planned to kill many Hutu in Rwanda. I believe the RPF planned the genocide one hundred percent. I'm not talking about the Rwandan Tutsi genocide; I'm talking about the Rwandan genocide that includes both Tutsi and Hutu, the real definition of the Rwandan genocide. Tutsis were killed as planned by the RPF leadership and these killings were supposed to be a bridge for Paul Kagame to seize power in Rwanda, a sine qua non condition to seize power in Rwanda.

DB: With respect, let me ask you this. Do you believe or do you deny the Rwandan Armed Forces, militia like the Interahamwe, and members of the gendarmes killed thousands of Tutsi?

JCN: I believe Interahamwe were involved in the killing of many innocent Tutsi and also some Hutu for political reasons. At the same time, like I told you, and everybody knows, the numbers of Tutsi killed does not correspond with the numbers given by the RPF Government. This is Kagame's scenario. After the U.N. gave their figures on the number of people killed, the RPF said they would have their

own investigation and then they gave their own numbers.

First of all, I should tell you that very few estimates were given. The U.N. said from 100,000 to 500,000 total were killed and independent organizations like some NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) said 250,000 were killed. Then the RPF gave its own number and said about 800,000 Tutsis were killed, a number that was widely broadcasted in the U.S., U.K., and Belgian press. At the same time, I want to know... if you know about Rwanda, you know that many people were killed and according to the RPF version, all of them were either Tutsis or politically moderate Hutu. How many Tutsis were living in Kigali according to the 1993 census that was done? The real truth is that Hutu were the majority living in Kigali. At the same time, where are my brothers and sisters!? Where are my friends!? All of them were...they talk about moderates. Why this confusion? Why are they saying all these people were Tutsis or `moderate` Hutus?

What I have just said, I am very confident in. The RPF will never investigate. The RPF will never accept an independent investigation and they want us to take this as an axiom. I know this one hundred percent. If anyone believes what I am saying is not true, let's go and open an investigation! Let's use DNA to find out what really happened to my people, to other people, to my fellow citizens! DNA was used in Bosnia and Croatia. Why not in Rwanda? We all want to know who really got killed. Who killed who? In Kigali and Kigali's neighborhoods, in the northwestern region where I am from, where most of the people died, you had a Hutu majority. Where I am from, in Ruhengeri, there weren't many Tutsi living there and nobody ever talks about how many Hutu were killed there from 1990 up to today. We need to know the whole truth.

Against conventional wisdom, I believe that the victims of this violence were fairly evenly distributed between Hutu and Tutsi, taking into account the total percentage of each ethnic group. According to some estimates, the majority of the victims may even have been Hutu. There is widely accepted demographic data showing that there simply wasn't a large enough number of Tutsi living in Rwanda at the time to account for all the reported deaths.²⁹ Definitive numbers aren't possible because the death tolls vary so much. The world has not yet confronted the true scale of Hutu deaths from 1990 to 1994, and from 1995 up to now beginning with the Kibeho massacre in 1995, and including the 1996, 1997 and 1998 massacres of returning refugees, which totaled about three and a half million deaths.

Footnotes

1 Note: Ibuka is a Kinyarwandan word meaning "remember." It is the name of a government-run organization for Tutsi survivors of the genocide. They were the organization that concluded 800,000 Rwandans were killed in the 1994 genocide.

2 Note: In 1996, President Joseph Mobutu Sese Seko was still in power. Zaire was renamed the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) by Laurent Kabila in 1997 after his rebel army, the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (AFDL-CZ) and the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) overthrew him.

3 Note: A prefecture is equivalent to a province in organization level. The Ruhengeri Prefecture no longer officially exists because Rwanda was condensed into four provinces by the RPF Government: North, South, East, and West.

4 Note: The RPA is the armed wing of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). The RPF refers to the political party. However, for simplicity, the RPF is used to refer to both the political party and the armed wing (RPA) in the majority of this interview.

5 Note: When Kamombe Airport was shut down due to fighting, the only safe way for reporters and film crews to enter Rwanda was to contact the RPF through their political office in Brussels and arrange for an armed escort to Mulindi from Southern Uganda. Journalists already in Kigali took refuge at the H³tel des Mille Collines when the fighting broke out in April and were quickly evacuated by a UNAMIR convoy. From April to July 1994, General Kagame appointed Lieutenant Frank Ndore and several other RPA officers to guide foreigners and journalists through the country. (Keane, Fergal. "Season Of Blood: A Rwandan Journey." New York, New York. Viking Penguin. 1993.

pg. 51-53, 58.) Journalists located in Kigali during the genocide were forced to stay at the Meridian Hotel on the RPA frontline. (Peterson, Scott. "Me Against My Brother: at War in Somalia, Sudan, and Rwanda." New York, New York: Routledge. 2000. pg. 298.)

6 Note: The party was called the Rwandese Alliance for National Unity (RANU). RANU transformed into the RPF in 1987.

7 Note: The NRM is a political party founded by current Ugandan President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni as opposition to (then) President Milton Obote's Ugandan People's Congress (UPC). Mr. Museveni served as President Obote's Minister of Defense before founding the NRM and launching the Luwero Bush War against him in 1980. President Museveni is a Hima from Uganda's Ankole District. The Hima are related to Tutsi.

8 Note: Tutsi refugees in Uganda, including Paul Kagame, fought alongside Yoweri Museveni and the Front for National Salvation (FRONASA) to overthrow Idi Amin in 1979.

9 Note: In 1989, Mr. Cohen also told President Habyarimana the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) did not possess any intelligence that the RPA was planning to attack Rwanda. When the RPA attacked in October 1990, President Habyarimana and President Museveni were attending a U.N. General Assembly debate. Also present at the debate were President George Herbert Walker Bush, (then) Secretary Cohen, and (then) Secretary of State James Baker, a family friend of President Bush. President Bush met with twenty-five African heads of state at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel the day after the debate. ("In the Waiting Room of the Rwandan Genocide Tribunal." Barrie Collins. Spiked Online. 26 May 2006. [http://www.spiked-online.com/index.php?site/article/322/.](http://www.spiked-online.com/index.php?site/article/322/))

10 Note: Chris' website can be found at [http://members.lycos.co.uk/hutusurvivors/.](http://members.lycos.co.uk/hutusurvivors/)

11 Note: From August of 1988 to June of 1991, Robert Houdek was the U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia. Prior to this post, he was the U.S. Ambassador to Uganda from 1985 (shortly before Yoweri Museveni took power) until 1988. He also served as the U.S. Ambassador to Eritrea from 1993 to 1997. Mr. Houdek also reportedly used a United States Agency for International Development (USAID) mission as cover and gathered intelligence on the movement of Hutu refugees in Congo-Zaire. (Madsen, Wayne. "Genocide and Covert Operations in Africa: 1993-1999." Lewiston, New York: The Edwin Mellen Press. 1999. pg. 196) Mr. Marc Baas took Ambassador Houdek's position from June 1991 to 08 July 1994; just days after the RPF captured Kigali. Ambassador Irvin Hicks took his place until June 1996.

12 "Kagame, Officials Alleged to Have Al-Qaeda Ties," Periscope Daily Defense News Capsules. 11 September 2002.

13 Note: The Tanzanian People's Defense Force (TPDF) still has ties with the Rwandan military. In September 2006, Forty-five members of the Staff and Command College in Monduli, Tanzania (led by General F.N. Ulomi) visited Rwanda for seven days and met with General James Kabarebe (Chief of Staff), General Richard Rutatina (Chief of Training, Operations, and Planning) and General Kagame. They signed an agreement to allow Rwandan soldiers to attend the Monduli school. ("Tz Military Team Visits," Staff Reporter. The New Times. 5 September 2006; "RDF for Training in Tz," Edwin Musoni. The New Times. 11 September 2006.)

14 Note: Please refer to footnote #8.

15 Note: General Saleh acted as a military advisor to the RPA from the very beginning of the Rwandan War. In 1990, he was stationed in Mbarara, Southwestern Uganda, but he relocated to the Byumba Prefecture in North-central Rwanda after the RPA took control of the territory. (Private Correspondence. 2006.) When the RPA set up headquarters in Mulindi, General Saleh returned to Southern Uganda because he did not want to be seen by the press or the U.N. during peace talks and military meetings held there. ("The Prosecutor v. Augustin Ndindilyimana, François-Xavier Nzuwonemeye, Innocent Sagahutu, Augustin Bizimungu." ICTR Case Number 00-56-T. Cross-Examination of General Roméo Dallaire by Ronnie MacDonald. 5 December 2006. Exhibit Number D. 158 (Bizimungu) 63. "Coded Cable from General Asrato to General Dallaire." 15 April 1994.)

When the RPA launched its infamous offensive in the Ruhengeri and Byumba prefectures in February 1993, three battalions of the NRA were at General Kagame's side. ("In the Waiting Room of the Rwandan Genocide Tribunal." Barrie Collins. Spiked Online. 26 May 2006. [http://www.spiked-online.com/index.php?site/article/322/.](http://www.spiked-online.com/index.php?site/article/322/))

General Saleh remained in Uganda while the RPA made its final push into Kigali, but (then) Lieutenant Colonel Walter Ochora, a former Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) fighter (and later the Local Council [LC]-5 of the Gulu District), commanded a unit of former UNLA soldiers that fought in the final battle for Kigali alongside the RPA. (Private Correspondence. 2006.)

16 Ferroggiaro, William. "The U.S. and the Genocide in Rwanda 1994: Information, Intelligence, and the U.S. Response." The National Security Archive. 24 March 2004. <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB53/index.html>.

17 Note: See <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/pdd25.htm> for the full text.

18 Power, Samantha. "Bystanders to Genocide." The Atlantic Monthly. September 2001.

19 "Rwandan Rebels 'Will Treat UN Troops as Foes'," The Herald. 18 May 1994; Dallaire, General Roméo, Beardsley, Major Brent. "Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda." New York, New York: Carrol & Graf Publishers (Avalon Publishing Group). 1st American Edition. pg. 342-343.

20 Note: Pro-RPF newspapers and magazines included L'Ere de Liberte, Le Messenger, Umuturaga, Ijambo, Kanguka, Rwanda Rushya, Congo Nil, Impuruza, Isibo, Inkotanyi, Intego, Avante Garde, Le Patriote, Huguka, Umulinzi, and Le Flambeau.

21 Note: Mulindi was an old colonial tea plantation located 60 kilometers north of Kigali in the former Byumba Prefecture. It became the RPA's headquarters.

22 Philpot, Robin. "Rwanda 1994: Colonialism Dies Hard." Robin Philpot, The Taylor Report (Phil Taylor). 2004. E-Book. [http://www.taylor-report.com/Rwanda_1994/.](http://www.taylor-report.com/Rwanda_1994/)

Note: U.S. Ambassador to Rwanda Robert Flaten (December 1990-November 1993) testified at the ICTR that he also did not believe the genocide was planned. ("Former U.S. Ambassador Testifies in Genocide Trial," Hironnelle News Agency. 30 June 2005.)

23 Note: Mr. Gourevitch received the fax from Mr. Jamie Rubin, who was U.N. Ambassador Madeline Albright's press attaché at the time. At the same time, Mr. Gourevitch was also dating Mr. Rubin's sister. ("An Open Letter to Phillip Gourevitch," Robin Philpot. Counterpunch. 7 June 2003. <http://www.counterpunch.org/philpot06072003.html>.) Interestingly, Lieutenant Colonel Tony Marley, the U.S. State Department's Political Advisor from 1992-1995, said he questioned the accuracy of the information contained in the fax because the State Department had reportedly received unfulfilled warnings of an impending genocide since 1992. ("The Triumph of Evil - Interview: Tony Marley." Frontline. Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). WGBH Educational Foundation, Boston: U.S.A. 30 January 2004.) Mr. Marley was also an advisor to Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense James L. Woods in the Defense Department's African Affairs office.

24 Note: Mr. Twagiramungu was the Hutu Prime Minister of Rwanda's Transitional Government. He resigned in 1995 and fled to Belgium. He ran in Rwanda's 2003 presidential elections as an independent. In February 2003, he visited the U.S. State Department and met with Dr. Cindy Courville, who-at the time-ran the Central and Southern Africa Desk at the National Security Council. She reportedly did not seem enthused about his candidacy. (Madsen, Wayne. "Jaded Tasks: Brass Plates, Black Ops, & Big Oil." Wãlterville, Oregon: Trineday. 2006. pg. 4.)

25 Note: Mr. Nizeyimana's statement is supported by ICTR testimony. Mr. Turatsinze's wife submitted an affidavit testifying he joined the RPF after he lived with a family in Tanzania who supported the RPF in February 1994. ("The Prosecutor v. Augustin Ndindilyimana, François-Xavier Nzuwonemeye, Innocent Sagahutu, Augustin Bizimungu." ICTR Case Number 00-56-T. Cross-

Examination of General Roméo Dallaire by Mr. Fabien Segatwa. 22 November 2006. KO 272527, AKO 272533. Written Statement from the wife of Jean-Pierre Abubacarr Turatsinze.)

26 Note: This is an ikinyarwanda word meaning, "those who work together." Expert witnesses at the ICTR have offered differing definitions of what actually constituted the Interahamwe militia. ("Interahamwe": Experts Give Different Interpretations," Hirondelle News Agency. 11 July 2005.) The Interahamwe militia began as a youth group of (then) Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana's National Revolutionary Movement for Development (MRND) political party. It was founded in early 1992 by its president, Jerry Robert Kajuga, a Tutsi from Kibungo.

27 Note: The MRND(D) was the political party of President Habyarimana. Founded in 1975, it was the sole political party in the country and every Rwandan is given membership at birth. The old Rwandan Constitution also had a clause only MRND party members could run for president.

28 Note: (then) Major Paul Kagame spent three months training at the U.S. General Staff and Command College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas under Uganda's International Military Education and Training (IMET) program. IMET was coordinated by the U.S. Embassy in Kampala's Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) Robert Gribbin. ("Politics, War, and Genocide in Rwanda 10 Years Later." Lieutenant Colonel Thomas P. Odom (Retired). Small Wars Journal. Volume 6. October 2006.) Mr. Gribbin later became the U.S. Ambassador to Rwanda from 1996-1998. President Kagame said he studied organization, battle tactics, strategy, human resources, psychological operations (PSYOPS), information gathering, psychology, and troop information during his brief time in the U.S. (Gowing, Nik. "New Challenges and Problems for Information Management in Complex Emergencies: Ominous Lessons From the Great Lakes and Eastern Zaire in Late 1996 and Early 1997." Paper presented at the conference "Dispatches from Disaster Zones: The Reporting of Humanitarian Emergencies." London, Great Britain. 27-28 May 1998. pg. 15-16.) He was trained by (then) Major Anthony Marley. (Waugh, Colin M. "Paul Kagame and Rwanda: Power, Genocide, and the Rwanda Patriotic Front." Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company Incorporated. 2004. pg. 222). Dr. Stephen Metz, a former staff member at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College who currently resides at the U.S. Army War College, said he was the one who instructed Major Kagame, not Major Marley. (Correspondence with Dr. Stephen Metz. 13 March 2007.)

29 Note: Mr. Niziyimana is referring to the following study: "Rwanda 1994: More than Genocide." Christian Davenport, Allan Stam. University of Maryland. <http://www.umd.edu/features/rwanda.html>; <http://www.geodynamics.com>.

[Skip to [pt. 2](#) / [pt. 3](#) / [pt. 4](#)]

From: Z Net - The Spirit Of Resistance Lives

URL: <http://www.zcommunications.org/surviving-the-genocide-an-interview-with-jean-christophe-nizeyimana-by-jean-christophe-nizeyimana-1-2-3>