

SECRET

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FROM

FM SSO DIA (b)(3):10 USC 424

TO

(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)

CONTROLS

~~SECRET~~ (b)(3):10 USC 424

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SECTION 01 OF 02

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/***** THIS IS A COMBINED MESSAGE *****/

BODY

SUBJ: DIA COMMONWEALTH INTSUM--MIDDLE EAST/AFRICA 611-90/20 NOV 90

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(U) THE ITEM CONTAINED IN THIS INTSUM HAS BEEN AUTHORIZED BY

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RWANDA: UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE PROSPECTS. (S)

AS OF 20 NOV 90

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MAJOR POINTS

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1. (S) RWANDAN GOVERNMENT FORCES RESPONDED WELL AFTER EARLY INVASION SUCCESSES BY TUTSI REBELS AND ARE LIKELY TO THWART THE REBEL MILITARY OPERATIONS IN THE LONG TERM.
2. (S) THE TUTSIS' GUERRILLA WARFARE EXPERIENCES IN UGANDA WILL LIKELY INFLUENCE THEM TO ATTEMPT LONG-TERM UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE. HOWEVER, THEY WILL EXPERIENCE DIFFICULTY IN CONDUCTING A GUERRILLA CAMPAIGN, AS THE MAJORITY OF THE **RWANDA** POPULATION IS HUTU.
3. (S) THE GOVERNMENT FORCES WILL EXPERIENCE FRUSTRATION AS THEY ATTEMPT TO SUCCEED AGAINST AN UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE STRATEGY BUT WILL PROBABLY DEFEAT THE REBELS.

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DISCUSSION

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4. (S) AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE **RWANDA**-BURUNDI CIVIL WAR IN 1959, THOUSANDS OF TUTSIS WERE EXPELLED FROM WHAT IS NOW **RWANDA** INTO UGANDA BY THE VICTORIOUS HUTUS. AN ESTIMATED 75,000 TUTS1 REFUGEES HAVE BEEN DISPLACED IN UGANDA FOR 30 YEARS. MANY NOW DESIRE REPATRIATION, PARTICULARLY SINCE POPULAR UGANDAN SENTIMENT IS TO

(b)(3):10 USC 424

SECRET

FORCE THE TUTSIS OUT OF UGANDA. HOWEVER, A MASSIVE INFLUX OF THESE REFUGEES IS DISCOURAGED BY THE RWANDANS, WHO FEAR A RETURN TO THE DAYS WHEN **RWANDA** WAS DOMINATED BY THE TUTSI ARISTOCRACY. MOREOVER, THEY VIEW REPATRIATION AS A MILITARY/POLITICAL THREAT AS WELL AS A LIABILITY TO A SOCIETY FACING OVERPOPULATION.

5. (S) THE RWANDAN REFUGEES HAVE BEEN USEFUL TO UGANDA'S PRESIDENT MUSEVENI. THEY JOINED MUSEVENI'S NATIONAL RESISTANCE ARMY (NRA) IN LARGE NUMBERS DURING THE CIVIL WAR THAT RAVAGED THE COUNTRY FROM 1981 TO 1986 AND ENABLED MUSEVENI TO WIN CONTROL OF UGANDA. ON 1 OCTOBER, WHEN THE TUTSI INVASION INTO **RWANDA** BEGAN, ABOUT 10 PERCENT OF NRA PERSONNEL WERE OF RWANDAN ORIGIN.

6. (S) DESPITE EFFORTS BY KIGALI AND KAMPALA TO RESOLVE THE REFUGEE PROBLEM, UGANDA'S MAJ GEN FRED RWIGYEMA, A RWANDAN-BORN TUTSI, UNDER THE BANNER OF THE RWANDAN PATRIOTIC FRONT (RPF), LED THE 1 OCTOBER INVASION INTO **RWANDA** WITH AN ESTIMATED COMBAT TROOP STRENGTH OF 2,000, IN A BID TO OVERTHROW THE REGIME OF THE HUTU-DOMINATED GOVERNMENT. RWIGYEMA DIED SOMETIME AFTER THE INVASION BEGAN UNDER MYSTERIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES BUT NOT BEFORE HIS NAME AND REPUTATION GAVE THE INVASION ADDITIONAL CREDIBILITY, AT LEAST AMONG HIS FORMER COLLEAGUES IN UGANDA.

7. (S) ALTHOUGH CAUGHT BY SURPRISE, THE RWANDAN GOVERNMENT FORCES (FAR) RESPONDED QUICKLY AND DECISIVELY TO THE 1 OCTOBER INVASION. THE FAR DISPLAYED CONSIDERABLE BATTLEFIELD COHESION AND SKILL IN OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE OPERATIONS, RETAKING NEARLY ALL THE TERRITORY GAINED BY THE RPF BY EARLY NOVEMBER. ALTHOUGH ISOLATED RPF ELEMENTS, UTILIZING THEIR COMBAT EXPERIENCE AS FORMER NRA SOLDIERS, CONTINUE TO HAVE LIMITED SUCCESS AGAINST SMALL UNITS OF NEWLY TRAINED AND INEXPERIENCED GOVERNMENT TROOPS, THE FAR, GENERALLY CONSIDERED ONE OF THE BETTER-TRAINED ARMIES IN AFRICA, HAVE SHOWN THAT THEY ARE CAPABLE OF THWARTING REBEL MILITARY OPERATIONS AT DECISIVE TIMES AND LOCATIONS, AND HAVE PERFORMED CREDIBLY AGAINST THE INCURSION FORCES.

8. (S) INITIALLY THE REBELS CONCENTRATED THEIR EFFORTS ON A DRIVE TOWARDS KIGALI, USING CONVENTIONAL WARFARE TACTICS. HOWEVER, /***** BEGINNING OF SECTION 002 *****/ SUPERIOR FIREPOWER, AND DECISIVE DEPLOYMENTS BY THE FAR HALTED THE REBEL DRIVE NEAR THE NORTHERN TOWN OF GABIRO AND PROBABLY CONTRIBUTED TO A DECISION BY THE RPF TO SWITCH TACTICS TO SMALL-UNIT UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE. PERHAPS EQUALLY IMPORTANT TO THE DECISION, MOST OF THE FORMER NRA MEMBERS OF THE REBEL FORCE ARE PROBABLY MORE CONFIDENT OF GUERRILLA WARFARE, WHICH THEY USED WITH MUSEVENI'S FORCES IN UGANDA DURING THE EARLY '80S, THAN THEY ARE OF

CONVENTIONAL TACTICS.

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OUTLOOK

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9. ~~(S)~~ THE CURRENT REBEL EMPHASIS ON SMALL-UNIT UNCONVENTIONAL OPERATIONS, WHILE FAILING TO OVERTHROW THE GOVERNMENT, HAS THWARTED THE FAR'S ATTEMPTS TO QUICKLY DEFEAT THE SMALLER TUTSI-DOMINATED FORCE. ALTHOUGH THE EXPERIENCE OF THE RPF IN UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE IS AN ADVANTAGE TO THEM, THEIR TUTSI ORIGINS ARE NOT. ALTHOUGH NEARLY ALL THE INVADERS ARE TUTSI, 85 PERCENT OF RWANDANS ARE HUTU, AND THERE HAVE BEEN NO INDICATIONS THAT AN UPRISING SUPPORTING THE INVADERS IS LIKELY. ANY ATTEMPT BY THE REBELS TO MERGE INTO THE POPULATION, IN THE TRADITION OF THE DICTATES OF CHAIRMAN MAO, WILL LACK THE SUPPORT OF THE HUTU MAJORITY AND THUS COMPLICATE THE TUTSI GUERRILLA CAMPAIGN. THE REBELS NEVERTHELESS ARE LIKELY TO ATTEMPT A LONG-TERM UNCONVENTIONAL CAMPAIGN IN NORTHERN RWANDA, SOMEWHAT SIMILAR TO THAT OF THE SUCCESSFUL UGANDA CIVIL WAR, IN WHICH THE TUTSIS WERE A VITAL ELEMENT.

10. ~~(S)~~ IN CONTRAST TO THE EXPERIENCED REBELS, RWANDAN GOVERNMENT FORCES ARE UNTRAINED IN COUNTERINSURGENCY WARFARE, ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT MISSIONS FOR ANY ARMY. THIS COULD LEAD TO HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES AGAINST THE CIVILIAN POPULATION AS THE FAR ATTEMPTS TO LOCATE AND ENGAGE WHAT MAY BE AN ELUSIVE HIT-AND-RUN ENEMY.

11. ~~(S)~~ FAR SUCCESSES TO DATE HAVE INCREASED THEIR ESPRIT AND CONFIDENCE. NEVERTHELESS, THE RWANDAN FORCES ARE LIKELY TO EXPERIENCE FRUSTRATION AS THEY ATTEMPT TO SUCCEED AGAINST AN UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE STRATEGY. MEANWHILE, THE RPF WILL LIKELY FIND IT DIFFICULT TO GAIN THE POPULAR SUPPORT IT NEEDS TO CONDUCT A TRUE GUERRILLA WAR AND WILL PROBABLY MEET EVENTUAL DEFEAT. ~~(DECL OADR)~~

~~(S)~~

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ADMIN

(OVERALL REGRADE IS ~~DECL OADR~~)

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