



REPUBLIC OF RWANDA

National Commission for the Fight against Genocide
Commission Nationale de Lutte contre le Génocide



-CNLG-

**Manipulation of the case of Habyarimana plane, a persistent
dissimulation of French responsibility in the Genocide against
Tutsi: case of French military officers**

French actors were involved in the genocide both as perpetrators and accomplices, and do not want their acts to be known despite their proofs. This is the biggest cause explaining the persistent refusal of the French authorities to validate the ballistic investigation by French experts in Rwanda in 2010 which indicated that missiles were fired from Kanombe military barracks. The role of twenty-two (22) French military officers below testifies it.

1) General Jacques Lanxade

He was the Special Chief of Staff of President Francois Mitterrand from April 1989 to April 1991 and Army Chief of Staff (from April 1991 to September 1995). The French army under Jacques Lanxade, played in Rwanda between 1990 and 1994, the role of a real occupation force, involved in serious crimes. As supreme commander of the Army, Jacques Lanxade received reports of abuses by the Rwandan army, its massacres, its discriminatory and genocidal policy, but he maintained increased assistance to this criminal army; by providing means like equipment, logistical and personnel, for its training and its development.

In 1991, Jacques Lanxade paid a visit to Rwanda in companionship of his chief of staff, General Pidancet and colonel Delort, head of external relations. During this visit, Jacques Lanxade participated in talks with higher authorities of the State and the Army, and visited on ground the Noroît and DAMI detachments. During this visit, Jacques Lanxade was informed of the massacres committed by the FAR on Bagogwe in Ruhengeri, but maintained the presence of the French instructors.



Jacques Lanxade equated the RPF in Uganda to the Tutsi group as a whole and thereby transforming a political conflict into ethnic or racial conflict. Jacques Lanxade argued that the Hutu ethnic majority corresponded to the democratic majority, and then decided to take sides with that majority. Worse, for Jacques Lanxade, every Tutsi was considered a potential fighter of the RPF; France's enemy that had to be fought. Under Jacques Lanxade's command, the French military DAMI Panda, received in April 1991, the order to provide operational assistance to the FAR to militarily strengthen the regime, so that it gains an upper hand in negotiations with the RPF.

Documents and testimony show that Jacques Lanxade was informed by his Defence Assistant, of the whole situation prevailing in Rwanda since 1990, and that important decisions were taken after his approval. Ambassador Jean-Michel Marlaud confessed before the Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry (MIP) that all communications from the Embassy of France in Rwanda were controlled by the military Attaché who, in turn, reported to Lanxade and Christian Quesnot.

2) General Christian Quesnot

Special Chief of staff of President Mitterrand from 1991 to 1995, Christian Quesnot is one of those responsible for alluring unreserved support to the Habyarimana regime. He was the main informant of the Chief of Staff regarding any interventions; both official and secret, that the French army carried out in Rwanda. In all his notes to President Mitterrand, Christian Quesnot advocated for immoderate support to the Habyarimana regime and its armed forces.

During the genocide, Christian Quesnot constantly held talks with President Theodore Sindikubwabo and constantly pleaded with President Mitterrand for France's military aid. On 29th April, 1994, three weeks into the genocide, Christian Quesnot wrote extremely offensive words about the RPF: "The RPF is the most fascist party I met in Africa. It can be equated to 'black Khmers'. It has collusion with Belgians". On 4 May 1994, the same demonization was repeated. On 4th May 1994, the same demonization was repeated. On 6th May 1994, **Christian Quesnot** offered support to FAR who were committing genocide.

May 24, 1994, General Quesnot, addressing the President, urged him to decide on a direct military support to the FAR and the interim government: "The coming to power in the region of a minority whose aims and organization are much more like the system of the Khmer Rouge is a guarantee of regional instability whose consequences have not been anticipated by those, including France, whose complicity and complacency are obvious". The ferocity of these remarks and hatred they contain reflect a total and deliberate adherence to the ideas and actions of the perpetrators of the genocide.



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3) General Jean-Pierre Huchon

He was the deputy to General Quesnot from April 1991 to April 1993 and head of the military cooperation mission from April 1993 to October 1995. He upheld the manipulation of ethnicity and coordinated the delivery of arms, munitions and military equipment to the FAR before and during the genocide. These weapons were used to carry out massacres of innocent civilians killed by the army and paramilitary militias. In May 1994, Jean-Pierre Huchon repeatedly received in his office in Paris, Lt. Col. Cyprien Kayumba, head of logistics and procurement in the Rwandan ministry of defense who stayed there for twenty seven days *"to try speed up the supply of weapons and ammunition to the Rwandan army"*. An arms purchase agreement was awarded to the SOFREMAS, a public company exclusively controlled by the French state. On May 9, 1994, Jean-Pierre Huchon received Lieutenant Colonel Ephrem Rwabalinda, Advisor to the Chief of Staff of the FAR.

In the report on his mission, Ephrem Rwabalinda mentioned among the priorities discussed with Jean-Pierre Huchon *"the support of Rwanda by France in terms of international politics; the physical presence of French military in Rwanda (...) support within the cooperation framework, indirect use of regular or non-regular foreign troops"*. Ephrem Rwabalinda also indicated that Jean-Pierre Huchon had accepted to provide FAR ammunition and communications equipment.

Rwabalinda added that Jean-Pierre Huchon advised Rwanda to brand the RPF responsible for the genocide: *"(...) If nothing is done to return the country's image outside, Rwanda's military and political leaders will be held accountable for the massacres committed in Rwanda. He reiterated this point several times"*. (...) *"portraying the good image of the country on the international scene is a priority that is NOT subjected to be brushed aside. These Telephones I bring should help to get out of isolation vis-à-vis the international community"*. Rwabalinda concluded that *"the military house of cooperation is preparing emergency measures to be taken in our favor"*.

4) Lieutenant-Colonel Michel ROBARDEY

Michel Robardey came to Rwanda in September 1990 and left in April 1994. Robardey led a team of four French gendarmes who developed and installed, between 1992 and 1994 in a tormenting center known *"CRIMINOLOGY"*, a computerized data system to provide lists of wanted persons and those to be tortured or massacred. These lists targeted primarily Tutsi and Hutu political opponents.

In February 1993, the Prime Minister, Dismas Nsengiyaremye, sent a letter to the Rwandan defense minister in which he protested against the criminal intent of those lists and demanded their confiscation. These encompassed an instrument of the genocide in 1994. A note of French



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military intelligence acknowledges that since the first day of the genocide, "equipped with pre-established lists, soldiers and the Presidential Guards undertook the killings of all Tutsi and Hutu from the south or those supporting opposition parties."

In the same center, Robardey participated in a series of violent interrogations against people who were detained there. In February 1993, major Corrière under the command of Robardey, tortured two Tutsi, Japheth Rudasingwa and Anne Marie Byukusenge, in the premises of Criminology, accusing them of providing a local newspaper "Le flambeau", with photos showing French soldiers involved in the fighting alongside the FAR. Anne Marie Byukusenge died later as a result of this torture. During their presence in Criminology, French gendarmes concealed in the criminal investigation, any evidence to prove the involvement of the Rwandan regime in terrorist acts that were unfairly attributed to RPF.

Currently, Michel Robardey is a member of an association of genocide deniers called France-Turquoise which brings together the former French soldiers who participated in Operation Turquoise in Rwanda in 1994. Michel Robardey owns a blog on which he disseminates disavowal ideas about the genocide committed against Tutsi. He participates in many seminars of genocide deniers and always testifies in favor of the suspected Rwandan genocidaires in France and other countries' courts.

5) Colonel Gilbert Canovas

Gilbert Canovas was from October to November 1990, the operational assistant to the Defense Attaché and Advisor to the Chief of Staff of the Rwandan gendarmerie. He was actively involved in the implementation of the plans to establish roadblocks on which several civilians were killed. On April 12, 1991, in companionship of Major Christian Refalo, Gilbert Canovas went to Ruhengeri *"for the purpose, he writes, of studying how to conquer and take control of the area of the volcano forest occupied by Inyenzi and where all our infiltration attempts have so far failed."*

During this operation, Gilbert Canovas organised a training of militiamen on killing and infiltration methods. Another example of his active engagement with the Habyarimana regime is the meeting of 18 February 1991 between Michel Robardey, Colonel Gilbert Canovas and the Chief of Staff of the Rwandan gendarmerie, Colonel Rwagafirita, during which Colonel Canovas *"said to be fully available to provide support for effective defense of the capital Kigali."*

6) Colonel Jacques Rosier

Jacques Rosier was head of Military Support Detachment and Instruction (DAMI) between June 1992 and November 1992. It is in this year 1992 that the DAMI emerged in Gabiro, Gako, Mukamira and Bigogwe military bases, emphasizing on training of Interahamwe. Jacques Rosier



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was the coordinator of the training. The two waves of killings that took place in Bugesera, early March 1992 targeting Bagogwe Tutsi between November 1992 and January 1993, were committed by Interahamwe militiamen trained by French instructors of DAMI. These criminal training had also been criticized in the report of the Commission of UN experts in June 1994 in these terms: "*a training camp for Hutu militia (Interahamwe) had been established in Mutara. The sessions lasted three weeks each, including indoctrination of 300 men on ethnic hatred against the Tutsi minority. The sessions also included learning methods of mass murder.*"

7) Captain Etienne Joubert

He was the head of DAMI called Panda of 23 December 1992 to 18 May 1993. Etienne Joubert led training of Interahamwe in Gabiro military camp. In this camp, Etienne Joubert and his men trained three distinct groups namely Burundian Hutu, Rwandan soldiers and Interahamwe militia. During Turquoise, Etienne Joubert returned to Rwanda, Gikongoro, initially as head of Special Operations Command (SOC) and at the same time intelligence officer and Chief Operating Officer. SOC officers he commanded were the first French soldiers to arrive in Gikongoro on 24 June 1994. Etienne Joubert immediately cooperated with the authorities responsible for the genocide, including the prefet Bucyibaruta and captain Sebhura, organizers of the genocide in Gikongoro. At SOS and ACEPR College Gikongoro, military men and officers under his command committed killings against the Tutsi, rape and systematic sexual assaults.

8) Colonel Didier Tauzin

Military adviser to President Habyarimana from 1990 to 1993, head of DAMI Panda and *Chimère* operation (22 February-28 March 1993), then after, commander for a short time, of Turquoise Gikongoro. He contributed towards training of the militia men and fought the RPF in 1993. He boasted of his acts in these terms: "*We have given hard time to the RPF! (...) We broke the momentum towards Kigali. (...) No survivors.*" He was strongly opposed to the Arusha peace agreement, which he called "*totally unrealistic, outrageous and despicable, a desertion and treason*" that allowed "*the intrusion of RPF militia in the country*". In other words, members of the RPF are not Rwandans, they are foreign militia!" He told the press, on 04/07/1994, that the French army would not hesitate "*to break the back of the RPF*". In his book published in 2011 "*Rwanda: I demand justice for France and its soldiers*", Tauzin denies that there was a genocide against the Tutsi.

9) Colonel René Galinié

He was the Defence Attaché and head of military assistance to Rwanda (August 1988-July 1991), Commander of the Noroît Operation (1990-July 1991 except November 1990): Defense



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Attaché to the Embassy of France in Rwanda and head of military cooperation mission (July 1991-April 1994), Noroît commander from July 1991-December 1993 except February and March 1993. He was aware of all the massacres committed by the Habyarimana regime, he covered them, and kept on providing assistance and logistical support to the regime.

10) Colonel Bernard Cussac

Defence Attaché and Chief of cooperation mission at the Embassy of France in Rwanda (July 1991-April 1994), Commander of Operation Noroît (July 91 to December 93, except for February and March 93). He participated in the interrogation of RPF prisoners of war and the so-called civilian accomplices of the RPF. Most of them were killed. In his report of April 5, 1993, he clearly mentions to the possibility of genocide.

11) Lt Col. Jean-Jacques Maurin

Operations assistant to the Defence Attaché of the Embassy of France in Rwanda from 1992 to 1994 and Advisor to the Chief of Staff of Rwanda. He had to advise the chief of Staff of the Rwandan Armed Forces (FAR), colonel Serubuga in conducting operations, preparation and training of troops; they met frequently. He participated as he says himself: "*the development of the daily battle plans and was involved in decisions*" taken by FAR. Jean Jacques Maurin also co-led Operation Amaryllis with Colonel Henri Poncet in which Tutsi were killed especially at Kigali International Airport.

12) Commander Grégoire De Saint Quentin

Technical Adviser to the Commander of the Para-commando battalion, Major Aloys Ntabakuze and training officer of aerial troops, August 1992-12 / 04/1994. He was present at Kanombe military barracks and led the checking of aircrafts. He trained the killers of the Para-commando battalion which oversaw the operations that took place in Kanombe on the evening of 06/04/1994.

13) Colonel Dominique Delort

He was Noroît Commander. In February-March 1993, he also became commander of DAMI in Bigogwe and Mukamira military camps where he trained the Rwandan army and militia. In February 1993, he set up an identity check mechanism to Kigali entries on Ruhengeri-Kigali, Gitarama-Kigali and Rwamagana-Kigali axes. Civilians were arrested on ethnic grounds, some went missing and others killed. Dominique Delort instigated a bitter hatred against the RPF to which he attributed all crimes committed by the FAR. For example, in March 1993, he is the one



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who ordered Lt Col. Michel Robardey to provide “*special attention on gathering of information about the massacres and atrocities of the RPF to better counter their propaganda*”.

14) Lieutenant Colonel Jean-Louis Nabias

On March 03, 1992, he replaced Colonel Chollet, head of DAMI PANDA. His job was to provide training to regiments of the FAR, putting much of his efforts on their weakest areas such as night infiltration missions or learning bypass techniques. These trainings were held in Gabiro and Bigogwe military camps. At the same time, the training was also given to Interahamwe militia.

15) Commander Denis Roux

From November 1991 to February 1993, he was the head of DAMI Presidential Guard. This DAMI trained Presidential Guards and the Interahamwe who eventually spearheaded the genocide. One of his trainers, Warrant Officer Thierry Prungnaud acknowledged with remorse on 22 April 2005 to Radio France Culture: “*I am certain; the French formed the militia in 1992. This occurred several times. The Presidential Guard was involved in several assassinations, especially between 1992 and 1994.*”

16) Captain Paul Barril

In 1990, before the RPF offensive, Barril conducted an audit of the Rwandan army. He presented himself as adviser to President Habyarimana. During the genocide, he was paid by the genocidal Government to train elite soldiers as part of “*Insecticide,*” operation meant to eliminate the Tutsi. He himself reported to have been present in Rwanda on 7th April 1994, he displayed on France 2 TV in June 1994, a device that he claimed to be the black box of Falcon 50 of Habyarimana. He is among those who actively deny the genocide committed against the Tutsi. He is especially the one who steered the purported investigations of Judge Bruguiere.

17) General Jean-Claude LAFOURCADE

Jean-Claude Lafourcade was the top commander of the French forces engaged in Turquoise from 22nd June to 22nd August 1994. Those French military officers cooperated with the authorities involved in the genocide. The testimonies of French officers collected by journalists during Turquoise prove that French officers well knew who they were dealing with in deciding to work with these genocidal authorities. For example, Captain **Marin Gillier** confirmed to journalist Christian Lecomte in July 1994: “*We know that the mayors and sous-prefets of the region are mostly involved in the massacres of Tutsi or their instigators. We have accumulated evidence to*



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prove it. But for now, they are our only contacts with the million and a half Hutu refugees who poured into the area”.

18) Colonel Jacques Hogard

Jacques Hogard was the commandant of Turquoise in Cyangugu. He allowed his subordinates to commit the killing of Tutsi, rape and sexual violence. In Cyangugu, French soldiers gave weapons to Interahamwe militia, encouraged them to hunt down Tutsi and kill them. At Nyarushishi camp of the internally displaced, guarded by French soldiers, Tutsi from outside were intercepted by Interahamwe militiamen before they could enter the camp. Tutsi refugees, pushed by hunger that attempted to go out of the camp were killed by the Interahamwe positioned on these roadblocks in view of French soldiers. The practice of rape by the French military was also frequent and systematic in the camps of French military in Cyangugu. In their campsite at Kamarampaka Stadium, the Interahamwe used to bring girls to the French in daylight. From 17 December 2005, Jacques Hogard owned a blog on which he published disavowal ideas against RPF and current regime in general. It was closed in 2007.

19) Colonel Jacques Rosier

In June 1994, Jacques Rosier returned to Rwanda as head of Special Operations Command (SOC) from 22 June to 30 July 1994 in the Zone Turquoise. The massacre of the Tutsi in Bisesero emanates from his individual decision. Jacques Rosier was in Kibuye on June 26, 1994 where he inspected the deployment of Lt Colonel Jean-Rémy Duval (aka Diego) and his 35 CPA-10 men at the Kibuye Technical School (ETO Kibuye). It was from there that he refused to order for any intervention to save Tutsi survivors of Bisesero even though he had just been informed that they would be killed immediately.

20) Col. Patrice Sartre

Patrice Sartre was Head of Turquoise Gikongoro from 05 to 16 July 1994 and Kibuye from 16 July to 21 August 1994. During these periods, a series of attacks followed by murder, rape and other inhuman treatment, were directed against civilians. For example, in Rubengera, under his instructions French soldiers collaborated with local authorities actively involved in the genocide. French soldiers ordered the killing of Tutsi who had gathered behind classrooms in Rubengera College.



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21) Commander Marin Gillier

Marin Gillier commanded the French military detachment based at Gishyita commune offices. He was informed on June 26, 1994 by foreign journalists of the existence of surviving Tutsi in Bisesero and that massacres of civilians were taking place. He went there with his colleague Diego and his detachment. They met Bisesero survivors and left them unprotected.

22) Lieutenant Colonel Eric De Stabenrath

Eric De Stabenrath led Turquoise in Gikongoro from 16th July to 22nd August, 1994. After their settlement in Gikongoro, French soldiers directly collaborated with administrative and military authorities of the prefecture who executed the genocide.

At Murambi camp, the French soldiers who controlled its access always enquired the ethnic group of people, and inside the camp, they indiscriminately mixed Tutsi survivors of the genocide, former FAR elements and militiamen who had participated in the genocide. This coexistence allowed the militia to continue killing in the camp yet it was a space meant to meet the humanitarian conditions. Foreign journalists on the scene in July-August 1994, described a situation where Tutsi survivors were threatened to death by Interahamwe militiamen. Crimes such as rape and assault were frequent, widespread and systematic in the headquarters where Eric De Stabenrath stayed.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of these facts demonstrates that senior French officers and politicians committed very serious crimes in Rwanda. The refusal to end the judicial investigation and pronounce a dismissal against Rwandan leaders who ended the genocide is an attempt of concealing their responsibilities. They only are carrying on the war they undertook against the RPF since 1990. It is not a coincidence that Kayumba Nyamwasa has the same lawyer; Veronique TRUONG, as General Quesnot, one of the strongest supporters of the Rwandan genocidal regime.

Kigali, 31 October 2016

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