

Media and Genocide: Are Public Media Useful for Early Warning or Creating Political Will for Early Response?

Milton Leitenberg¹

Center for International and Security Studies (CISSM), School of Public Affairs, University of Maryland, College Park, MD, USA

The question addressed here poses several constraints, which should be pointed out to begin with:

First, my topic specified 'Genocide': which would exclude a large number of conflicts with very high mortality – in the range of several hundred thousand to a million or more – that were not by definition 'genocides' as stipulated by the categories set out in the 1948 Genocide Convention. In discussing the record of the media's effect on the response of publics, governments and international organizations, it would be useful to look at conflicts that produced deaths of such magnitudes but were not classified as genocide, as well as the ones that were.

Second, the word 'useful': might be interpreted by some to mean any information that the media provided, no matter how small or ambiguous its effect in the early stages of some particular situation. This would make little sense, and it is more meaningful to attempt to assess if and when public media – the press, journals, radio or television – produced an effect that could be considered to have been instrumental or operational, or at the least, an important contributing factor to an eventual response.

Third, the question seeks an assessment of the media's effect *both* for 'early warning', as well as for 'early response'. The two must be separated. Although the essential answer to both will be 'no, to marginal, at best' there are basic differences between the two. It is frequently assumed that 'creating political will' for *any* response – early, or late, or extremely late – requires the mobilization of general public opinion as well as elite attitudes, a process in which the media most certainly play a role. This is frequently not the case at all. Governments can decide to respond, if and when they do, either in the absence of an informed and supportive public, or for policy reasons, irrespective of, and long after, public support for action exists. 'Early warning' is almost by definition a question aside from public mobilization and requires no such prior process. One must, therefore, examine the question of what the media can or do contribute to each of the subjects separately.

There are two other extremely important points that should be made at the outset. First, there is no reason for governments or international agencies to look to or rely on the media for 'early warning' information or indicators. All the major actors that desire and can use early warning have assets of, and access to, information and knowledge that are far in advance of what the general media can or do provide. Media attention or presentation is largely driven by already initiated national involve-

ment and journalistic 'agendas',² although in the cases that the media introduce novel information, that is of course desirable and beneficial. At the same time newspaper readership in the US has been in a steady decline, and although most Americans get their news primarily from TV, major network TV audiences have also dropped sharply.³ Second, the problem has never been and is not now the lack of 'early warning'; it is and has always been the lack of response, early response or any response. Both of these statements should be amplified before turning to the major question to be addressed.

Non-media sources of early warning information

Governments have recourse to routine diplomatic traffic from their overseas embassies, as well as intelligence personnel, and a part of their function has always been to alert their capitals of conflictual political developments in the country in which they are based. Both of these traditional assets are proportionately greater in the major powers, who are synonymously the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, and whose interest or disinterest, action or active opposition to action is crucial to any response.

The United Nations

In March 1987, UN Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar established the Office for Research and the Collection of Information (ORCI) '...to use up-to-date research methods and technology to collect and process information on international events in support of the preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution functions of the Secretary-General.'⁴ There has never been any analysis of whether this office provided any 'early warning' of the numerous international conflicts which developed after 1990, and if so, how such warnings were acted upon. (The ORCI was abolished in 1992 when the Department of Political Affairs was reorganized.) In 1991, the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted a Declaration on UN Fact-Finding, which said that: 'The Secretary-General should monitor the state of international peace and security regularly and systematically in order to provide early warning of disputes or situations which might threaten international peace and security.'⁵ This was an important step, since the USSR had previously always opposed any UN fact-finding free from Security Council veto.

In a third step, in the 1992 *Agenda for Peace*, a report requested of the UN Secretary-General by the UN Security Council Summit meeting, Boutros Boutros-Ghali stated the need for existing UN early warning or indicator systems '...(to) be synthesized with political indicators to assess whether a threat to peace exists and to analyse what action might be taken by the United Nations to alleviate it.' He additionally recommended that the Security Council asks the '...Economic and Social Council to provide reports...on those economic and social developments that may, unless mitigated, threaten international peace and security.'⁶ Under the pressure of the numerous crises under way in the early 1990's, such systems were established at the

UN headquarters.⁷ Nevertheless, it is important to note that the 'Group of 77', composed of developing UN Member States, has opposed any moves by the Secretary-General's office to establish a 'Political Early Warning System.'

The United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs established three different early warning databases, one primarily for the use of UN agencies and policy makers, and two that are additionally available for use by any interested party:

- *Relief Web* is an internet web-site accessed by 10,000 persons worldwide daily (and will be described in greater detail in another presentation during the Conference). It provides daily updates, maps, graphs, and is designed to help relief agencies, NGOs/PVOs, and governments at all stages, from early warning to response, intervention and rehabilitation efforts.⁸
- *The Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN)* produces analytical reports that are faxed or e-mailed daily to 1,000 subscribers. It is also available through the Relief Web.
- *The HEWS Project* is a database for internal use by UN analysts and policy makers inside the UN. It includes early warning related indicators for 100-plus countries (demographic, economic, trade, agriculture, health, etc.)⁹ plus 'headlines' of political and humanitarian events, and input from journalists, NGO's and different UN agency sources.

The United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees. The UNHCR's Center for Documentation and Research has initiated an early warning pilot project.¹⁰ In addition, during the early 1997 'Great Lakes Crisis' in Africa (Zaire, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Tanzania) the UNHCR's Public Information Section produced internal report summaries every few days, which were made available to a wide variety of interested parties. This practice is likely to be repeated in other emergencies in the future.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE; formerly CSCE) includes a multiplicity of venues through which 'early warning' should be raised, at least in theory:

- *The High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM)*, whose task is stipulated under the Helsinki Decisions to provide early warning and, as appropriate, early actions in regard to tensions involving national minority issues in its member States '...which have not yet developed beyond the early warning stage, but, in the judgement of the High Commissioner, have the potential to develop into a conflict...'¹¹
- *The Senior Council's* attention may be raised to any situation having the potential of developing into armed conflict, by the HCNM, or by any member State.
- *The 'Mechanism for Consultation and Co-operation with Regards to Emergency Situations'* (the 'Berlin Mechanism', and subsequent Valetta Mechanisms) are intended to serve the same purpose.

- *The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)* is also intended to monitor circumstances that could functionally serve as early warning indicators.

Agencies of individual Governments: in the United States, the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) in the Agency for International Development (AID) performs this function, and analogues presumably exist in the development AID agencies of at least several major donor governments. Early warning is also of obvious interest to Ministries of Foreign Affairs.¹²

Institutes specifically established for an early warning function. There are currently two such organizations: *The International Crisis Group* which was until recently situated in London, and has just moved to Brussels, and *FEWER* and *International Alert*, both based in London.¹³

Other NGOs whose organizational functions have led them to have a strong interest in early warning. There is a wide variety of these, only a few of which are indicated here: Human Rights Watch, InterAction (an association of NGO's and PVO's dealing with humanitarian assistance), The Refugee Policy Group, the US Committee for Refugees, Refugees International, and even ad-hoc groups, such as The Great Lakes Policy Forum, located in Washington, DC.

Academic conferences and publications. The series of wars and conflicts that broke out in the early 1990's prompted a small resurgence among academic political scientists, particularly in the United States, in quantitative 'model-based' indicator studies intended to provide predictors - early warning - of conflict.¹⁴ This has led to several major publications,¹⁵ research projects¹⁶ and conferences.¹⁷

All of the above, together, are a reasonably formidable array of resources, nearly all of which would be available in various combinations to individuals and groups attending this conference.

Is early warning the problem?

The second point was that early warning, or the lack of it, is not and has not been the problem, only the lack of interest in a response or intervention, except when it suits particular nations for their own interests and on their own terms. In December 1994, the Deputy Director of the German development AID agency had the following to say about early warning:

One remark on early warning: in a hearing of the German Parliament on conflict prevention and non-military conflict resolution in May this year, all invited experts shared the opinion that the problem was not so much a lack of early warning mechanisms, but rather the step from early warning to early action. I do fully endorse this point of view. We usually know in advance about emerging or escalating conflicts. In many cases, however, the political will for early action is lacking; divergent or conflicting political interests of the major players hamper coordinated and consistent common action which might be able to prevent conflict escalation. Yugoslavia and Rwanda are sad examples.¹⁸

A group of specialists convened by the United States Institute of Peace in April 1997 agreed: 'The problem is not a lack of information, according to a broad range of relief workers, but the lack of political will among governments to respond.'¹⁹ That this is demonstrably so in the important cases since 1990 will become evident as we look at individual examples. The common reference to '...lack of Political will' is a very poor choice of phrase, frequently even misleading and a distortion, since in reality it often means active disinterest, or policy choices in direct opposition to the particular course of action. The phrasing in the above statement, which mentions 'divergent or conflicting political interests', suggests this in a mild diplomatic formulation.

There is nothing particularly new in this: even an event such as the 'Irish potato famine' of 1845 to 1849-1851 was not solely due to the fact that a blight attacked the Irish potato crop in successive years. The British Government was informed of the potato blight by local constables very soon after it began, and it also responded quickly. It imported boat-loads of corn from America, and in the first year, the food relief effort was successful. However, the relief program was discontinued after that first year. After a year of famine, in 1846, food AID was reinstated in the Spring of 1847, again feeding three million people per day, but was once again discontinued after several months with the passage of a new Poor Law. The new Poor Law shifted responsibility for assistance to the Irish landlords, who for the most part were willing to do nothing as they thereby obtained the land clearances that they had long sought. No further AID followed though the famine continued for several more years. At the same time, landlords exported grain and cattle from Ireland while the poorest portion of the population – agricultural smallholders who depended on the potato food – starved. It is extraordinarily interesting to note that in four of the major international cases of famine in the 19th and 20th centuries, *food was being exported* by the country undergoing the famine, in three of the cases by the governing authorities. In addition to the case of Ireland, wheat was exported by Russia during the Ukrainian famine of 1933-1935, the entire famine being of government instigation. Similarly, rice was being exported by China during the 1959-61 'Great Leap Forward' famine, an event again directly caused, exacerbated and continued by government action and policy. Finally, grain was exported by the Government of Ethiopia during the Ethiopian famine of 1984.

Genocide

In the years since 1945, few of the events which caused truly major loss of life have been labeled as genocide by the United Nations or by any other official body.

The events in Rwanda in April to June 1994 were, and presumably those that have occurred in Burundi on several occasions should be. The massive killings by the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia between 1975 and 1978 are frequently referred to as genocide, but do not in fact fit the technical definition provided in Article II of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide. (Nevertheless – and fi-

nally – a US Department of State spokesman on July 18, 1997, repeatedly referred to the 1975-78 period in Cambodia under Pol Pot's rule as 'genocide'.) Article I of the Convention *obligates* the signatories to '...undertake to *prevent and to punish*' genocide, '...whether committed *in time of peace or in time of war.*' Article II then provides the definition:

In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

At the time of the drafting of the Convention, the original language was restricted to omit one notable group, largely due to pressure from the communist countries. In the 1990's, it is interpreted to include members of a *political* group, as well, or killings for political reasons.

Those killed in Cambodia by the Khmer Rouge were not a separate 'national, ethnical, racial, or religious' group; neither were the millions killed in the wars in Angola or Mozambique. Iraq's 1988 'Anfall' campaign against the Kurds does fit, as may the killings by Indonesian military forces on East Timor island. The Sudanese government's massive killings of Southern Sudan's black tribal groups for two decades certainly does. The East Pakistan killings in 1971, the Indonesian massacres in 1965, the Nigerian civil war deaths of Biafrans may or may not fit the Convention's definition.²⁰ Helen Fein, in particular noted the exclusion of political groups from the Genocide Convention's categories, and in several papers has attempted to distinguish among these various cases.²¹ I have included a table (table 1) which lists the war-related deaths between 1955 and 1994 in a group that I have called 'the Great Domestic Slaughters'.²² There was no consideration of response or intervention on the part of any international institution or coalition to any of the events before 1990, irrespective of whether the media or government channels provided early warning. That was so for the cases of the Sudan, Nigeria-Biafra, Bangladesh, Burundi (1972-73), Cambodia (1975-78), Indonesia (1965) or Indonesia-East Timor. (The Cambodian genocide received what could be termed minimal attention: it was raised, before 1980, within the mechanism of the Convention, that is, by communication among parties to the treaty.) In fact, in several of these cases many nations joined in supporting one or the other of the combating sides, (Nigeria-Biafra), or the government side guilty of the genocide. (Cambodia, supported by China, Thailand and the US; Pakistan and Indonesia, supported by the US; Rwanda supported by France.) As late as 1994, a magnificent and explicit report to the United Nations by Amb. Max van der Stoel, the Special Rapporteur of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, describing the destruction of the Southern Shiites or 'Marsh Arabs' in Southern Iraq, by the Government of Iraq, produced no international response even though the context of the existing UN resolutions regarding Iraq since

1990 should have made such a response both mandatory and – presumably – politically feasible to initiate.²³

Table 1: Deaths in Civil Wars, 1955-1995, Selected Countries [The Great Domestic Slaughters]

| Country | Years | Estimated Deaths |
|--------------------------|-----------------|--|
| Sudan | 1955-1972 | 750,000 |
| Sudan | 1983-1995 | 1.3 million |
| Indonesia | 1965 | Ca. 400,000-450,000 |
| Nigeria/Biafra | 1967-1970 | 1 million civilian; 1 million military |
| Uganda [Idi Amin] | 1971-1978 | Ca. 300,000 |
| Uganda [Obote] | 1981-1985 | Ca. 300,000 |
| Bangladesh/East Pakistan | 1971 | 1 million civilian; 500,000 military |
| Burundi | 1972 | Ca. 250,000 |
| Indonesia/Timor | 1975-1980 | Ca. 100,000 (out of a population of 2 million) |
| Cambodia/Khmer Rouge | 1075-1978 | Ca. 1.75 million, of which ca. 90,000 murdered |
| Angola | 1980-1988 | Ca. 700,000 |
| Mozambique | 1980-1988 | Ca. 1 million (1989 UN figure was 90,000) |
| Iraq/Kurds | First half 1988 | Ca. 100,000 killed in a pure WW-II Nazi mobile unit-style extermination campaign. (Since 1970 had destroyed 3,000 Kurdish villages and moved 1.5 million Kurds.) |
| Somalia | 1991-1992 | 350,000 starved to death; 1.5 million refugees |
| Angola | 1993-1994 | Over 100,000. In September 1994, a UN Secretary-General's report quoted a 'death rate' of 1,000/day, or over 300,000/year, 'the highest of any conflict in the world'. 2 million refugees. |
| Burundi | October 1993 | Ca. 200,000 |
| Rwanda | 1994 | 500-800,000; 4 million refugees |
| Bosnia/Yugoslavia | 1992-1995 | Ca. 200,000 |
| TOTAL DEATHS | | Approximately 12.25 million |

Response – action, intervention – is made by governments and international agencies, and not by the general public or public opinion. In the very few cases in which a national executive actually *requires* the consent of the national legislature, and the United States is the major and most crucial example, the relation of public opinion to government policy when faced with a genocide is tenuous. It is here, if at all, that information supplied by media plays a role; it is the point at which warning by the media, if it were there, could affect public opinion. Yet the examples of Rwanda, Somalia, Bosnia and Haiti all demonstrated that this was *not* the case, most particularly in the United States. Warren Strobel, author of the 1997 volume, *Late Breaking*

Foreign Policy: The News Media's Influence on Peace Operations, stated in an April 1997 Conference in Washington DC:

...that the so-called 'CNN effect' – whereby, supposedly, CNN broadcasts a crisis or disaster and officials rush to change their policy agenda in response – is a myth.²⁴

This conclusion was confirmed by the remaining participants of the Conference: ...in most instances, the often dramatic, emotion-rousing images shown on television have not controlled the US foreign policy agenda nor have they forced substantive policy changes. These were the conclusions of speakers at two recent discussions of the mass media's impact on international affairs organized by the US Institute of Peace.

In Bosnia, for example, the mass media - including some reporters who hoped to influence US foreign policy - filmed and reported on the atrocities of the war for years with no response from either the public or the Bush administration. 'We're perfectly capable of watching horrible things on our TV screens [and doing nothing]', Strobel said. He quoted Warren Zimmerman, the last US ambassador to Yugoslavia: 'It wouldn't have mattered if television was going 24 hours around the clock with Serb atrocities. Bush wasn't going to get in'.²⁵

Certainly for the United States, the reluctance of US administrations to become involved in Somalia, Bosnia or Rwanda did *not* reflect prevailing opinions in the general public – as distinguished from the opinions of members of Congress, the House and Senate – irrespective of whether the media had presented them with sufficient or insufficient amounts of information on the basis of which to make informed judgements. A careful series of seven public opinion surveys, between May 1993 and May 1995, covering Bosnia (on three separate occasions), Somalia, Haiti, and US participation in UN peacekeeping missions in general, all resulted in very similar statistics. About a third of the respondees *opposed* US intervention under any circumstance. Another third *favoured* US intervention in all circumstances. The remaining third *favoured* US intervention *provided* the following conditions were met:

- a) the intervention was sanctioned by the United Nations Security Council;
- b) the United States did not act alone; its forces were part of a multinational force;
- c) The US president presented the case for intervention to the public.

Given these three conditions, even if US involvement should result in the loss of life among American servicemen, percentages ranging from the mid-fifties to over seventy percent favored intervention in one or another of the three specific crisis areas. Without those three conditions, roughly the same percentages of the general public surveyed opposed intervention.²⁶

It is also obvious, although they were cases of US military intervention that had *no* relation to instances of genocide, that when the Reagan administration invaded Grenada, and the Bush administration Panama, both for relatively trivial reasons, these were acts of fiat, with no prior discussion, and therefore certainly totally independent of support by 'public opinion', or even that of the US congress.

The media as 'Early Warners', and the effects of the media on the (US) policy process

In 1996 and 1997, three books and a series of monographs appeared which dealt with the effects of news media on US Government decision-making in cases of genocide, humanitarian emergencies and peace operations. All addressed the question of whether the media provided early warning, as well as their subsequent presumptive effects as pressures on policy formation. I have summarized the most relevant sections of these studies and added information from my own research on US policy process concerning Somalia, Bosnia and Rwanda.²⁷

(1) *From Massacres to Genocide: The Media, Public Policy and Humanitarian Crises*. Robert I Rotberg and Thomas G. Weiss, editors. (The Brookings Institution and the World Peace Foundation, 1996.)

The book dealt with four major questions, only one of which concerned the utility of information provided by the media and humanitarian organizations to policy makers. Two of the more valuable chapters in the book are by Andrew Natsios and John Shattuck, as both were US government policy makers in the 1990's; Natsios was director of the USAID Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) in the administration of President Bush, and John Shattuck is Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights in the administration of President Clinton.²⁸

Natsios was one of the key participants in the eventual US government decision to become involved in Somalia, which will be described in some detail further on in the paper.

Natsios' chapter looks at what he calls "the international disaster response system", and asks:

...how such a system is activated to respond - who makes the decision to respond, how the decision is made, and what pressures are brought to bear on the decision-making process. It will not deal with the operation of the response system itself. More specifically, this chapter will examine whether the news media play a central role in forcing public policy-makers to attend to a major foreign disaster and when the media's role is peripheral or irrelevant.

This chapter suggests that the so-called 'CNN effect' has taken on more importance than it deserves as an explanation for responses emanating from the policy-making process in Washington. In its crudest form the CNN effect suggests that policy-makers only respond when there are scenes of mass starvation on the evening news. It also suggests that policy-makers obtain most of their information about ongoing disasters from media reports. Both propositions are inaccurate and seriously exaggerated. The truth is that most complex emergencies receive little media coverage at any stage. Usually it is when the disaster response is unsuccessful and people die that serious coverage occurs.²⁹

Natsios puts forward three propositions, which he then explains in some detail:

PROPOSITION I: Policy-makers will actively support an early and robust government humanitarian response to a complex humanitarian emergency if it threatens the geopolitical interests of the United States. Electronic and print

media attention will be tangential or irrelevant to the decision, whether or not the United States intervenes

PROPOSITION II: In an area of peripheral geopolitical importance to US interests where a complex humanitarian emergency threatens, AID will initiate the relief response without outside direction if there are sufficient resources available and no approvals outside the agency are required. Print and electronic media attention will be tangential or irrelevant in the initial response, but may influence sustained funding from Congress...

PROPOSITION III: The government's response to a complex humanitarian emergency in an area peripheral to American geopolitical interests will provoke opposition from career officers if 1) US military force is needed, 2) the UN Security Council must become engaged, or 3) US diplomatic capital must be expended to rally the support of other nations in favor of intervention. The president or Congress can intervene to reverse this opposition to intervention. The electronic media can play an important role in focusing public and policy-maker's attention to the crisis..."

And concludes:

This analysis suggests that focusing attention in the decision-making apparatus of the US Government would probably be more productive than focusing on attempts at reforming errant media behavior, as the latter is probably not as essential a factor as conventional wisdom suggests. The CNN factor may have consequences for fundraising for NGOs and for sustained congressional funding but is not essential to early intervention except where troops for security are critically important. Even then media coverage may not be sufficient to force a robust international response.

Shattuck's comments focused on *Bureaucracy and the Media*:

There are major political and bureaucratic factors that militate against US intervention in cases like Bosnia and Rwanda. I would identify four syndromes in particular that have limited the US response to these crises.

Vietnam and Somalia syndrome (fear of losing): This can be a healthy check on our commitment but an unhealthy inhibition against advancing the US post-Cold War national interests in limiting conflict.

Interagency syndrome (gridlock at the National Security Council): Interagency processes emphasize consensus, thus giving any major player (for example, the Department of Defense) an effective veto power over humanitarian intervention.

Presidential support syndrome: Strong public support is unlikely until the president has stimulated it by cogently explaining that the redefinition of US national interests includes the prevention of human rights and humanitarian disasters that might destabilize the world. This is a catch-22 situation, since the lack of presidential leadership and lack of public support tend to cancel each other out...

In discussing the media, we need to keep in mind a genuine distinction between print and electronic media. Nothing compares with the sheer intimacy of television. It has the ability to grab and galvanize the viewer and compel the public to shout: *do something!* But the electronic media also have the defects of their virtues. They tend to polarize the viewing audience, especially when the subject is Rwanda or

Bosnia, initially capturing attention by eliciting outrage but steadily numbing the viewer over time through compassion fatigue.³⁰

(2) *The News Media, Civil War, and Humanitarian Action*. Larry Minear, Colin Scott, Thomas G. Weiss (Lynne Reiner Publishers, 1996).³¹

This volume examined six case studies: Liberia, Northern Iraq (Operation Provide Comfort to AID the Kurds in April 1991), Somalia, the former Yugoslavia, Haiti, and Rwanda in an effort to discern the interrelationships between the media, humanitarian organizations and governments. One subquestion was '...the extent of influence by the news media on the processes of policy formation and humanitarian action.' The book found the interactions 'complex' and presented these in a series of interactive diagrams that contribute very little to understanding whether there was any contribution of media reporting to government decision-making, and if so how and to what degree. Quantitative data of media attention is not included in the case studies, and, if anything, information provided in several of them demonstrate not only that media reporting was often inaccurate, simplistic and misleading, but that it contributed little to policy response. The book quoted the most highly merited international report on the Rwandan events to the effect that:

It is clear the media play an increasingly influential role within the international humanitarian AID system. However, for a variety of reasons it is difficult to determine precisely how influential this role is and how it varies between different contexts and between different types of agency.³²

This was however far from the most important comment on the media made by this same report. It was, in fact, extremely critical of the press. It concluded that early media coverage of the events in Rwanda after the genocide began on April 6, 1994, was generally 'irresponsible', and it criticized most particularly the vaunted *New York Times*. Not until the end of July 1994, when it still only supported President Clinton's decision to send US humanitarian AID to the refugee camp in Goma, did the *New York Times* deviate from a persistent and strong editorial position supporting total inaction in the face of a clear and enormous genocide. *New York Times* editorials were also grossly misleading, continually referring to the events in Rwanda as 'tribal conflict'. During the first three months of 1994 there was virtually no Western media coverage of events in Rwanda, despite the rising tensions, repeated warnings from humanitarian NGO's and the killings of between 100,000 and 250,000 people in Burundi only a few months before. The book also notes that when France mounted Operation Turquoise to Rwanda in late June, it did not reflect '...pressure from French or European media, ...(it) was more the product of French political interests in Francophone Africa.' The French Government had no more interest in stopping the *genocide* that any other nation – African *or* Western – and did not arouse itself about 'humanitarian' concerns until the Hutu Government, which was responsible for the genocide and which France was still supplying with arms, was rapidly being defeated on the battlefield. As for Haiti, the book noted that 'the US media by and large covered the "plight" of the elites in Port-au-Prince much more thoroughly than that of the rest of the country.' Perhaps this was not altogether surprising when even a branch of the US Government – the Central Intelligence

Agency – was actively supporting these same ‘elites’ and anti-Aristide forces that killed 5,000 people from the time of the military coup in September 1991. In that context, clearly the US Government did not need the media to supply either ‘early warning’ or to provide it with ‘political will’ for ‘early response’. However, when the US-led multinational force landed in Haiti in September 1994, 500 media personnel were on hand; *that* was US ‘news’.

Before going on to the third study, it is important here to introduce the work of Harff and the Global Events Data System (GEDS) group on which her research results are based. Using essentially a single press service source, the Reuters World Service, and keying each individual press report according to a series of substantive categories, these studies claim to be able to distinguish between situations which will erupt into genocide and those which will not. Collectively, their papers have reported on research which examined pre-crisis events in Slovenia, Croatia, Kosovo, Bosnia, Macedonia, Abkhazia-Georgia, Rwanda and Burundi.³³ Harff focuses particularly on a group of indicators which she labels ‘accelerators’, and measures the incidence of these during two periods: in the three months before a given date, and in the nine months preceding it, that is, in the previous year altogether.³⁴ Because of their emphasis on the ‘accelerators’, which are, in essence, or at least include, instrumental political occurrences, these studies are far more advanced than any others that are available. I nevertheless do not think that the studies actually succeed in demonstrating what they claim to demonstrate, and therefore do not discuss them further here. For example, Macedonia did not erupt into genocide or even into open warfare, not because of the relative numbers of press reports in the indicator categories but for two salient reasons: that the Serbian president did not particularly think it desirable to attempt to incorporate Macedonia, though he did think it particularly desirable to incorporate as much of Bosnia as he could, and that President Bush placed a contingent of US ground troops with the UN observer force on the Serbian-Macedonian border and stated that if they were attacked the US would become militarily engaged.

(3) Warren P. Strobel, *Late Breaking Foreign Policy: The News Media's Influence on Peace Operations* (United States Institute of Peace, 1997).

Strobel's book is the most directly concerned with our subject and deals primarily with Somalia, with some additional data regarding the media and Rwanda. He begins with the standard cliché:

‘CNN got US into Somalia, and CNN got US out.’ That is the popular explanation of television's role in the US military intervention in Somalia, an explanation accepted by many government and media leaders in the United States³⁵ and then proceeds to dismantle it entirely. The best explanation for its currency as a formulation by well-informed persons, particularly those that served in the Bush administration, is that it permits them to totally avoid any description of what actually occurred within the government: the policy dispute and debates that led to national inaction.

I have appended Strobel's tables which demonstrate the number of national network television news programs (CBS, NBC, ABC, etc.) which mentioned Somalia in

the year 1992, although most of these were no more than a few lines. (The third of Strobel's tables provides the number of network TV broadcasts that dealt with Rwanda in 1994.) Another table, taken from a monograph by Eric Larson includes data for CNN-TV.³⁶ I have also included data compilations of press reporting prepared by two other authors: Steven Livingston's tables showing the number of *Washington Post* articles dealing with both the Sudan and Somalia between 1983 and 1994,³⁷ and Brian Hoey's covering both the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* from January 1, 1992, to March 31, 1994.³⁸ One thus has data both on the popular national-network TV and the 'elite' press. Of course, January 1, 1992, is a *very late* date for Somalia: on August 13, 1989, Holly Burkhalter of Human Rights Watch had published an 'op-ed' article in the *New York Times*, titled 'Somalia's Massacres Aren't on TV',³⁹ and as we will see in a moment, there was *substantial, direct, official* 'early warning' at the *very highest levels long before* the press or TV discovered the Somalia crisis.

Strobel's data, in focusing on US national network TV, demonstrate unequivocally that these did not respond to what was taking place in Somalia, but to what US politicians or the government did in or regarding Somalia: first the visit by several US Senators to Somalia early in July 1992 (at a time when only three relief agencies were working in Somalia), and then President Bush's decision to initiate a US food airlift in August 1992. Prior to August 1992 only 14 network TV broadcasts had even mentioned Somalia in 1992. In July 1992, there were only three news reports on Somalia on ABC, CBS and NBC news combined, and only one on CNN, and these were occasioned by the visits of the US Senators. TV reporting *followed* the US AID delivery program.⁴⁰ It also *followed* newspaper reporting, not vice-versa, in other words the 'images', and the CNN effect lagged behind rather than led.

In other words, sharp increases in media coverage *followed*, rather than *preceded*, the administration's actions. The policymakers affected the media more than – or at least before – the media affected them. The lesson here is that by taking the first step in Somalia, the Bush administration opened itself up to greater potential influence from the news media. Once the decisions were taken, reporters and camera crews from around the world began to converge on Somalia and report back on a tragedy that had been going on for many months while the world paid only sporadic attention.⁴¹

Larson entitled the relevant section in his monograph 'Somalia and the Myth of the "CNN Effect".'

The media coverage was characterized 'by coverage that framed the Somalia intervention as a humanitarian relief mission that evolved into a "war" story',⁴² exactly the opposite of what it was. That was, of course, also the preferred presentation of the administration, even after US military forces were deployed to Somalia in December 1992. Strobel even suggests that Natsios intended the airlift in order to draw the media to Somalia and to increase media coverage of the crisis.⁴³ When Natsios had tried to interest the media in the situation in Somalia earlier, in the spring of 1992, he was unsuccessful.

(4) *Monographs* by Nik Gowing.

Beginning in 1994, Nik Gowing, a member of the staff of the BBC international TV news service, wrote several extensive studies on media experience during several recent major conflicts. His conclusions are altogether in line with the arguments in this paper, and could scarcely be more negative.

The media's role in the new generation of regional conflicts and substate violence is ambiguous, unclear, and often misconstrued. Journalists and policymakers alike tend to assume that the media coverage has an undefined yet pivotal role in helping conflict management or prevention. Indeed, a role for the media in conflict prevention is routinely assumed at conferences, seminars, and gaming sessions without question or any clear understanding of what that role is.

Frequently, there is an undignified rush to judgement. The instinctive assumptions made by policymakers, diplomats, and the military are often wrong. Their instant, superficial analysis of the media's role is usually skewed by the emotion of anecdotal comments as opposed to rigorous analysis. Frequently, the media are blamed both for what does and does not happen...

But off-the-cuff, apparently well-informed references to what is widely referred to as the 'CNN factor' are not always helpful to understanding the precise dynamics of this relationship. Often such references are conspicuously ill-informed and based on false assumptions. Understandable, superficial emotional responses by political leaders who make decisions to engage (or not) in a conflict are not the same as a fundamental political will to act in the national interest. This distinction is crucial.

Like many decision makers, former US defence secretary William Perry, for example, confirms the instant power of the CNN factor and the images that pursue him from office to hotel room to home. Pressed further he talks of 'digging in my heels' in response. More important, Perry confirms this author's earlier research that although vivid media reporting from conflict does provide useful tip-sheet coverage of developments, government officials usually consider most coverage to be trite and crude. Former US State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns has highlighted the resulting dilemma: 'The challenge for US in government is to balance the need to feed the beast of television against the more natural and wise human instinct to reflect before speaking.'

...But despite the conviction of many journalists about the powerful influence that their reporting has on policy, ministers and government officials instinctively doubt the veracity of such reporting.

...Most important, the result is a government decision to commit itself publicly to the *appearance* of action by way of palliative humanitarian operations, rather than through a firm political commitment to do everything possible to prevent or end a conflict, using military force if necessary.

...Ultimately, despite all the bleating, the vital national interests and strategic assessments of governments hold sway over emotions. Usually those national interests are far more limited than most assume, unless national security is threatened. However appalling the TV pictures and newspaper reporting, in the US (and probably in many other Western countries as well) 'severe human rights violations, including genocide' are most unlikely to constitute a vital national interest.

...Like the misplaced assumptions of the power of the CNN factor in conflict management, most people readily assume that there is, or must be, a direct cause-and-effect relationship between media coverage and the chances for either preventing, preempting, or limiting a conflict. The emotions created by vivid, gruesome TV images add weight to this assumption.

Again, the evidence suggests otherwise. Conflicts are now predominantly of a substate and intrastate nature in what are described as 'sick state' cases. Rarely is there media coverage of a conflict that is about to explode. It is war, and the images of fighting, that catalyses TV coverage, in particular, and not the vaguer possibility of a conflict breaking out at some indefinable moment. When it comes to prevention, media coverage is usually too late to help.

...On the buildup to the Rwanda genocide, it must be concluded that the media were unbriefed, ill-informed, ill-prepared, and therefore unaware of what might be looming. On the other hand, NGOs, the UN and, therefore, leading world powers, all had access to early warning signs. But in some cases they failed to understand them, and in others, governments and the UN actively suppressed them.

...As the Rwanda Steering Committee report makes clear: 'Inadequate and inaccurate reporting by international media on the genocide itself contributed to international indifference and inaction.'⁴⁴

Somalia

Strobel's narrative does include some key-points in the evolution of US policy on Somalia, but he is missing more of them than his presentation includes. Although Natsios had favoured a US response all along, he was not the key decision-maker in approving the August 1992 US airlift.

- *In December 1991*, the International Committee of the Red Cross had already criticized the United Nations for its absence from Somalia and lack of activities there. (The UN had pulled its staff out, UN Under-Secretary-General Jonah later explained, because it could not get insurance for them in the conflict zone.)
- *In January 1991*, Andrew Natsios testified before a US Congressional committee, and said that 'Somalia was the greatest emergency in the world.' He reported that the death rate due to starvation was by then *1,000 per day*, and suggested that that was a sufficiently high number to be a criterion for a major preventative effort. Natsios had by then also begun urging such an effort within the US administration.
- *In March 1991*, the President's National Security Adviser asked Fred Cuny, who had planned the logistics and method for the US Provide Comfort operation in Northern Iraq to draft a plan for an analogous US mission in Somalia. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Colin Powell, and the Joint Chiefs opposed any US involvement, and the plan was not adopted.⁴⁵
- *In July 1991*, a conference of the Somali warring parties was held in Djibouti after which a message was sent to UN Under-Secretary Jonah: 'We have done

what we can as intermediaries; the UN must now step in.' The reply was, in essence, 'We are sorry, it is too complicated a problem for US.' (In January and February 1992, Jonah and a deputy had made two single day trips to Mogadishu, and had been given Potemkin tours by General Aideed, and in the Spring of 1991 the UN bureaucracy had spent three months looking for an 'authority' in Somalia to provide a permission to carry out a single AID delivery contract.)

- *In July 1991*, Cuny was again requested by the US National Security Council to draft another plan for a rapid US humanitarian food mission, and was specifically told that it was to be ready for announcement before the Republican Presidential Convention in the fall. The plan was again rejected because of the opposition of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; instead President Bush authorized a US airlift for August, also against their opposition. The mockery of what had been occurring with UNOSOM I in Mogadishu for months under UN Resolutions 751 and 767 strongly contributed to the August decision. For much of the year UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali pleaded, privately and publicly, for the major powers and the UN Security Council to intervene in Somalia, and criticized them for their disinterest in Africa in contrast to Yugoslavia.
- *By September 1991*, the death rate in Somalia was 2,000 per day.
- *Following the November 1992 US Presidential elections*, in a matter of days during several National Security Council meetings, the deployment of US forces in a multinational mission under UN authorization was agreed to. This force would become UNITAF, operating under UN Resolution 794, with Chapter 7 authority to use force. The US Joint Chiefs of Staff finally agreed on the terms that there would be *no* similar US role in a UN operation in Yugoslavia. Several other countries had reportedly rejected UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali's earlier requests that they lead such a mission. The UN reported the death rate in Somalia at this point as 3,000 per day. When the decision was made to send US troops to Somalia, *then* Somalia got 'on the media agenda'.⁴⁶

All of the above, and not a count of press or TV stories, or the dates on which they appeared, explain why the Somali crisis was not an 'early warning' problem, and what was not done and why, as well as what was done. Only a small fraction of the known information regarding policy formulation – early response, or late response – on the part of the United States, other nations, and the United Nations has been included here.

Rwanda

As for Rwanda, the post-April 1994 genocide was most definitely not a lack of early warning, irrespective of the fact that there was little media reporting, or media warning from Kigali between January and April 1994.⁴⁷ There were *years* of early warning: the smaller scale massacres which were duly documented in successive Human Rights Watch reports since 1990; the massive killings in Burundi in October

1993; the human rights organizations in Rwanda that had gotten wind of what was coming and were trying to convince any and all foreign visitors that they could find; UNAMIR, with a UN mandated force of 2,500 men was present in Rwanda, as well as a Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General. The unprecedented report that the UNAMIR commander, Canadian Gen. Dallaire, sent to UN headquarters on January 11, 1994, and which most researchers writing on the Rwanda events have known about since mid-1995, was publicly released in September 1997 as part of a Belgian legislative investigation.⁴⁸ Gen. Dallaire had been provided with information by a senior commander of the Government's Hutu militia, the Interamwe, with details of the plans and preparations by his own organization for the coming genocide:

- the drawing up of lists of victims - all Tutsi living in the capital of Kigali, but also Hutu officials and human rights activists willing to collaborate in a power-sharing government along the lines agreed to in the Arusha Accords;
- the stockpiling and location of arms for the Hutu militias, with which to do the killing;
- the rate of killing that the Interamwe had projected: 1,000 persons in twenty minutes;
- that Belgian peacekeepers in the UN's UNAMIR force would be attacked and killed as the genocide began, to precipitate the withdrawal of the force.

General Dallaire requested permission to confiscate the stockpiled weapons within 36 hours, and to interpret his (Chapter 6) mandate so as to protect Rwandan civilians in any future contingency. Both requests were denied by senior officials in the office of the Secretary-General. A copy of Gen. Dallaire's cable also reached the desk of the head of the US Department of State's Africa division. It waited a month before it was read, and when it was read - long after Dallaire's request had already been turned down - it was considered implausible by US officials. A Rwandan Government radio station had been broadcasting for months, urging the killing of Tutsi, and would continue to do so during the genocide. Dallaire apparently made the same request a second time some time later on, and was again denied. A US AID investigative team that had chanced to be in Rwanda in the last days of February 1994 also learned at least some of these details, and asked the US ambassador in Kigali to discuss some response to the situation: they were in effect ordered home.

When the genocide started, the international response was striking. The American president had lectured the United Nations and Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali in September 1993 on how the UN '...had to learn to say no.' Catastrophically, Rwanda became the first victim of that retreat from the previous US position of 'multilateral engagement'. US decision-making by then was entirely governed by what had taken place in Somalia in mid-1993 and by the disastrous process following that event, which produced the final version of Presidential Decision Directive 25 (PDD-25), a new US policy on how it would deal with crises such as these. France, Belgium and the US landed troops in Kigali or in neighboring countries, but only to withdraw their own nationals. The Hutu government and the Interamwe

took this 'hands off' response as a signal to spread out from the capital city and to accelerate the killings. Had the same force landed in Kigali with Chapter 7 authority to reinforce UNAMIR, the killings would have been stopped in a week with less than ten percent of their ultimate deaths. Instead the US and other countries pressed the UN Security Council to withdraw the UNAMIR force entirely, and it was cut to 250 observers as estimates of the numbers killed reached into the hundreds of thousands. As the numbers reached 200,000, then 500,000, then 700,000, they were all reported in the media, week by week. At the same time the US Department of State ordered its staffers not to use the term 'genocide' for many weeks in describing the events. When the French government became concerned, it was not due to the genocide, but because of the impending defeat of the genocidal government forces that it was still supporting, and in part to facilitate their escape. This effort was pursued under the guise of a 'humanitarian' mission. Countries that criticized the French plan in the UN Security Council – New Zealand, the Czech Republic, and several others – did not however offer to send their own military forces to Rwanda to help UNAMIR stop the killing.

In December 1997, in a speech to the Organization of African Unity, US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright admitted to the essential argument presented above, as well as to other errors that the international community compounded during its late, reluctant and misguided response.

We, the international community, should have been more active in the early stages of the atrocities in Rwanda in 1994 and called them what they were – genocide...

She promised that the United States would control future funding 'to insure that humanitarian AID is not used to sustain armed camps or to support genocidal killers.'

The United States has made a strong commitment to supervise our refugee assistance far more closely and to work to keep humanitarian AID from falling into the wrong hands...⁴⁹

Secretary of State Albright's final acknowledgement referred to the fact that those who had carried out the genocide in Rwanda were subsequently supported and maintained (for over two years) by international AID in UN refugee camps in Zaire, in which they rearmed themselves and from which they continued to attack Rwanda.

Yugoslavia

International media coverage of the wars in the former Yugoslavia, particularly in Bosnia, was voluminous, detailed, explicit.⁵⁰ It made no difference for four gruesome years, until a potentially fatal loss of credibility to both NATO and the United Nations was at risk. Even then, it was the potential risk to a US presidential election that finally forced a denouement. And there had been no lack of advance warning: to the EU, the CSCE, the UN, and to individual nations. US Ambassador Zimmerman has described the prewar meetings of the Serbian and Croatian presidents, Slobodan Milosevic and Franjo Tudjman, attempting to come to an agreement over outspread

maps on how to divide up Bosnia between them. These meetings were known to several Western ambassadors, and duly reported to their home capitals.

On February 10, 1993, long after the fighting had begun and information regarding Serbian atrocities was well known, US Secretary of State Christopher stated:

We cannot ignore the human toll. Serbian 'ethnic cleansing' has been pursued through mass murders, systematic beatings and rapes of Muslims and others, prolonged shelling of innocents in Sarajevo and elsewhere, forced displacement of entire villages, inhumane treatment of prisoners in detention camps, and the blockading of relief to sick and starving civilians. Atrocities have been committed by other parties as well. Our conscience revolts at the idea of passively accepting such brutality...

The world's response to the violence in the former Yugoslavia is an early and crucial test of how it will address the concerns of ethnic and religious minorities in the post-Cold War world. That question reaches throughout Eastern Europe. It reaches to the States of the former Soviet Union...

The events in the former Yugoslavia raise the question of whether a state may address the rights of its minorities by eradicating those minorities to achieve 'ethnic purity'. Bold tyrants and fearful minorities are watching to see whether 'ethnic cleansing' is a policy [that] the world will tolerate.⁵¹

The first paragraph of Sec. Christopher's statement can almost be taken as an operational paraphrase of 'genocide'. Nevertheless, within three months the Secretary's rhetoric and US policy had turned to phrases about 'quagmire', and to total US non-involvement. Once the UN had designated six Bosnian cities as 'safe havens', and did nothing to carry out the dozens of resolutions passed by its bodies, the world watched a succession of four years of utterly scandalous and disgraceful behavior by the great powers, by the EU, by NATO, and by the UN. By January 13, 1993, UN officials stated that 250,000 shells had been fired on the city of Sarajevo alone since the siege of the Bosnian capital had begun. On one single day (December 6, 1992) UN military observers counted 1,500 shells falling on the Sarajevo suburb of Otage. Every day the shells were 'observed': counted, recorded, reported, and the sums given to the press. They were well reported in the media: published in the press and referred to on TV. *Each* shell can also be considered a *late* 'warning'. They were irrelevant to any UN or coalition response. In effect, by that mid-way date, the decision had been taken 250,000 times to do nothing, simply to watch. Pictures of emaciated and tortured concentration camp inmates in Europe were once again widely seen, in Europe and all over the world, on TV and in the press, while the occupants were still in the camps. The UN Secretary General's Special Representative, Yasushi Akashi, and the military commanders, Generals Rose and Morillion, successively accommodated Serbian demands, and let the fighting and killing go on. When Gorazde and Srebrenica, two of the UN's six designated 'safe haven' cities, were overrun by Serbian forces, General Janvier persistently refused to call in air-strikes to protect either the UN forces or the cities and their civilian inhabitants, as local (Dutch) military commanders repeatedly requested. Instead the British and Dutch Governments asked to withdraw their forces from the two respective cities. Between 1991 and 1995, for different reasons at different times, the US, British and French

governments refused to undertake a coordinated military response (and the USSR and then Russia actively supported Serbia). It was widely understood that the vaunted 'humanitarian' effort they supported was being carried on so as to *avoid* a military response to the killing and genocide. Media reporting was voluminous. Under these conditions, over a span of years, it is rather meaningless to speak of a contribution of media reporting to 'early' or to any response, except to postulate that the 'response' of the great powers and of international organizations could have been even more miserable had there been no media reporting at all.

Some other cases - Less known, or less attended to

In addition to the discussion of major international events, such as Somalia, Bosnia, and Rwanda, it would be useful to provide examples of three other events involving a smaller number of deaths, either past or still brewing, and to examine the aspects of available knowledge and response, either early or late. Since there are no quantitative thresholds established to define genocide, the three examples below would very likely qualify, since they were attacks against specific identified groups within the State. The cases differ: the events described in Zimbabwe and in Kenya were unquestionably organized by the Government, while in the case of the events in India in 1992, it was not the State, directly or indirectly, that was responsible for provoking sectarian killings, but an opposition political party.⁵²

Zimbabwe-Matabeleland: 1983-1984

In August 1981, the Government of Robert Mugabe brought 106 North Korean instructors to Zimbabwe to train a special operation unit of the military, the Fifth Brigade, or Gukurakundi. (In Western military services a brigade would nominally include between 2,400 and 3,000 soldiers.) They were deployed to Matabeleland in January 1983, at the same time as journalists were forbidden to leave Bulawayo, the provincial capital in Matabeleland. Within six weeks, the Fifth Brigade, together with members of the Government's Central Intelligence Organization, had murdered between 2,000 and 3,000 people in a terror campaign which included many of the characteristics of the Khmer Rouge murders in Cambodia in 1975-78 and of Iraq's Anfall campaign in 1987-88; little differed except the numbers killed. In fact the recent 'Bishops Report' on these events, released in May 1997 notes: 'The data relating to Bhalagwe (a concentration camp) may bear some comparison with genocide survivors, such as those from the Nazi era or Cambodian survivors from the Pol Pot regime.'⁵³ The killings included forced participation of families and neighbors, gross atrocities, the burning of villages and homesteads, etc. After the killing, the Government instituted a food embargo over the area, which '...resulted in the intimidation and near-starvation of 400,000 civilians.' As best, as is known, no description of these events appeared at the time in the African press or weeklies (and certainly none in the Western daily press). Nevertheless, word did get out in some manner, as in 1984 or 1985 an independent British film team produced an hour-long documen-

tary, dealing with the killings and their circumstances, which was shown on TV in several European countries.⁵⁴

In May 1997, after five years of preparation and 1,000 interviews, particularly in Tsholotsho and Nyamandlovu, districts of Matabeleland North and Matobo in Matabeleland South, a report on the events was released by one of the two Zimbabwean human rights groups that had undertaken the study. The main organization identified with the report, the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe – in effect the Catholic Church hierarchy in Zimbabwe – was not particularly happy that the report had been made available to the public. Nor was ZANU, the political party of the Matabele, as they feared it might upset the 1987 accord between the Government ZAPU party and their own. There was no response by the Government to the publication of the report, which took place in South Africa, and it was not mentioned in the Government press in Zimbabwe. No representation on the subject has ever been made by the OAU, either before or since May 1997. At the end of May, Amnesty International asked President Mugabe to acknowledge the report and its findings, at which point the President offered his first public comment. He said that the massacre claims were ‘...a pack of lies’, and that the report was meant to cause trouble. ‘Whatever happened during the dissidents era, happened in war...If we dig up history, then we wreck the nation...These people are trying to fan factional and personal divisions among US, digging up the past so that we could end up divided on tribal and even village lines.’ The human rights lawyers, he said, were ‘mischiefmakers.’⁵⁵ The Genocide Convention pertains, of course, ‘...in time of peace and in time of war’, but Zimbabwe was *not* at war in any case in 1983; the war against white rule had been over for several years.

India: Hindu-Muslim violence in 1992

The end of the 1980's and early 1990's saw a sharp increase in inflammatory anti-Muslim activism in India on the part of the right-wing Hindu fundamentalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the Vishnu Hindu Parishad, the Rashtriva Swayamsevak Sangh (National Volunteer Corps) and the Shiv Sena.⁵⁶

...the Shiv Sena has perfected techniques of brutal violence; throughout the 1980's it instigated riots on the outskirts of Bombay and in other Maharashtra cities, always targeted precisely at the Muslims and their property...with electoral registers that enabled them to identify Muslim households to attack, a program that imitated the actions of the Congress Party members during the anti-Sikh violence of 1984. As in Delhi in 1984, so in Bombay in 1993; retraction of police protection for the victims revealed the extent to which this arm of the Indian state had been communalized...The absence of any neutral arm of the state to police and provide protection...has left this essential responsibility to the discretion of politicians and men who command armed gangs...⁵⁷

In this instance, the BJP campaigns and those of its ideologically related groups were thoroughly reported in the Indian press, as they were a basic means by which the party vied with the Congress Party for political power. They were also reported in the international press, naturally to a lesser degree, but sufficient for anyone to understand their significance and their danger to India.

There had been another India-Pakistan crisis over Kashmir in January 1990, with major mobilization of military forces and threats of the use of nuclear weapons by both sides, and in 1990 alone nearly 5,000 people are reported to have been killed in the Punjab due to the conflict between the Indian Government and the Sikhs, and about 1,000 killed in Hindu-Muslim clashes elsewhere in India. In December 1992, with the President and the parliamentary leader of the BJP present, the two senior political figures of the party, the Muslim Ayodha mosque was destroyed by a Hindu mob. There had been no sectarian riots in Bombay in the 1970's or 1980's. Following the destruction of the mosque, Muslim-Hindu fighting broke out, and after ten days in January 1993, 550 people were reportedly killed, and 75 percent of the Muslim owned shops and street stalls in Bombay had been burned and 50,000 people had their homes burned. By the end of the month, 'thousands' had reportedly been killed, '...most of them Muslims.'⁵⁸ So long as Hindu revivalist parties, which held only two seats in the Indian parliament in 1986 but won 119 – some 20 percent – in the 1991 elections, utilize anti-Muslim rhetoric, exhortations and activism as their primary road to political power, far more serious Hindu-Muslim violence could erupt at any time and spread across India. There have been no international representations to the Indian Government on the problem, and given its nearly fifty year record on Kashmir, it is inconceivable that it would welcome or entertain any.

Kenya: ethnic violence initiated and organized by the Government (1991-92)

The descriptions of events in Kenya since 1991 are excellently documented and abundant in both the general press and in more scholarly publications.⁵⁹ A survey of articles in various African weeklies would undoubtedly run into many hundreds. In December 1991, multilateral AID donors pressured Kenya's President Moi to hold national elections or he would risk losing foreign AID, with the result that elections were scheduled for December 1992. Moi immediately predicted that pluralism would lead to tribal violence. It was a prediction easy to fulfill. The 1993 Human Rights Watch report said that attacks on the Kikuyu were 'organized and systematic...the conflict has been deliberately manipulated and instigated by President Moi and his inner circle.' A 1994 US Department of State human rights report implicated senior aides to President Moi '...in instigating the clashes or in shielding fighters from prosecution.' Even a 238 page report prepared by a special committee of the Kenyan parliament in 1993 linked the violence to high-ranking officials of Moi's government. One of these has been identified as Local Government Minister William ole Ntimama. Estimates of the number of people killed by government organized and sanctioned raiders in 1991-92 range between 1,000 and 1,500, as well as 300,000 people displaced by September 1993. President Moi has repeatedly used tactics bearing strong similarity to those of the Nazi era in 1930's Germany, and to pronouncements of the Nazi party's chief propaganda chief, Paul Goebbels; in speeches to the Kenyan nation he has repeatedly claimed that multiparty politics breeds division and hatred, at the same time as the Government itself has been responsible for organizing the attacks on the Kikuyu and Luo in the Rift Valley.⁶⁰ I have included below three other brief assessments of these events:

State-sanctioned ethnic cleansing has occurred with distressing regularity in the Rift Valley region of central Kenya since multi-partyism was announced. Kalenjin and sometimes Masai militias have attacked Kikuyu, Luo and Luhya farms, burning homes and driving residents away...Beginning in February 1992, the Government...

...orchestrated and engineered the worst intercommunal violence in the nation's history. The killings of Kikuyus and Luos within the Rift Valley, Kenya's breadbasket, by members of the Kalenjin community, from which Moi comes, were ostensibly spurred by land disputes. In reality, the Government used its agents and material to spark the killings to punish the opposition and drive it from the province...

In 1993, some 1,500 people were killed and over 300,000 displaced in clashes in the Rift Valley and Western Provinces. In 1994, the Burnt Forest and Molo areas were both subject to a series of attacks, displacing up to 30,000 people. In 1995, the number of attacks have decreased, but most internally displaced persons have not been able to return to their homes.

Land tenure is the basis for manipulating ethnic tensions in the Rift Valley. Rather than addressing growing population density and shrinking land availability, the Government has exploited ethnic relations in a classic divide-and-rule tactic. Asset transfer in the Rift Valley has enabled the Government to reward and empower Kalenjin and Masai loyalists with gifts of land or facilitated purchase of land from sellers under duress. The losers in the process are a key constituency for the opposition in the most important agricultural areas of the country.

There are numerous reasons for the clashes:

- The regime wanted to portray the anarchic results of democratization.
- The regime hoped the clashes would unify the coalition between the Kalenjin and other smaller groups, while displacing Kikuyu from the Rift Valley.
- The policy of *majimboism* (regionalism) was supported in an effort to restore land primarily to Kalenjin who claim they were originally displaced by the colonial authority's favoritism toward the Kikuyu.

The clashes created further fragmentation along ethnic lines. It brought the historic problem of the Kikuyu back to the center of the political debate, capitalizing on resentment of the Kikuyus' favoured status under the British and their continuing asset accumulation since then.

Politically, the strategy was extremely successful for Moi's government and its patchwork of minority supporting groups. Leaders of government-allied groups gleefully stoked the anti-Kikuyu flames, and the opposition splintered throughout 1992 prior to the elections. The clashes appeared to many observers as locally originating intercommunal violence, rather than State-sponsored terrorism and asset-stripping.⁶¹

'We have a President who is determined to fulfill his prophecy of three years ago that the country is not cohesive enough for multi-party democracy,' Imanyara says. 'His desire is to prove he was right even if it means destroying Kenya as a country.'⁶² (Gitobu Imanyara, publisher of the *Nairobi Law Review*, until it was forcibly closed by the Kenyan government).

'The embattled despot, Daniel Arap Moi, of Kenya, has sought to preserve his regime by exploiting ethnic divisions.'⁶³

The only response was, again, from the international AID community supplying Kenya with foreign assistance. In 1991, donors suspended development assistance to Kenya on the grounds of its human rights abuses, government corruption, and economic waste. In 1993 the AID moratorium was lifted, and in 1994 donors again pledged funds. Almost immediately President Moi's Government returned to a policy of political repression, forcibly relocating thousands of Kikuyus from the Rift Valley, jailing opposition politicians, and silencing the media and human rights groups.⁶⁴ Foreign assistance to Kenya nevertheless continued. Western donors gave Kenya over \$8 billion between 1986 and 1995, making it one of the world's largest AID recipients, despite the campaign which could be considered genocide (and continued financial corruption by the Kenyan Government).⁶⁵ With new elections scheduled for March 1998, ethnic-based violence organized by Kenyan Government agencies again broke out in the summer of 1997, so far on a smaller scale than the pre-election campaigns in 1991-92.

Summary

If 'early warning' is considered to be a notice of the likelihood of genocide six months or a year before its potential occurrence, to allow time for political mediation or intervention by outside powers or by international agencies, the media are not particularly suited to providing such notice. The decisions of media editors on what is newsworthy rarely include the political events that precede genocide; it is not 'news' then. And though events such as Bosnia and Rwanda were thoroughly reported in the media, once war had broken out, in one case, and a massacre on an incredible scale, in the other, in neither case did such reporting contribute to 'political will' for response, *any* response, pertinent to the genocide. On the contrary, 'humanitarian assistance' programmes were initiated which were substitutes for doing what was necessary to stop the killing from continuing and, particularly in the Bosnian case, permitted the killing to continue. This paper is not a theoretical exercise, and takes pains to introduce known details of the policy formulation for several of the events discussed. Government determination *not* to respond on the part of the major powers easily overcame any contribution to public and even elite opinions that resulted from information provided by the media. In the Bosnian case that meant a period of four years of high-intensity reporting. Certainly in lesser cases – such as Kenya (1991-92), or India (1992) – there were and are no international moves to 'respond'.

The international community – governments and international organizations – however, has substantial other sources of early warning information than can be provided by the media. They have become particularly developed in recent years, and these are summarized in the study. But 'early warning' is *not* the problem. Rather it is the active disinterest or opposition of those governments with major in-

ternational capabilities to do so to carry out Article I of the Genocide Convention. Bosnia and Rwanda were gross, flagrant, scandalous instances demonstrating that in recent years.

In 1996, a member of Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs wrote the following as the opening paragraph of a 'Draft Early Warning Analysis Framework':

While there are a number of sources (including NGO and media) of early warning information on internal conflicts, such information is rarely presented in a format relevant to policy-makers. As the recent joint donor evaluation of the Rwanda conflict found, what is needed is not so much information but *policy-oriented analysis* that will suggest logical operational responses. One could add, by stating the issue more sharply, that the debate on early warning has not yet moved forward to deal with the issue of the *process link* between early warning analysis and effective preventive action. This may be because existing early warning practices are not effective in producing analysis (as distinct from reporting or monitoring) that clearly presents options for effective preventive action and rapid engagement policy.⁶⁶

But even this is well removed from the crucial point: a willingness to *act*, to abort episodes of genocide. The irony is that since 1945, the United States, USSR/Russia, Britain, France and China have not hesitated to expend well over a million of their own servicemen's lives in military interventions made for their own geo-strategic reasons when they so preferred. (France: Vietnam and Algeria; China: Korea and Vietnam; the US: Vietnam, Dominican Republic, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama; Russia: Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Afghanistan; Britain: Malaysia, Kenya, etc.) They are not willing to risk the loss of dozens or perhaps hundreds in exchange for saving hundreds of thousands and even millions in cases of genocide.

References and Notes

1. The Author is currently writing a book on forceful humanitarian intervention under a grant from the J.T. and C.T. MacArthur Foundation. He would also like to thank Dr. Helen Fein for a meticulous reading of the paper.
2. Journalistic or media 'agenda' setting is a somewhat tautological concept, used in research on the effects of media on public opinion and on government policy, and one definition of it has been given as '...the measured, codified importance of issues in mass media content' - in essence a count of numbers of stories or presentations, their size, etc. Another concept with important implications is journalistic 'framing', the context in which the media presents an event: for example, genocide vs. 'ethnic' or 'tribal' conflict. In an unpublished paper, Helen Fein and colleagues examined such 'frameworks' in the presentation of events in Bosnia in editorial comments in the US press; *Recognition of Genocide in Bosnia: Frameworks of Interpretation in US Newspapers, 1992-1993, and their Implications*, Fein Helen et al. (Conference paper, 1994).
3. According to a Time/CNN poll in the fall of 1996, 23 percent of US households get their news primarily from newspapers, while 59 percent get it from TV. In 1981 41.2 percent of all American TV homes watched a major network (ABC, CBS, NBC) evening news program; in 1995 that number had dropped to 26.1 percent. 65 million US homes can access

CNN; however, on an average day only 300,000 households watch CNN. Zoglin Richard, *The News Wars*, 'Time' (October 21, 1996), pp. 58-70.

In addition, the average US family spends *five minutes per week*, on 'politics', '30 second sound bites', on TV are now down to an average of 8 seconds, and local TV newscasts usually have local murders as the first six stories that they carry. All this makes one highly dubious as to the value of the media as a public informant.

4. Kanninen Tapio, *New Prospects at the United Nations to Utilize Research and Technology Related to Data on International Relations* (Conference paper, November 13, 1987).
5. Dorn A.W., *Keeping Watch For Peace: Fact-Finding by the United Nations Secretary-General*, Chapter 10 in 'United Nations Reform: Looking Ahead After Fifty Years', Fawcett E. and Newcombe H. (1995), pp. 138-147.
6. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace* (United Nations, 1992), pp. 15-16.
7. *Establishment of an Early Warning Mechanism in the United Nations Secretariat and Rationalization of Information Management*, Report of the Interdepartmental Working Group on the Implementation of the Recommendations Contained in *An Agenda for Peace* (September 7, 1993).
8. The stipulated purpose of Relief Web '...is to strengthen the capacity of the humanitarian relief community through the timely dissemination of reliable information on prevention, preparedness and disaster response'. Relief Web, descriptive summary, April 1996 and June 1996; *Guide to Relief Web* (no date); King Dennis, *Relief Web: A New Information Management Tool for the International Humanitarian Community* (November 1996). Relief Web (September 1997) currently lists information on "ongoing emergencies and crises" in 14 countries or areas:

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Afghanistan | Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia) |
| Albania | Russian Federation/Chechnya |
| Angola | Great Lakes, Africa (Burundi, DR Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda) |
| Iraq | Sierra Leone |
| DPR Korea | Somalia |
| Liberia | Sudan |
| Tajikistan | |

As a comment on portions of the paper that follow, a 'Great Lakes IRIN Background Brief' on the current situation in Angola of September 25, 1997, was excellent in depicting political and military developments involving the Angolan Government and UNITA, but one for Kenya also on September 25, discussed only drought, and not the resurgence of violence taking place in Kenya at that time.

9. *Humanitarian Early Warning System (HEWS): Progress and Prospects* (United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs, 1995), and *HEWS Update* (August 1996). There are, of course, more than two decades of research and compilation of indicator lists for development (UNRISD, etc.), starvation (FAO), the exodus of refugees (UNHCR), and all of these agencies routinely monitor such early warning indicator compilations. As examples, an Angola, IRIN Background Brief, of September 25, 1997 and a HEWS Brief on Kenya, August 19, 1997. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the latter were its sources: publications of the Economist Intelligence Unit, Oxford Analytica, Human Rights Watch, Minorities at Risk Project, BBC Focus on Africa, Journal of Modern Africa Studies, and Africa Confidential. In other words, these were all open public sources available to any competent analyst.
10. *Internet and UNHCR: In-Progress Review* (June 10, 1996) in Dmitrichev Andrei, *The Role of Early Warning in the Activities of UNHCR* (UNHCR, October 1996).

11. Walraven Klaus et al., *Conflict Prevention and Early Warning in the Political Practice of International Organizations* (Netherlands Institute of International Relations, Clingendael, February 1996). [This monograph also reviews early warning functions in other international agencies: the UN Secretariat, the OAS, the OAU, ECOWAS, SADC, ASEAN.]; Consolidated summary of the *CSCE Seminar on Early Warning and Preventive Diplomacy* (CSCE Secretariat, February 1, 1994); a Summary of the *CSCE Seminar on Early Warning* (CSCE, February 1, 1994); *Seminar in Early Warning and Preventive Diplomacy: Statements* (CSCE Secretariat, February 7, 1994).
12. Garvelink Bill, *Humanitarian Assistance Interventions in Complex Emergencies: Information Requirements in the 1990's*, US AID/OFDA, 1996; McHugh H.S., *Annotated Bibliography: Early Warning Systems of Political Disasters*, US AID, (PPC/CDIE/DI), March 1996; *Early Warning and Encouraging Coordinated Action on Analyses of Violent Conflict Potentials*, Netherlands draft paper for the OECD/DAC (Development Advisory Committee), Task Force on Conflict, Peace and Development Cooperation, 1996; Cockell John, *Draft Early Warning Analysis Framework* (Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canada, August 1996).
13. International Alert's expanded title is *The Standing International Forum on Ethnic Conflict, Genocide and Human Rights – International Alert*. See also, *Designing an Early Warning System for Potential Armed Conflict and Refugee Flows*, Discussion Paper, International Alert (1996).
14. In the 1960's and 1970's a branch of the US Department of Defence funded a sizeable amount of 'data events research' by American academic political scientists and private contractors, in an effort to develop quantitative indicator models of incipient conflict. One of the later of these studies, *Internal and External Crisis Early Warning Monitoring*, by Gerald Hopple, December 1980 (International Public Policy Research Corporation) contains a large bibliography of the studies produced in the previous decade in this field of work. Although the intended utility of these studies was certainly not a humanitarian one, they did not lead to systems used by the government or the military for analysis or assessment, and they had no political effect (see also Singer J.D. and Wallace M.D. eds., *To Augur Well: Early Warning Indicators in World Politics*, Sage Publications, 1979).
 In 1995 a US Government task force produced the 'State Failure Task Force Report'. I have included below a summary of this report to demonstrate its total political inutility for 'early warning', as a result of the selection of social science models as the research methodology instead of political analysis.
 This report, sponsored by the Central Intelligence Agency, was prepared in response to a 1994 request from Vice President Gore. He asked the CIA to develop a methodology that would identify key-factors and critical thresholds signaling a high risk of failed states approximately two years in advance. Using two advanced techniques – statistical logistic regression analysis and a pattern of methodology known as 'neural networks' – the study found three variables that best identify which states failed 'during the historic period studied': degree of openness to international trade, infant mortality, and democracy. The study found that a combination of these three variables can correctly discriminate between failure and non-failure cases, two years in advance, for about 70 percent of the cases.
 The study also found that among more democratic countries, the risk of failure was greater when infant mortality was high and foreign trade was low. Among less democratic countries, the risk of failure was greater when trade was low, regardless of infant mortality rates. Other findings include: for cases involving ethnic war, the existence of a youth bulge increased the risk of state failure; and for cases involving adverse or disruptive regime transition, the length of time that a type of government has been in place emerged as a good in-

- indicator of failure (with new regimes facing a higher risk of failure than established regimes).
15. Only some examples are indicated here:
 - Gurr T.R. et al., *Minorities at Risk, A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflicts* (United States Institute of Peace, Washington, DC 1993).
 - *Early Warning of Communal Conflicts and Humanitarian Crises*, a special issue of the *Journal of Ethno-Political Development*, vol. 4, No. 1 (July 1994), pp. 1-131.
 - Doone R. and Vlassenroot K., *Early Warning and Conflict Prevention; Minerva's Wisdom* (University of Ghent, November 1995).
 - Gurr T.R. and Harff B., *Early Warning of Communal Conflicts and Genocide: Linking Empirical Research to International Responses* (The United Nations University, 1996).
 16. Examples of two of the current data events research projects are the Global Events Data System (GEDS), University of Maryland, which has served as the basis for the studies of Harff Barbara and Gurr Ted referenced directly above (*The Global Events Data System*, Davies J.L. and McDaniel C.K., March 1991, and *Event Data for Conflict and Crisis Early Warning*, Davies J.L., November 1993) and the PIOOM projects on Monitoring and Early Warning of Humanitarian Crises, at the University of Leiden, with B. Jongman and A. Schmid.
 17. Examples are the two conferences held by the Centre for Refugee Studies, York University in Toronto, Canada, in May 1991 and February 1992, The Workshop on Risk Assessment and Crisis Early Warning Systems, at CIDCM, University of Maryland, November 1996; The Humanitarian Policy Forum on Humanitarian Early Warning, Ottawa, Department of Foreign Affairs, Canada, May 1996; and the Conference on 'Synergy in Early Warning', March 15-18, 1997; the conference aim was to 'focus on three types of synergies in establishing systematic early warning: integrating diverse research methods, combining the organizational efforts of academics, states, international agencies and NGOs, and connecting analyses to strategic responses'. This linkage of research, organization and response will contribute to the early detection, and prevention or mitigation of deadly conflicts. The focus will be on intra-State rather than inter-State conflicts.
 18. van de Sand Klemens, *Statement on Peace, Conflict and Development Cooperation: Managing 'Crisis Management'*, OECD/Development Advisory Committee, Senior Level Meeting, December 12-13, 1994. De Sand continued his statement with the following:

'And looking at these and other wartorn countries or at potential conflict regions like Kenya, Burundi, etc., we have to be honest to ourselves: Often we see quite a gap between the foreign policy a government practices in reality and what its representatives proclaim at international fora in order to prove their allegiance and their cooperation. Against this background the scope of development agencies to influence political decision-making is quite limited.'

This paper does not otherwise discuss Haiti, but the following extract from a report makes the same point:

'The major fault, it turns out, lay not within MICIVIH (the UN/OAS mission in Haiti). Its intended beneficiaries, those diplomats and leaders responsible for shaping the world's response to the Haitian crisis, did not – would not – listen. During the critical period after the ill-fated July 1993 Governors Island Accord between Haiti's military leader and exiled President Aristide, MICIVIH's reports made clear that no sooner had Gen. Cedras left the New York negotiating room than the coup's henchmen had embarked on a wave of terror clearly designed to forestall the anticipated return to democratic rule. Yet the international community equivocated, the killing got more brazen, and by October 1993, MICIVIH had

- literally fled Haiti for its safety, a casualty of a failed process.' *Learning the Hard Way* (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, April 1995).
- See also, George Alexander and Holl Jane, *The Warning-Response Problem and Missed Opportunities in Preventive Diplomacy*, a Report to the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict (May 1997).
19. *Information Technologies Can Help Prevent, Manage and Resolve Conflicts Internationally*, Peace Watch (US Institute of Peace) vol. 3, No. 4 pp. 6-7: 17 (June 1997).
 20. Kuper's Leo classic volume, *Genocide: Its Political Use in the Twentieth Century* (Penguin Books, 1981), refers to Burundi (1972-1973) and Bangladesh as genocides. *The Widening Circle of Genocide*, published in 1994 and edited by Israel Charney (Transaction Publishers), has chapters identifying Afghanistan (1978-1992), the Kurds (Iraq, Turkey, USSR), and East Timor as 'genocides'. In the 1996 volume *Contemporary Genocides: Causes, Cases and Consequences*, Albert Jongman lists Cambodia (Khmer Rouge), Iraq (1988 Anfal Campaign), and Bangladesh (1971) as genocides. In her 1993 study, *Accounting for Genocide after 1945: Theories and Some Findings* (International Journal on Group Rights, vol. 16. N.1 (1993), pp. 79-106); Fein Helen resorts to a mixed category of *Genocides and other state sponsored or sanctioned massacres... 1945-1988*, and lists 12 'genocides'. In 1984, Barbara Harff listed only Bangladesh (1971), Rwanda and Burundi, and Cambodia (Khmer Rouge) as 'genocides' (*Genocide and Human Rights: International Legal and Political Issues*; vol. 20; Book 3, Monograph series in World Affairs, Graduate School of International Studies, University of Denver), but in a series of papers several years later, beginning in 1989, Harff also resorted to a mixed category of 'Genocides and Politicides' (*Victims of the State: Genocides, Politicides and Group Repression Since 1945*, International Review of Victimology, No.1 (1989), pp. 23-41. See also the chapter by Harff and Ted Gurr in the volume edited by Jongman Albert, above which resulted in 44 events listed in 1989 and 46 plus two 'possibles' in 1996. (Also published as Harff B. and Gurr T.R., *Victims of the State: Genocides, Politicides and Group Repression from 1945-1995*, PIOOM Newsletter, vol. 7, No.1 (Winter 1995), pp. 24-38.
 21. Fein Helen, *Genocide: A Sociological Perspective* (Sage, London 1992); and *Genocide, Terror, Life Integrity and War Crimes: The Case for Discrimination*, in G.J. Andreopoulos (editor), *Genocide: Historical and Conceptual Dimensions* (University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia 1994). Fein refers to any 'collectivity' as a target group that should be encompassed by the Genocide Convention.
At the time of the East Pakistan/Bangladesh events, a report by the International Commission of Jurists referred to them as Genocide. Others who referred to the Cambodian events as Genocide were Ben Kiernan (1996), Hurst Hannum and David Hawk (1986), and Hannum, in *International Law and Cambodian Genocide: The Sounds of Silence*, Human Rights Quarterly, vol. 11, No. 1 (1989), pp. 82-138.
 22. The word 'domestic' is important: The wars in Korea (1950-54), Algeria (1956-60), Vietnam/Indochina (1945-56 and 1960-75) and Afghanistan (1979-87) were all omitted, though they all had very large mortalities – between one and four million – because major foreign military powers were involved in all of these, and were the ones responsible for most of the killing.
 23. *Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Iraq*, submitted by Max van der Stoep, Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights, In Accordance with Commission Resolution 1993/74; United Nations, Economic and Social Council; E/CN.4/1994/58, February 25, 1994.

24. Strobel's book was published by the United States Institute of Peace, Washington, DC. *The quotation appeared in "The Mass Media's Impact on Managing International Affairs, Peace Watch, (USIP) vol. 3, No. 4 (June 1997), pp. 4-5.*
25. *Ibid.*
26. The series of US public opinion surveys were carried out by the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA), which is a joint program of the Center for the Study of Policy Attitudes and the Center for International and Security Studies, School of Public Affairs, University of Maryland. The seven relevant surveys were the following:
 PIPA-1 *US Public Opinion on Intervention in Bosnia*; May 15, 1993.
 PIPA-2 *US Public Attitudes on Involvement in Somalia*; October 26, 1993.
 PIPA-3 *US Public Attitudes on UN Peacekeeping, Part I: Funding*; March 7, 1994.
 PIPA-4 *US Public Attitudes on US Involvement in Bosnia*; May 4, 1994.
 PIPA-5 *US Public Attitudes on US Involvement in Haiti*; August 22, 1994.
 PIPA-7 *Americans on UN Peacekeeping*; April 27, 1995.
 PIPA-8 *Americans on Bosnia*; May 16, 1995.
- In 1997 these studies were summarized and analyzed along with a great deal of additional data on both public survey responses and those of congressional representatives in *The Foreign Policy Gap: How Policymakers Misread the Public*, Kull Steven, et al., CISSM/PIPA, October 1997. Public opinion surveys carried out in France showed roughly similar results: in December 1992, 82 percent of a French survey sample favoured French military intervention in Somalia, and in regard to the former Yugoslavia, three different surveys done on seven occasions between August 1992 and June 1996, showed the percentages favouring French military intervention to range from 52 percent to 70 percent. (The lowest value was in the June 1995 poll, and the highest in the July 1993 poll.)
27. Some other sources, in addition to the Gowing monographs, on the same subject matter include the following:
 Girardet Edward (ed.), *Somalia, Rwanda, and Beyond: The Role of International Media in Wars and Humanitarian Crises* (Crosslines Global Report, Geneva 1995).
 MacGuire James, *Rwanda Before the Massacre*, Forbes Media Critic, vol. 2, No. 1 (Fall 1994).
 Livingston Steven and Eachus Todd, *Humanitarian Crises and U.S. Foreign Policy: Somalia and the CNN Effect Reconsidered*, *Political Communication*, vol. 12, No. 4 (October-December 1995).
 Livingston Steven and Eachus Todd, *Too Little, Too Late: American Television Coverage of the Rwanda Crisis of 1994*; to be included in a forthcoming book on the Rwandan genocide, edited by Edelman Howard and Suhrke Astri.
 Benthall Jonathan, *Disasters, Relief and the Media* (Tauris, London 1993).
 Hesmondhalgh David, *Media Coverage of Humanitarian Emergencies: A Literature Survey*, unpublished paper (Department of Media and Communications, Goldsmiths College, London, October 1993).
 Kohut A. and Toth R., *The People, The Press, and the Use of Force*, Times Mirror Center for the People and the Press (1994).
 Lichter R., *Top Ten TV News Topics of 1993*, *Media Monitor*, vol. 7, No. 1 (1994).
28. Another valuable chapter is by Livingston Steven, *Suffering in Silence: Media Coverage of War and Famine in the Sudan*, a case in which there has been no international response to curb genocide over a period of a decade.
29. Natsios Andrew, *Illusions of Influence: The CNN Effect in Complex Emergencies*; pp. 149-168 in Rotberg and Weiss (eds.), 1996.
 Natsios classifies complex human emergencies (CHE's) as:

- '...emergencies in which four characteristics are present: (1) food insecurity, frequently deteriorating into mass starvation; (2) macroeconomic collapse involving hyperinflation, debasement of a currency, net decreases in GNP, and massive unemployment; (3) ethnic or religious violence, widespread human rights abuses, and the deterioration of central government authority; and (4) mass population displacement. CHEs inevitably lead to a collapse of civil society. According to one study, between 1964 and 1990, famines and civil wars accounted for 75 percent of all deaths in all categories of disasters. Such CHEs accounted for 90 percent of all US Government relief expenditures in fiscal 1993. Complex emergencies also pose a challenge to international order and stability because they are not contained by national boundaries. Because of this unique distinguishing characteristic, CHEs have become the focus of foreign policy study. According to one such study, between 1978 and 1985, there were an average of five complex emergencies each year. In 1989, the number grew to fourteen. In 1994, there were twenty.'
30. Shattuck John, *Human Rights and Humanitarian Crises: Policy-Making and the Media*, pp. 169-175, in Rotberg and Weiss (eds.), 1996.
31. It is notable that two of these books involved Weiss Thomas G., the Codirector of the Humanitarianism and War Project at Brown University's T.J. Watson Institute for International Studies. Weiss has authored, edited, or coedited no less than a half dozen books in as many years on humanitarian crises. Nevertheless, writing only one year before the two volumes discussed here, so initiated an observer presented what was almost a parody of the cliché of 'the CNN effect':
- 'More recently, the media has played a role in galvanizing international action for civil wars. Its current influence was foreshadowed in earlier crises: Biafra in the late 1960s, Bangladesh in the early 1970s, and Ethiopia in 1973 and again in 1984. But media influence in the post-Cold War crises has taken a quantitative jump. Starting in Northern Iraq in 1991 and continuing in Somalia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, observers have quipped that Ted Turner and the Cable News Network (CNN) rather than Boutros Boutros-Ghali or the US president are in charge. This is only slightly hyperbolic. Without a clear policy framework after the waning of East-West tensions, governments are more prone to be buffeted by the pressures of media coverage... There is widespread agreement that the media exercised a decisive influence on the political decisionmakers and on military and humanitarian organizations in Somalia and Bosnia.' The last sentence is most certainly not the case at all, and only a few sentences further on Weiss noted that '...the war in the Balkans dragged on despite relentless media coverage of the carnage.'
- The United Nations and Civil Wars* (Lynne Reiner Publishers 1995), pp. 207-208.
32. *The International Response to Conflict and Genocide: Lessons from the Rwanda Experience*, Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda (March 1996), 5 volumes.
33. (a) Harff Barbara, *Early Warning of Potential Genocide: The Cases of Rwanda, Burundi, Bosnia and Abkhazia*", Chapter 3 in Gurr and Harff (United Nations University, 1996) *op. cit.* (Rwanda, Burundi, Bosnia, Abkhazia-Georgia)
- (b) Harff Barbara, *Early Warning of Humanitarian Crises: Sequential Models and the Role of Accelerators*, November 1996 (Rwanda and Burundi)
- (c) Davies John L., Harff B. and Speca A.M., *Dynamic Data for Early Warning of Ethnopolitical Conflict*", November 1996 (Slovenia, Croatia, Kosovo, Bosnia, Macedonia, Abkhazia, Rwanda, Burundi)
34. Different papers present slightly different versions of the accelerator descriptors; paper (a) above lists as the accelerators:
- A1: New discriminatory policies by regime

- A2: Clashes between regime supporters and target groups
- A3: Increased external support for politically active groups
- A4: Threats of external involvement not backed by action
- A5: Increase in size and cohesion of opposition group
- A6: Violent opposition by kindred groups
- A7: Aggressive posturing by opposition groups
- A8: Increase in life integrity violations

Paper (b) above lists as the accelerators:

- A1: Occurrence of violent opposition by kindred groups in neighboring countries, or increase in refugee flows (displaced people).
- A2: Increase in external support for politically active groups, ranging from symbolic support by sympathetic groups to arms transfers.
- A3: Threats of external involvement against governing elites, ranging from warnings of sanctions to the threat to intervene militarily, that are not backed by action.
- A4: Aggressive posturing or actions by opposition groups.
- A5: Increase in size, or degree of cohesion in, opposition group.
- A6: Physical or verbal clashes between regime (or regime supporters) and targeted groups.
- A7: New discriminatory or restrictive policies by the regime.
- A8: Life integrity violations by government or government-supported groups against targeted groups.

These major groupings are then further specified, each containing a subgroup of stipulated actions, statements or events.

35. This is a generic variant of a common appreciation, even when major (US) policy players, such as US Chief of Staff General Shalikashvili, know without question that it was not what occurred. At a 1995 conference, Shalikashvili said: 'The CNN effect: surely it exists, and surely we went to Somalia and Rwanda partly because of its magnetic pull' (quoted in Minear et al., p. 46). And in the 1996 Rotberg and Weiss volume, John Shattuck: 'The media got us into Somalia and then got us out.'
36. Larson Eric V., *Casualties and Consensus: The Historical Role of Casualties in Domestic Support for US Military Operations* (RAND, Santa Monica, California 1996), pp. 45-46.
37. Livingston Steven, *Suffering in Silence: Media Coverage of War and Famine in the Sudan*, in Rohberg and Weiss (eds.), 'From Massacres to Genocide...' (1996); tables on pp. 74-75.
38. Lt. Col. Hoey Brian P., *Humanitarian Intervention in Somalia, 1992-1994: Elite Newspaper Coverage, Public Opinion and US Foreign Policy*, Ph.D. Dissertation (University of Maryland, College of Journalism, 1995).
39. Burkhalter Holly, *Somalia's Massacres Aren't on TV*, 'New York Times', (August 13, 1989).
40. Another Ph.D. thesis, by Combelles Pascale, found that in 1992, national network TV systems had only one 'major' coverage of events in Somalia prior to the August 1992 US airlift, but seven following it.
41. Hoey, *op. cit.*, page 144.
42. Strobel, *op. cit.*, page 136.
43. Strobel, *op. cit.*, page 252, fn. #23.
44. The extracts quoted are from the first of Gow's studies listed below:
 - Gowing Nik, *Media Coverage: Help or Hindrance in Conflict Prevention*, a Report to the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict (September 1997).
 - Gowing Nik, *Real-Time Television Coverage of Armed Conflicts and Diplomatic Crises: Does it Pressure or Distort Foreign Policy Decisions?* Working Paper 94-1 (Press, Politics, and Public Policy, Harvard University, June 1994).

Gowing Nik, *Real-Time TV Coverage From War: Does it Make or Break Government Policy?*, in "Bosnia by Television", Gow James et al. (eds.), (British Film Institute, London 1996), pp. 81-91.

Additional remarks by Gowing from the third of these studies are included here:

'The conventional wisdom – the assumption – of many in the media, the military and government is that real-time television coverage of the horrors of Bosnia or Somalia or Rwanda not only creates a demand that "something must be done", but also drives the making of foreign policy. The assumption is of an *automatic* cause-and-effect relationship. Televised horror in Bosnia: instant policy response in Whitehall or Washington. In this essay I will detail some important challenges to that belief. The relation is not what it seems.

...The more I have researched and dug into it, the more I realized that most people in government and the TV news business make glib, unsubstantiated assumptions that are wrong.

...TV's unquestioned ability to provide a contemporaneous, piecemeal, video ticker-tape service – a tip-sheet of raw, real-time images virtually instantly – must not be confused – as it usually is – with a power to drive policy-making. By and large it does not, even though we on the television news side might hope it does – especially if the blood, the shredded limbs, the tortured faces and the misery of war are there in front of us. And even though the policy-makers talk despairingly of the new power and role of TV news.'

Lawrence Freedman, Professor of War Studies at King's College London, has written of 'the basic failure [of governments] to watch passively as the Yugoslav crisis brewed'. In other words, television did not have an active impact on policy-making. In retrospect, the graphic TV images merely highlighted the West's impotence and failure to find enough of a diplomatic consensus to prevent or preempt war. It was the missed opportunity. Government worked to apply diplomatic bandages while the warring parties deceived them.

'...ministers, diplomats and the military have learned by and large to resist the power of TV pictures with a steely determination. As in Bosnia, their fundamental long-term strategy was to engage in low-risk, low-cost, minimalist policies which gave the impression of a full engagement when the political will was anything but that. As one British official put it to me echoing the words of many others: "[In Bosnia] TV almost derailed the policy on several occasions, but the spine held. It had to. The secret was to respond to limit the damage, and be seen to react without undermining the specific [policy] focus.'

'...Over Bosnia and Somalia, I believe there was what I would call a carefully crafted policy of ambiguity over true political intentions, even though the British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd made it clear on many occasions - though these remarks were not widely reported – that 'What we are doing in Bosnia is not abdication, but sense.' Official statements expressed outrage and a determination to bring the war to an end 'by all means'. Sound-bites and declarations of horror or condemnation were usually misread in TV and newspaper reporting as signals of a hardening of policy – which they were not. They were what one official described to me as often 'pseudo-decisions or pseudo-action'. As a senior US administration figure put it: 'Reacting can be anything from a UN resolution to sending a press spokesman out.' Hence the reluctant, hesitant commitment to humanitarian aid and 'safe areas'. But such measures could only be called palliatives or alibis. They were not policies to force an end to war.

45. This information is based on interviews with Fred Cuny, and documentation that he provided to the author before Cuny was killed in Chechnya in 1995.

46. In addition, the media, most particularly TV, but the press as well (and also members of Congress opposed to the US operations in Somalia), persisted in a *grossly misleading* representation of the circumstances in Somalia. One regional warlord – General Aideed – the leader of a single sub-clan out of a half-dozen in one of six major clan groupings in Soma-

lia, who happened to control the southern half of the capital city, Mogadishu, where the UN had stubbornly and foolishly insisted on placing its offices and forces, and who had to bargain with two other sub-clan leaders for half of his fighting forces, and who had little or no sympathy from any of the five other major clans – was conflated with ‘Somalia’, or ‘the Somalian people’.

In another example, the US support mission to aid the Kurd’s in Northern Iraq in 1991, Cuny and his staff wrote:

‘Throughout Operation Provide Comfort, journalists played a major role. For the most part, the impact of the reporting was positive. During the latter stages of the operation, however, much of what was reported was inaccurate, highly speculative, and generally wrong.’

Humanitarian Intervention: A Study of Operation Provide Comfort; Brilliant Franca et al., Intertext; undated.

47. The best sources on the events in Rwanda are:

The International Response to Conflict and Genocide: Lessons from Rwanda, *op. cit.* (Ref vol. 31 above).

The Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda: A Review of Follow-Up and Impact Fifteen Months After Publication, (June 12, 1997).

Prunier Gerard, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide* (Columbia University Press, New York City 1995).

Seybolt Talyor B., *Coordination in Rwanda: The Humanitarian Response to Genocide and Civil War* (Conflict Management Group, Cambridge, Massachusetts, February 1997).

Destexhe Alain, *The Third Genocide*, *Foreign Policy*, No. 97 (Winter 1994-95), pp. 3-17.

‘Genocide in Rwanda, April-May 1994’, *Human Rights Watch/Africa*, vol.6, N. 4 (May 1994), pp.1-13.

Burkhalter Holly, *The Question of Genocide: The Clinton Administration and Rwanda*, *World Policy Journal*, vol. 11, No. 4 (Winter 1994-95), pp. 44-54.

Leitenberg Milton, *Rwanda, 1994: International Incompetence Produces Genocide*, *Peacekeeping and International Relations*, vol. 23, No. 6 (November-December 1994), pp. 6-10. (Also published in B. Jongman, 1996, *op. cit.*)

48. Truehart Charles, *UN Alerted to Plans for Rwanda Bloodbath: ‘94 Document Shows Peacekeepers Sought to Seize Hutus’ Weapons*, “Washington Post” (September 25, 1997).

49. *After Rwandan Terror, Albright Promises Greater Vigilance*, “New York Times”, (November 10, 1997).

50. Dozens of books and many hundreds of monograph studies and academic journal articles have been written regarding the events in Yugoslavia since fighting broke out. As in the case of Rwanda, I have listed here what I consider to be some of the best sources:

– Silber Laura and Little Alan. *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation*, TV Books, Inc. (1995).

– Zimmerman Warren, *Origins of a Catastrophe: Yugoslavia and Its Destroyers* (Times Books, New York 1996).

– Ullman Richard (ed.), *The World and Yugoslavia’s Wars* (Council on Foreign Relations, New York 1996).

– Gow Peter, *Triumph of the Lack of Will: International Diplomacy and the Yugoslav War* (Columbia University Press, New York 1997).

– Owen David, *Balkan Odyssey* (Harcourt Brace and Co., New York 1995).

– *War Crimes in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, vols. I and II, Helsinki Watch/Human Rights Watch (New York), August 1992 and April 1993.

– *Bosnia-Herzegovina: The Fall of Srebrenica and the Failure of UN Peacekeeping*, Human Rights Watch/Helsinki Report, vol. 7, No. 13, pp. 1-58 (October 1995).

- Sacirbey Nedzib, *The Genesis of Genocide: Reflections on the Yugoslav Conflict*, The Brown Journal of World Affairs, vol. 3, No. 1 (Winter-Spring 1996), pp. 341-352.
 - Rieff David, *Slaughterhouse: Bosnia and the Failure of the West* (Simon and Schuster, New York 1995).
 - Zimmerman Warren, *The Last Ambassador: A Memoir of the Collapse of Yugoslavia*, Foreign Affairs (March-April 1995), pp. 1-20.
 - *Unfinished Peace: Report of the International Commission on the Balkans*, Tindemans Leo, et al. (Aspen Institute Berlin/Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1996).
 - Rohde David, *Endgame: The Betrayal and Fall of Srebrenica, Europe's Worst Massacre Since World War II* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York 1997).
 - Woodward Susan L., *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution After the Cold War* (The Brookings Institution, Washington, DC 1995).
 - A series of three review essays by Mark Danner in the "New York Review of Books" that reviewed a total of 28 books dealing with the wars in Yugoslavia:
 - *The US and the Yugoslavian Catastrophe* (November 20, 1997), pp. 56-64.
 - *America and the Bosnia Genocide* (December 4, 1997), pp. 55-65.
 - *Clinton, the UN, and the Bosnian Disaster* (December 18, 1997), pp. 65-81.
51. In 1992 when Bosnian Serb detention camps were disclosed by ITN TV in the UK in 1992 President Bush promised that the United States '...will not rest until the international community has gained access to all detention camps.' Was 'gaining access' the issue, in circumstances in which concentration camps had reappeared in Europe in 1992, with some of the attributes of Nazi camps during WWII? Gowing continues with even more severe criticism:
- Senior officials at the time have now confirmed that the US Government had possessed significant details about the camps for at least two months before the ITN revelations. US Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger denies this. But a senior official has said on record that the highest authorities at the State Department gave instructions 'deliberately not to tell the truth'. A senior official told Congress just before ITN's revelations that there was no 'substantiated information that would confirm the existence of these camps'. The UN knew. So too, to a lesser extent, did the International Committee of the Red Cross, although they were unable to work in Bosnia at the time because of threats against their staff. The UN claimed to have circulated a document to its member governments, and yet no one in the British Foreign Office could remember seeing a copy.
- Gowing Nick, in Gow James et al. (eds.) (1996), p. 89.
52. For a general discussion see the book produced by Human Rights Watch, *Slaughter Among Neighbors: The Political Origins of Communal Violence* (Yale University Press, New Haven 1995).
53. *Report on the 1980's Disturbances in Matabeleland and the Midlands*, compiled by the Catholic Commission for Justice in Zimbabwe, March 1997. (Co-authored by the Legal Resources Foundation, Zimbabwe.)
- Machipsa Lewis, *Human Rights Report Could Open Old Wounds*, The Star (May 9, 1997). A series of articles in the "Mail and Guardian" (South Africa), and the 'Electronic Mail and Guardian', on January 20, 1997 and between May 2 and May 13, 1997.
54. I chanced to see it in Sweden, where I happened to be working at the time. It is possible that this was the result of investigative reporting by an ex-Rhodesian, Peter Godwin; see Godwin Peter, *Mukiwa: A White Boy in Africa* (Atlantic Monthly Press, 1996).
55. Reports summarized from 'Independent Online', 'The Star', and the 'Saturday Argus', (May 29 and May 30, 1997).

56. Gargan Edward, *Rising Tide of Hindu Hostility Is Worrying India's Muslims*, 'New York Times' (September 17, 1993); *India Doesn't Have to Go the Way of Yugoslavia*, (Letters Section), "New York Times" (October 4, 1993); Ward Andrew, *The Weimar Republic of India*, 'New York Times' (March 17, 1993); Wilkinson Paul, 'Jane's Intelligence Review', vol. 5, No. 3 (March 1993), pp. 128-130.
57. For an insightful discussion of the origins and activities of Shiv Sena see *India's Cities*, 'The Wilson Quarterly', vol. 21, No. 4 (Autumn 1997), particularly pages.
58. Gargan Edward, *Fervent Hindu Party is Severely Defeated in Indian State Vote*, 'New York Times' (December 2, 1993).
59. *Divide and Rule: State Sponsored Ethnic Violence in Kenya*, 'Human Rights Watch/Africa Watch' (1993); *Kenya: Multipartyism Betrayed in Kenya, Continuing Rural Violence*, 'Human Rights Watch/Africa Watch', vol. 6, No. 5 (July 1994), pp. 1-33; Berkeley Bill, *Kenya: Barely Escaping Rwanda*, 'APF Reporter', vol. 17, No. 1 (1995), pp. 11-16; Berkeley Bill, *An Anchor for Chaos*, 'The Atlantic Monthly' (February 1996), pp. 30-36; Straus Scott, *Moi Accused of Causing Violence*, 'The Globe and Mail' (August 19, 1997); Lorch Donatella, *Thousands Flee Kenya Ethnic Strife*, 'New York Times' (September 7, 1993); Richburg Keith B., *Kenya's Ethnic Conflict Drives Farmers Off Land; Ruling Politicians Blamed for Masai Raids*, 'Washington Post' (March 17, 1994); Lorch Donatella, *Kenya Crackdown Is Aimed at Opposition and the Press*, 'New York Times' (April 3, 1995); Copson Raymond W., *Kenya: Briefing Paper*, Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress (US), 95-775F (July 6, 1995); Khadiagala Gilbert, *Preventive Diplomacy in Africa: The Kenyan Case* (Conference paper, April 1995).
60. In an example of euphemism to the point of being obscurantist and misleading, a report on the events in Kenya, prepared in 1993 by the United Nations Development Program, stated, 'The principal causes of the violence in the past two years are directly and unequivocally related to the ongoing process of democratization in the country.'
61. Prendergast John, *Multi-Layered Conflict in the Greater Horn of Africa*, Creative Associates International, Washington, DC (April 1996), pp. 36-37, 46-47.
62. Berkeley Bill, *op. cit*, 1995.
63. Berkeley Bill, *op. cit*, 1996.
64. *Kenya: Old Habits Die Hard; Rights Abuses Follow Renewed Foreign Aid Commitments*, Human Rights Watch/Africa Watch, vol. 7, No. 6 (July 1995), pp. 1-15; *Message to Mr. Moi*, "New York Times" (May 31, 1995).
65. Wrong Michaela, Holman Michael, *West Gave Kenya \$8 Billion Aid Despite Corruption Evidence*, "Financial Times" (July 18, 1997).
66. Cockell John, *Draft Early Warning Analysis Framework* (August 1996).