

Rwanda Minister Snubbed At Un Over Massacre.

James Bone

The Times, May 13, 1994

From James Bone in New York and Catherine Bond in Kigali.

BRITAIN is refusing to meet a senior official from the Hutu-dominated government in Rwanda because of its role in a genocidal campaign against the Tutsi minority.

Jerome Bicomupaka, the Foreign Minister in the government formed after the death of President Habyarimana in a plane crash on April 6, requested a meeting this week in New York with Sir David Hannay, the British Ambassador at the United Nations. Under pressure from human rights groups, Sir David refused, even though he regularly deals with the Rwandan UN Ambassador.

Mr Bicomupaka is being accompanied by Jean-Bosco Barayagwiza, a leading Hutu hardliner who is accused of helping to incite the killing of more than 200,000 people. Mr Barayagwiza is leader of Coalition for the Defence

of the Republic, a political party that controls the militia thought to be responsible for many of the killings.

The Security Council continued yesterday to discuss the formation of a peacekeeping force to deliver aid and establish "secure areas" in Rwanda. Boutros Boutros Ghali, the UN Secretary-General, has called for 5,500 peacekeepers to be based in Kigali, and has obtained troops commitments from Ghana, Nigeria, and Tanzania.

Jose Ayala Lasso, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, ended a two-day visit to Rwanda yesterday after meeting military leaders on both sides of the civil war. Senor Ayala Lasso said he had received pledges from government and rebel representatives that trapped refugees would be allowed to move. "I don't want to see another innocent civilian's life lost," he said.