Current Class: CONFIDENTIAL

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Document Number: 1994BUJUMB01026

Page: 1 Channel: n/a

PAGE 01 BUJUMB 01026 01 OF 04 260638Z ACTION AF-01

AID-01 AMAD-01 A-01 CIAE-00 C-01 EB-01 EUR-01 OIGO-01 HA-09 INFO LOG-00 OASY-00 DODE-00 DS-00 H-01 INM-02 TEDE-00 INR-00 IO-16 L-01 ADS-00 M - 00NEA-01 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PC-01 PM-01 PRS-01 P-01 RP-10 SNP-00 RNEA-00 SP-00 TRSE-00 T-00 SR-00 STR-01 USIE-00 RPE-01 PMB-00 /058W

------34B4DB 260639Z /38

O 260632Z MAR 94

FM AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3177

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ACCRA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO IMMEDIATE

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AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

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AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TUNIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE IMMEDIATE

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BUJUMB 01026 01 OF 04 260638Z USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 BUJUMBURA 01026

DEPT FOR DAS BRYNN, AF/C, DSS/OP, DS/OP/AF
DEPT PLEASE PASS TO PC AND AID FOR AFR
ACCRA FOR A/S MOOSE
LONDON FOR MCKINLEY
NAIROBI FOR CO CO. "F"
PARIS FOR PERLOW
YAOUNDE FOR DAO
EUCOM FOR J3

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: AMGT, PGOV, PREF, PHUM, PINR, BY

SUBJECT: DAS BUSHNELL MEETS WITH PRESIDENT CYPRIEN

Current Class: CONFIDENTIAL

Page: 1

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE REVIEW AUTHORITY: HARRY R. MELONE DATE/CASE ID: 27 APR 2000 199501642

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Current Class: CONFIDENTIAL

Current Handling: n/a

Document Number: 1994BUJUMB01026 Channel: n/a

#### NTARYAMIRA

REF: BUJUMBURA 1008

1. SUMMARY. DURING A COURTESY CALL ON PRESIDENT NTARYAMIRA ON MARCH 24, DAS BUSHNELL AND AF/C DIRECTOR RENDER STRESSED US CONCERN OVER THE CONTINUING VIOLENCE IN BURUNDI AND UNDERSCORED ITS SUPPORT FOR THE GRB'S EFFORTS TO IMPLEMENT DEMOCRATIC LACK OF CONTROL OVER THE MILITARY AND HIS NEED TO ASSERT LEADERSHIP TO RESTORE ORDER AND BEGIN THE RECONCILIATION PROCESS. BUSHNELL EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE EFFECTIVE USE OF MEDIA TO INFORM, REASSURE AND MOTIVATE THE POPULATIASDRK) O&ZCQ 2. DAS PRUDENCE BUSHNELL AND AF/C DIRECTOR ARLENE CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BUJUMB 01026 01 OF 04 260638Z
RENDER ACCOMPANIED BY CHARGE D'AFFAIRES LEONARD LANGE
MET WITH PRESIDENT CYPRIEN NTARYAMIRA AT THE
PRESIDENTIAL OFFICE MARCH 24. DAS BUSHNELL
COMPLIMENTED THE PRESIDENT'S TELEVISION SPEECH OF THE
PREVIOUS NIGHT, PARTICULARLY CITING HIS STATEMENT
THAT CITIZENS HAVE RESPONSIBILITIES IN TIME OF CRISIS.

# CONTROL OF THE MILITARY?

- 3. FOREGOING THE USUAL OPENING COURTESIES, PRESIDENT NTARYAMIRA LAUNCHED INTO AN ASSESSMENT OF BURUNDI'S IMMEDIATE PROBLEM OF "INSECURITY" IN BUJUMBURA. ACCORDING TO THE PRESIDENT, MILITARY TROOPS ARE IGNORING ORDERS TO WITHDRAW FROM CERTAIN QUARTIERS AND REMAIN INSTEAD TO FIRE UPON CITIZENS. SOME OF THOSE CITIZENS ARE ARMED AND ARE RETURNING FIRE AND/OR THREATENING OTHER CIVILIANS. VICTIMS INCLUDE WOMEN AND CHILDREN. HE STATED THAT THE ARMY HAD DIRECTLY OPPOSED ITS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, THAT THE POPULATION HAD LOST ALL CONFIDENCE IN THE ARMY'S INTENTION OR ABILITY TO DEFEND THEM, AND THAT THE SITUATION RISKED INFLAMING THE ENTIRE SUB-REGION IF NOT CONTAINED. HE EXPRESSED HIS CONVICTION THAT "THE LOGIC OF WAR HAS OVERTAKEN THE DESIRE FOR PEACE."
- 4. DAS BUSHNELL RESPONDED THAT THE US IS EXCEEDINGLY CONCERNED BY THE CURRENT SITUATION, THAT WE SUPPORT THE GRB AND ITS EFFORTS TO BRING ABOUT PEACE AND DEMOCRACY, AND THAT WE CONSIDER IT THE RESPONSIBILITY

Current Class: CONFIDENTIAL

Current Class: CONFIDENTIAL

Current Handling: n/a

Document Number: 1994BUJUMB01026

Channel: n/a

Page: 3

#### CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 BUJUMB 01026 01 OF 04 260638Z
OF THE LEADERS OF BURUNDI TO BEGIN THE RECONCILIATION
PROCESS. SHE EMPHASIZED THAT MEMBERS OF THE
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY CANNOT DO WHAT BURUNDIANS
MUST DO FOR THEMSELVES AND NOTED THAT THE AMERICAN
TAXPAYERS HAVE CONTRIBUTED MILLIONS OF DOLLARS THAT
PRESIDENT OF BURUNDI, IT WAS NTARYAMIRA'S
RESPONSIBILITY TO TAKE CHARGE AND LEAD THE COUNTRY
OUT OF THE CURRENT SITUATION.

THE GOVERNMENT'S STRATEGY?

#### CONFIDENTIAL

BUJUMB 01026 02 OF 04 260639Z

ACTIO	N AF-01						
INFO	LOG-00 DODE-00 INM-02 NEA-01 PM-01 SR-00 /058W	AID-01 DS-00 TEDE-00 NSAE-00 PRS-01 STR-01	AMAD-01 EB-01 INR-00 NSCE-00 P-01 TRSE-00	A-01 EUR-01 IO-16 OIC-02 RP-10 T-00	CIAE-00 OIGO-01 L-01 OMB-01 SNP-00 USIE-00	C-01 HA-09 ADS-00 PA-01 RNEA-00 RPE-01	OASY-00 H-01 M-00 PC-01 SP-00 PMB-00

-----34B4F3 260639Z /38

O 260632Z MAR 94

PAGE 01

FM AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3178

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AMEMBASSY ACCRA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE

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AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE IMMEDIATE

CONFIDENTIAL

Current Class: CONFIDENTIAL

Current Class: CONFIDENTIAL

Current Handling: n/a

Document Number: 1994BUJUMB01026

Page: 4

Channel: n/a

PAGE 02 BUJUMB 01026 02 OF 04 260639Z USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 04 BUJUMBURA 01026

DEPT FOR DAS BRYNN, AF/C, DSS/OP, DS/OP/AF
DEPT PLEASE PASS TO PC AND AID FOR AFR
ACCRA FOR A/S MOOSE
LONDON FOR MCKINLEY
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EUCOM FOR J3

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: AMGT, PGOV, PREF, PHUM, PINR, BY
SUBJECT: DAS BUSHNELL MEETS WITH PRESIDENT CYPRIEN

5. DAS BUSHNELL ASKED WHAT WAS THE GOVERNMENT'S STRATEGY FOR HANDLING SUCH AN EXPLOSIVE SITUATION. THE PRESIDENT STATED HIS BELIEF THAT THE MAJORITY OF THE ARMY IS LOYAL BUT THAT EXTREMIST ELEMENTS HAVE GREATER INFLUENCE IN BOTH THE MILITARY AND CIVILIAN POPULATION. HIS PROPOSED STRATEGY WAS TO MARGINALIZE THE EXTREMISTS AND TO CREATE A FORCE TO PROTECT DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS. THIS STRATEGY HAD BEEN DISCUSSED WITH THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE. THE PRESIDENT ACKNOWLEDGED THAT IT WOULD TAKE TIME TO IMPLEMENT. HE ASSERTED HIS DESIRE THAT ALL CONCERNED IN THE MILITARY AND THE GOVERNMENT "MAKE A NEW START" CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BUJUMB 01026 02 OF 04 260639Z AND "PUT EVERYTHING ON THE TABLE" SO THAT THE ARMY COULD OFFER ITS OWN PROPOSALS FOR REFORM.

## CLARIFYING THE PROBLEM

6. THE PRESIDENT WENT ON TO DESCRIBE THE ARMY'S PROBLEM AS 1) AN ESSENTIALLY TUTSI COMPOSITION, 2) A LACK OF DISCIPLINE AMONG THE LOWER RANKING TROOPS AND A LACK OF CONTROL OVER THESE TROOPS BY THE SENIOR OFFICERS. HE FURTHER NOTED THE NEED FOR CLARIFICATION OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES BETWEEN THE ARMY AND THE GENDARMERIE. BUSHNELL TOLD HIM THAT

Current Class: CONFIDENTIAL

Current Class: CONFIDENTIAL

Current Handling: n/a

Document Number: 1994BUJUMB01026

Page: 5

Channel: n/a

US MILITARY TEAMS WERE AVAILABLE TO HELP NATIONS DETERMINE APPROPRIATE MILITARY NEEDS. SHE ADVISED THE PRESIDENT TO STAY IN TOUCH WITH THE CHARGE SHOULD HE WANT TO EXPLORE THIS FURTHER.

SUBSIDIZING THE ARMY VS. PROMOTING DEVELOPMENT

7. THE PRESIDENT EXPRESSED HIS FRUSTRATY-LQ5\$2Q3CKM SNTAINING A MILITARY, PAZHF E(BQ8UK3WQ-FQC"QCONSUMED BOTH DIRECT EX#ANQ.7L K6) QALLY UNREASONABLE SITUATION.

USE OF MEDIA ~ ~ **~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~** ~ ~ ~ ~

8. DAS BUSHNELL REITERATED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 BUJUMB 01026 02 OF 04 260639Z PRESIDENT'S TELEVISION ADDRESS AS A TOOL TO EXERCISE HIS LEADERSHIP AND DEMONSTRATE CONTROL OVER THE SITUATION. SHE WENT ON TO UNDERSCORE THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATING THE GRB'S POSITION ON ISSUES TO THE PUBLIC, AND IN PARTICULAR, TO QUICKLY REACT TO MISINFORMATION. AS A CASE IN POINT, SHE DESCRIBED HOW SHE AND AMBASSADOR RENDER HAD COME CLOSE TO POSTPONING THEIR TRIP BECAUSE OF A RADIO RWANDA BROADCAST OF A COUP D'ETAT IN BURUNDI -- A RUMOR OF NO SUBSTANCE. IT WAS ONLY BECAUSE THEY HAD TELEPHONED THE CHARGE THAT THEY WERE ABLE TO GET THE

#### CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ACTION AF-01		BUJUMB	01026 03	OF 04	260641Z					
INFO	LOG-00 DODE-00 INM-02 NEA-01 PM-01 SR-00	AID-01 DS-00 TEDE-00 NSAE-00 PRS-01 STR-01	AMAD-01 EB-01 INR-00 NSCE-00 P-01 TRSE-00	A-01 EUR-01 IO-16 OIC-02 RP-10 T-00	CIAE-00 OIGO-01 L-01 OMB-01 SNP-00 USIE-00	C-01 HA-09 ADS-00 PA-01 RNEA-00 RPE-01	OASY-00 H-01 M-00 PC-01 SP-00 PMB-00			
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Current Class: CONFIDENTIAL

Current Class: CONFIDENTIAL

Current Handling: n/a

Document Number: 1994BUJUMB01026

Page: 6

Channel: n/a

AMEMBASSY ACCRA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

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AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TUNIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE IMMEDIATE

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BUJUMB 01026 03 OF 04 260641Z USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 04 BUJUMBURA 01026

DEPT FOR DAS BRYNN, AF/C, DSS/OP, DS/OP/AF
DEPT PLEASE PASS TO PC AND AID FOR AFR
ACCRA FOR A/S MOOSE
LONDON FOR MCKINLEY
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EUCOM FOR J3

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: AMGT, PGOV, PREF, PHUM, PINR, BY
SUBJECT: DAS BUSHNELL MEETS WITH PRESIDENT CYPRIEN

FACTS. THE PRESIDENT HEARTILY AGREED THAT THEY NEEDED TO CONTROL RUMORS. BUSHNELL TOLD THE PRESIDENT THAT THE US COULD HELP THE GRB BETTER USE THE MEDIA.

## JUDICIAL PROBLEMS

9. AF/C DIRECTOR RENDER ASKED ABOUTTHE STATE OF THE JUDICIARY. THE PRESIDENT DESCRIBED BURUNDI'S JUDICIAL SYSTEM AS "ANOTHER SICK SYSTEM WITH THE SAME SOCIAL PROBLEM AS THE ARMY" (I.E. TUTSI PREDOMINANCE). HE EXPRESSED THE NEED IN THE

Current Class: CONFIDENTIAL

Current Class: CONFIDENTIAL

Current Handling: n/a

Document Number: 1994BUJUMB01026

Page: 7

Channel: n/a

#### CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BUJUMB 01026 03 OF 04 260641Z JUDICIARY FOR MORE TRAINING IN DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES, AND CITED NDI'S EFFORTS AS AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT WAS HELPFUL. DAS BUSHNELL EMPHASIZED THAT ONLY THROUGH DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS CAN COUNTRIES RESOLVE ETHNIC PROBLEMS.

#### RENEWED US COMMITMENT

COMMITTMENT TO SUPPORT BURUNDI'S EFFORTS TO CONSOLIDATE DEMOCRACY AND AVOID A WAR IN WHICH ALL SIDES WOULD SHARE EQUALLY IN MISERY. PRESIDENT NTARYAMIRA CITED BURUNDI'S TWO STRENGTHS AS ITS POPULATION AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. HE EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR THE CONTINUED SUPPORT OF THE U.S. IN PROMOTION OF JUSTICE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND NOTING PARTICULARLY THE CONTRIBUTION OF CHARGE D'AFFAIRES LANGE, NOT ONLY IN THE PERIOD AFTER THE COUP WHEN BURUNDI'S DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS WERE IN SERIOUS PERIL, BUT IN RESOLVING ONGOING EVENTS THROUGH HIS CONSTANT CALL FOR DIALOGUE BETWEEN ALL PARTIES. SUCH ASSISTANCE, HE SAID HELPS THE MAJORITY OF BURUNDIANS WHO WANT PEACE AND HELPS TO MARGINALIZE EXTREMISTS.

# COMMENT

11. COMMENT: WE LEFT THE PRESIDENT WITH THE DISTINCT IMPRESSION OF A MAN OF GOOD INTENTIONS WHO CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 BUJUMB 01026 03 OF 04 260641Z
NEEDS HELP IN EXCERCISING THE KIND OF LEADERSHIP
NECESSARY TO BRING THE COUNTRY OUT OF CRISIS. THIS
AND SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS, DESCRIBED SEPTEL, HELPED TO
GIVE GRB AND POLITICAL LEADERS A CHANCE TO VOICE
CONCERN AND BEGIN TO TAKE THE NEED FOR IMMEDIATE
RECONCILIATION SERIOUSLY. POST WILL CONTINUE ITS
EFFORTS TO DETERMINE APPROPRIATE ASSISTANCE. THIS
SHOULD INCLUDE MORE PERIODIC VISITS TO PROVIDE
BURUNDIANS A REALITY CHECK AND TO SUPPORT THE GRB.
END COMMENT.

Current Class: CONFIDENTIAL

Current Class: CONFIDENTIAL

Current Handling: n/a

Document Number: 1994BUJUMB01026 Channel: n/a

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#### CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BUJUMB 01026 04 OF 04 260641Z

ACTION AF-01

DOG-00 AID-01 AMAD-01 A-01 CIAE-00 C-01 OASY-00 DODE-00 DS-00 EB-01 EUR-01 OIGO-01 HA-09 H-01 INM-02 TEDE-00 INR-00 IO-16 L-01 ADS-00 M-00 NEA-01 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PC-01 PM-01 PRS-01 P-01 RP-10 SNP-00 RNEA-00 SP-00 SR-00 STR-01 TRSE-00 T-00 USIE-00 RPE-01 PMB-00 /058W INFO LOG-00 AID-01 AMAD-01 A-01

/058W

----34B508 260641Z /38

O 260632Z MAR 94

FM AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3180

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 04 OF 04 BUJUMBURA 01026

DEPT FOR DAS BRYNN, AF/C, DSS/OP, DS/OP/AF DEPT PLEASE PASS TO PC AND AID FOR AFR ACCRA FOR A/S MOOSE LONDON FOR MCKINLEY

NAIROBI FOR CO CO. "F"

CONFIDENTIAL

BUJUMB 01026 04 OF 04 260641Z PAGE 02 PARIS FOR PERLOW YAOUNDE FOR DAO EUCOM FOR J3

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR TAGS: AMGT, PGOV, PREF, PHUM, PINR, BY

SUBJECT: DAS BUSHNELL MEETS WITH PRESIDENT CYPRIEN

12. AFTER MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT, DAS BUSHNELL WAS INTERVIEWED BY BURUNDI RADIO AND TELEVISION. DAS BUSHNELL REITERATED HER MESSAGE OF US CONCERN FOR

Current Class: CONFIDENTIAL

Page: 8

Current Class: CONFIDENTIAL

Current Handling: n/a

Document Number: 1994BUJUMB01026

Page: 9

Channel: n/a

BURUMOT S'DÉMOCRACY AND ABHORRENCE OF INTER-ETHNIC VIOLENCE. SHE CALLED FOR AN IMMEDIATE END TO ALL KILLING NOTING THAT HUTU AND TUTSI SHARE EQUALLY IN THE MISERY OF WAR. ASKED ABOUT INCREASED HUMANITARIAN AID, SHE REMINDED HER AUDIENCE THAT THE US CURRENTLY GIVES OVER 14 MILLION DOLLARS TO BURUNDI IN HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE -- MORE THAN THE AMOUNT GIVEN TO DEVELOPMENT AID AIMED AT FUTURE PROSPERITY. SHE CALLED ON ALL BURUNDIANS TO CEASE THE VIOLENCE AND TO BEGIN THE PROCESS OF RECONCILIATION. KILLING OF INNOCENT PEOPLE, SHE SAID, IS UNACCEPTABLE. COMMENT: DAS BUSHNELL HAS BEEN STOPPED BY ORDINARY PASSERS-BY DURING HER MOVEMENTS AROUND TOWN TO SAY THANK YOU FOR THE STRONG MESSAGE, NOTING THAT IT MAY HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO AN EVENING OF CALM. THIS SHOWS THE IMPORTANCE OF EFFECTIVE USE OF THE MEDIA. END COMMENT. LANGE

#### CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BUJUMB 01026 04 OF 04 260641Z CONFIDENTIAL

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Current Class: CONFIDENTIAL