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	INR-00	IO-16	LAB-01	L-01	ADS-00	NEA-01	NSAE-00
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O 181633Z MAY 94
 FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4929
 INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY KINSHASA PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY KAMPALA PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
 AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
 AMEMBASSY CAIRO
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 USMISSION GENEVA
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 PARIS 13749

DEPARTMENT ALSO FOR HA A/S SHATTUCK

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
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PAGE 02 PARIS 13749 01 OF 03 181655Z
 TAGS: PREL, PGOV, PREF, PHUM, RW, BY, FR
 SUBJECT: BUILDING A CASE AGAINST FRENCH POLICY IN
 - RWANDA: "LIBERATION" ON THE OFFENSIVE

REF: PARIS 13634

1. PARAGRAPHS CLASSIFIED AS MARKED.

SUMMARY AND COMMENT

2. (C) THE MAY 18 EDITION OF "LIBERATION" RAN A LENGTHY, ACIDLY CRITICAL ARTICLE ON FRENCH POLICY IN RWANDA. THE AUTHOR CLEARLY HAD ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AND LEAKS FROM AT LEAST ONE SOURCE THOROUGHLY FAMILIAR WITH FRENCH ACTIVITY SINCE THE DEATH OF PRESIDENT HABYARIMANA. THIS ARTICLE REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN MEDIA COVERAGE AFTER ACCOLADES TO THE GOVERNMENT FOR THE EVACUATION OF FRENCH NATIONALS FROM RWANDA. IT FOLLOWS ON THE WELL PUBLICIZED ATTACK BY MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES ON MONDAY (REFTEL).

3. (C) ALTHOUGH MUCH OF THE MATERIAL COVERED IN THE ARTICLE (ARMS SALES, MILITARY ADVISORS, AN UNSUCCESSFUL MILITARY INTERVENTION IN 1993-94, IGNORING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS, FRICTION WITH BELGIUM, MOBUTU'S ROLE), HAS BEEN COMMON KNOWLEDGE AMONG GOF AFRICANISTS AND OUTSIDE SPECIALISTS, IT HAS NOT BEEN WIDELY KNOWN AMONG THE GENERAL PUBLIC. WHILE THESE SORTS OF EXPOSES CREATE SHORT-TERM SCANDALS IN FRANCE, THEY RARELY CAN FORCE A
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REEXAMINATION OF GOF POLICY SINCE THERE IS NO SERIOUS POLICY DEBATE IN PARLIAMENT NOR A WELL-ORGANIZED AFRICAN AFFAIRS LOBBY. THAT SAID, WE SHOULD NOTE THAT DURING A ROUND OF CALLS ON VARIOUS RWANDA ISSUES, THE FIRST TOPIC RAISED BY OUR INTERLOCUTORS AT THE QUAI AND DEFENSE WAS THE "LIBERATION" ARTICLE -- WITH THE OBSERVATION THAT IT CUT VERY CLOSE TO THE BONE. END SUMMARY AND COMMENT.

A LEAKED MEMO

4. (U) "LIBERATION" ON MAY 18 RAN 5 PAGES ON EVENTS IN RWANDA; THE KEY ARTICLE WAS ENTITLED "FRANCE: TRAPPED BY ITS ACCORDS." THE AUTHOR QUOTES FROM A FOREIGN MINISTRY MEMO DATED APRIL 29 STATING "SOME MEDIA (SOURCES) AND ASSOCIATIONS (IN FRANCE) ARE CASTING BLAME ON FRANCE FOR ITS ROLE IN RWANDA.... IF YOU ARE ASKED TO COMMENT, YOU SHOULD RESPOND IN THE FOLLOWING LANGUAGE: FRANCE, SINCE THE START OF THE CRISIS, HAS MADE AN EFFORT TO AVOID DESTABILIZATION OF (RWANDA). OUR GOAL HAS BEEN TO PREVENT A MILITARY CONFRONTATION AND TO PRESS FOR A POLITICAL SOLUTION."

5. (U) "LIBERATION" CONCLUDES THAT DESPITE THE NEUTRAL SOUNDING PHRASES IN THE QUAI DOCUMENT, THE GOF POLICY HAS BEEN TO SUPPORT THE RWANDA GOVERNMENT AND TO PREVENT THE RPF FROM ACHIEVING A MILITARY VICTORY. A

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PAGE 04 PARIS 13749 01 OF 03 181655Z BELGIAN DIPLOMAT (REPORTEDLY REFLECTING COMMONLY HELD VIEWS IN BRUSSELS) IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT "FRANCE HAS ALWAYS SUPPORTED HABYARIMANA AND FURNISHED HIM ARMS AND MILITARY EXPERTS, (BUT) TODAY (FRANCE) WANTS TO PLAY THE ROLE OF MODERATOR... AND IS TRYING TO GET THE RPF TO THE SCAFFOLD." THE AUTHOR ADDS THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF BELGIUM HOLDS PARIS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE RWANDAN CRISIS.

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THE BLACK BOX

6. (U) THE ARTICLE CONTINUES WITH A QUOTE FROM RPF MEMBER JACQUES BIHOZAGARA IN BRUSSELS ASKING FOR THE GOF TO MAKE PUBLIC THE RESULTS OF THE EXAMINATION IN PARIS OF THE "BLACK BOX" FROM PRESIDENT HABYARIMANA'S PLANE. (NOTE: THE GOF HAS CONSISTENTLY DENIED TO US THAT IT HAS CARRIED OUT ANY FORENSIC OR OTHER EXAMINATION OF THE DOWNED PLANE. BIHOZAGARA DOES NOT OFFER ANY SUPPORTING COMMENT FOR THIS REQUEST. WE WILL FOLLOW-UP WITH OUR CONTACTS. END NOTE.)

KEEPING YOUR WORD

7. (U) IN RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS THAT FRENCH MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO THE GOR IS CONTINUING, A FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCE IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT "IF WE FAILED TO KEEP OUR WORD (CONCERNING THE 1975 FRANCO-RWANDAN DEFENSE TREATY), OUR CREDIBILITY VIS-A-VIS OTHER

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AFRICAN STATES WOULD BE SERIOUSLY HARMED AND WE MIGHT SEE THESE STATES TURN TOWARD OTHER SOLUTIONS." DEFENSE MINISTRY PERSONNEL ARE QUOTED AS RESPONDING THAT AID GIVEN BY FRANCE TO THE GOR WAS INTENDED TO "PREVENT RWANDA FROM FALLING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF UGANDA, OF WHICH THE RPF IS A SATELLITE." (COMMENT: THE WORDING

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OF THE ARTICLE IS AMBIGUOUS ABOUT WHETHER MILITARY AID IS STILL BEING GIVEN OR HAS ENDED. END COMMENT.)

A FRENCH BANK AND EGYPTIAN ARMS

8. (U) THE ARTICLE THEN REVIEWS GOF AID TO RWANDA, INCLUDING THE WELL-REPORTED DIRECT INVOLVEMENT OF FRENCH PERSONNEL IN COMBAT SITUATIONS IN 1992 AGAINST THE RPF. IT ALSO REFERS TO AN "AFRICA WATCH" REPORT FROM EARLIER THIS YEAR WHICH CRITICIZED "CREDIT LYONNAIS" BANK (WHICH IS PARTIALLY OWNED BY THE GOF AND UNDER TUTELAGE OF THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE), FOR PROVIDING USD 6 MILLION TO ENABLE THE GOR TO PURCHASE ARMS IN EGYPT IN 1992. THE AUTHOR DERIDES THE "FRANCOPHONE" BASIS OF GOF POLICY, NOTING THAT PERHAPS 10 PERCENT OF THE RWANDAN POPULATION SPEAKS FRENCH. FOREIGN MINISTER JUPPE IS ALSO CRITICIZED FOR WAITING UNTIL MAY 16 BEFORE OPENLY MAKING A CRITICAL REFERENCE TO THE GENOCIDE CARRIED OUT IN GOR-HELD AREAS.

FRENCH INFLUENCE WITH THE GOR

9. (U) THE AUTHOR NOTES THAT ELYSEE COUNSELOR BRUNO DELAYE SUCCESSFULLY INTERVENED TWO WEEKS AGO WITH THE RWANDA MILITARY LEADERS TO PREVENT A MASSACRE OF TUTSI POPULATION TRAPPED AT THE MILLE COLLINES HOTEL. A QUAI SOURCE (WHO IS PERSONALLY DISGUSTED BY FRENCH POLICY AND THE TRADITION OF NOT SPEAKING OUT), IS QUOTED SAYING THAT "WHILE IT MAY HAVE BEEN A ONE-TIME EFFORT,

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IT SHOWS THE DEGREE TO WHICH FRANCE STILL HAS INFLUENCE

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MOBUTU, FRONT AND CENTER

10. (U) THE FINAL PARAGRAPH OF THE ARTICLE CONCLUDES THAT THE FRENCH HAVE BEEN WORKING CLOSELY WITH ZAIRIAN

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PRESIDENT MOBUTU (VIA UNOFFICIAL EMISSARY MICHEL
AURILLAC), TO ENCOURAGE HIM TO PLAY A GREATER ROLE IN
MEDIATING THE CONFLICT. THE ARTICLE NOTES THAT "THE
SMALL CITY OF GOMA IN EASTERN ZAIRE HAS NEVER KNOWN
SUCH ACTIVITY, INCLUDING A RECENT DELIVERY OF 40 TONS
OF AMMUNITION WHICH CAME FROM BULGARIA AND WAS UNLOADED
ON MAY FIRST AND SECOND BY RWANDA ARMY TROOPS, WITH THE
COMPLICITY OF ZAIRIAN ARMY OFFICIALS -- DESPITE THE
OPPOSITION OF CIVILIAN AUTHORITIES FROM KIVU WHO FEAR
AN EXTENSION OF THE CONFLICT INTO ZAIRE."

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