

[ 2 STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL ]

UN ARCHIVES

SERIES S-1062

BOX 158

FILE 2

ACC. 1998/0283

UN CONFIDENTIALMEMORANDUM

TO: FHQ/DFC/COS/G3/G2

MILOBS HQ/SSO OPS

SECTOR 3A/COL HASNAIN *← IMMEDIATE*

FROM: SECTOR 3 HQ

SUBJECT: SHOOTING INCIDENT AT GITARAMA PRISON 3 APR 95

DATE: 5 APR 95

1. THE DELAY IN SUBMITTING THIS REPORT IS REGRETTEED BUT WAS UNAVOIDABLE DUE TO THE MASS OF OBSCURING RUMOUR THAT HAD TO BE WADED THROUGH BEFORE A CONGENT REPORT COULD BE WRITTEN. A JOINT MILOB/CIVPOL/HR INVESTIGATION OF THE GITARAMA PRISON INCIDENT WAS CONDUCTED WITH THE FOLLOWING PRELIMINARY RESULTS:

A. AT ABOUT 2100 HRS ON 2 APR 95, AN UNKNOWN NUMBER OF PRISONERS ATTEMPTED TO ESCAPE FROM GITARAMA PRISON. SHOTS WRE FIRED AND THE ATTEMPT WAS FOILED. IT WAS CONFIRMED BY ALL POSSIBLE SOURCES THAT AT MOST ONE PRISONER WAS KILLED BY RIFLE FIRE AND THAT THIS PERSON WAS KILLED WHILE TRYING TO SCALE DOWN A ROPE BLANKET FROM THE PRISON ROOF. THERE IS SOME DESCREPANCY OVER THE EXACT TIME THAT THIS HAPPENED WITH SOME SOURCES CLAIMING THAT IT HAPPENED AT MIDNIGHT IN A SEPARATE ATTEMPT AND OTHERS CLAIMING THAT IT HAPPENED LATER,

B. IT WAS CONFIRMED BY VISUAL OBSERVATION AND INTERVIEW OF PRISON MEDICAL AUTHORITIES THAT AT LEAST FOUR PERSONS SUFFERED GUNSHOT WOUNDS WHILE TRYING TO SCALE THE WALLS ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE PRISON. SIX OTHERS SUSTAINED NON-GUNSHOT INJURIES. THIS SEEMS TO HAVE TAKEN PLACE BETWEEN 0525 AND 0545 3 APR. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE DEATH MENTIONED ABOVE OCCURRED AT THIS TIME; AND,

C. IT WAS CONFIRMED THAT THE MANY SHOTS FIRED WERE PRIMARILY WARNING SHOTS TO DISCOURAGE ANY MORE ESCAPEES.

2. WHAT CANNOT BE CONFIRMED IS THE SPECIFIC REASON FOR THE INCIDENT. THE PRISONERS CLAIMED THAT THE GUARDS FIRED SEVERAL BURST OF AUTOMATIC FIRE AT AROUND 2000HRS ON 2 APR WITHOUT APPARENT CAUSE. THIS FUELED THEIR FEAR THAT THEY WOULD BE MASSACRED BY THEIR GUARDS AND MADE MANY OF THEM DESPERATE TO ESCAPE. THEY CLAIM THAT THEY TRIED TO ESCAPE ONLY AFTER HEARING SHOTS, WHICH THEY CLAIM WERE FIRED DELIBERATELY TO PANIC THEM.

3. THE RPA VERSION CORRESPONDS TO THE PRISONERS VERSION EXCEPT FOR THE TIMES AT WHICH SHOTS WERE FIRED. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE PRISON IS GUARDED BY RPA GUARDS AND THAT THE LOCAL BDE CDR HAS AN ITIMATE KNOWLEDGE OF THE SECURITY CONCERNS OF THE PRISON AUTHORITIES. HE IS ALSO ON RECORD AS STATING THAT ALL PRISONERS ARE GUILTY OF GENOCIDE AND DESERVE NO PITY. THE RPA MAINTAIN THAT NO SHOTS WERE FIRED UNTIL THE ESCAPE ATTEMPT BEGAN. THE RPA CLAIM THAT THEY HAVE BEEN ANTICIPATING A MASS ESCAPE ATTEMPT EVER SINCE

NOTICING THAT THE PRISONERS HAD REMOVED THE MORTAR FROM MOST OF THE WALLS. THEY BELIEVE THAT THE PRISONERS COULD JUST PUSH THE WALLS DOWN AND STAMPEDE OUT. THEY ADMIT TO FIRING A NUMBER OF ROUNDS AT 2100HRS 2 APR AND TO FIRING NEARLY 100 RDS BETWEEN 0500 AND 0545 ON 3 APR. THEY CLAIM THAT THE DEATH OCCURRED AT MIDNIGHT AND THAT NO ONE WAS INJURED IN THE EARLY MORNING SHOOTING.

4. AS IS USUAL IN THESE INCIDENTS, THE TRUTH IS PROBABLY SOMEWHERE IN BETWEEN THE TWO VERSIONS. ON THE ONE HAND, THE RPA MADE EXCELLENT USE OF THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE PSYCHE OF THEIR OPPONENTS DURING THE LAST WAR AND IT WOULD BE QUITE IN CHARACTER FOR THEM TO PLAY ON THE FEARS OF THE PRISONERS IN A CALCULATED WAY. ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE WERE MANY ROUNDS FIRED AND RELATIVELY FEW PEOPLE HIT. HAD THE RPA DELIBERATELY ATTEMPTED TO PANIC THEIR PRISONERS INTO A DESPERATE ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE, IT IS LIKELY THAT THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN MANY MORE DEAD AND WOUNDED THAN THERE ACTUALLY WERE.

5. WHATEVER THE TRUTH OF THE EVENTS, IT IS EVIDENT THAT A DYNAMIC OF FEAR HAS BEGUN TO REINFORCE THE ALREADY EXISTING FEARS OF BOTH PARTIES. EACH ACTION BY ONE SIDE REINFORCES THE FEARS OF THE OTHER. THE PROVERB THAT WHEN THE WOLF SMILES, THE SHEEP SEE HIS TEETH DESCRIBES WHAT APPEARS TO BE HAPPENING. IN THIS CASE, THE CONDITIONS INSIDE THE WALLS ARE SO BAD THAT LEAST DISTURBANCE MAY HAVE AN EXAGGERATED EFFECT. THE NORMAL DEATH RATE HAS RECENTLY INCREASED MARKEDLY AND THIS MAY BE ADDING TO THE DESPERATION OF THE PRISONERS. LACKING A SYSTEM OF JUSTICE THAT OFFERS THEM SOME HOPE OF FAIR TREATMENT, THEY FACE EITHER LINGERING DEATH AS A RESULT OF THE LIVING CONDITIONS OR IMMEDIATE DEATH AT THE HANDS OF THEIR GUARDS. LACKING HOPE, THEY HAVE LITTLE TO GAIN FROM COOPERATION.

6. THE PRISON AUTHORITIES AND THE HUMAN RIGHTS TEAM ARE COOPERATING IN AN ATTEMPT TO REDUCE THE TENSION BY ADDRESSING THE PRISONERS AND EXPLAINING THAT THERE IS LITTLE TO BE GAINED FROM TRYING TO ESCAPE. IN FACT, MILOBS HAVE OBSERVED A PLATOON SIZED AMBUSH SET UP OUTSIDE OF THE PRISON WALLS. IT IS EXPECTED THAT THE CONSEQUENCE OF A MASS ESCAPE ATTEMPT WOULD BE LARGE NUMBERS OF DEATHS AT THE HANDS OF THIS PLATOON.

*for* *PC Hasnain*  
S.A. HASNAIN  
COL  
SECTOR CDR

*TOR = 05 11 45*

*TOC = 05 11 50*

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Fav: 083911  
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UNITED NATIONS  
ASSISTANCE MISSION FOR RWANDA

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MISSION POUR L'ASSISTANCE AU RWANDA

UNAMIR - MINUAR

TO: MILOB GP HQ

FILE REF : 4B/OPS/95

FROM: SECTOR 4B

DATE : 11 MAR 95

SUBJECT: ALLEGED ARREST OF BOUGEMESTRE OF GISOVU

REFERENCE: INVESTIGATION REPORTS OF ALLEGED ARRESTS  
OF PREFECTS AND BOUGEMESTRES dated 07 Mar 95

1. Kindly be informed that to the knowledge of this Sector the Bougemestre of GISOVU COMMUNE has not been arrested as mentioned in the reference letter.

2. The only prominent figure in Sector 4B arrested was the Assistant Bougemestre of MABANZA COMMUNE Mr SEMANZA Celestine. This arrest took place on the 26 Jan 95.

3. Best regards.

*Aklay C...*  
A KRISHNA  
MAJOR  
ACT SECT CDR  
SECT 4B - KIBUYE