

Yugoslavia and Rwanda: On “Genocide Denial” and “Revisionism”

Media Disinformation, George Monbiot and The Guardian

By [Edward S. Herman](#) and [David Peterson](#)
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[image above: Professor Edward S. Herman]

On Tuesday, June 14, the *Guardian* of London published [“Left and Libertarian Right Cohabit in the Weird World of the Genocide Belittlers.”](#)¹ In this nearly 1,100-word commentary, the British writer George Monbiot attacked the two of us (among others) as “genocide deniers” and “revisionists” for our writings on the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. Monbiot also went on to assail Noam Chomsky, John Pilger, and the U.K.-based Media Lens group for their association with individuals as depraved as we are.

In response, each of us submitted separate manuscripts to the *Guardian* by no later than the following weekend (June 17-19). But the *Guardian* found our submissions problematic, and delayed its decision about their status while it purported to check the accuracy of what we had written — something that it clearly had not done for Monbiot’s error-laden and grossly misleading original.

By July 5, the *Guardian* had rejected both of our manuscripts.² But, it also invited us to resubmit a single joint-response, with no guarantee of publication, and requested that we observe a strict 550 word limit — or half-the-length of Monbiot’s original.

Soon thereafter we delivered a consolidated manuscript to the *Guardian* at exactly 550-words; and on July 20, five weeks and a day after it had published Monbiot’s original, the *Guardian* published an even shorter, 524-word response under our names. But rather than giving it a title that featured our claims about Monbiot’s errors, ignorance, and crass name-calling, the *Guardian* gave it a title that was both plaintive and defensive: [“We’re Not Genocide Deniers.”](#)³

At least two comments posted to the *Guardian* Response column’s Web page below our piece by the Canadian media-activist Joe Emersberger provided links to our original responses, which we had posted to ZNet. But Emersberger’s comments were removed by the *Guardian*’s intellectual police, never to be restored; a comment by one of us (Peterson) that linked to these same responses also was removed. Eventually, this latter comment was restored, “most likely in response to public complaints,” Media Lens believes.⁴

On the other hand, the first comment recorded by the *Guardian* after it opened its Response column for feedback on July 20 asked us: “If you say you are *not* denying the genocide in Bosnia and Rwanda, what are you saying? And please, one sentence will suffice.”⁵ This is, of course, an aggressively hostile question, and impossible to answer in one sentence. But

it is also a question that we had answered at length in [The Politics of Genocide](#)⁶ and in our original submissions that the *Guardian* had rejected, and to which its Web site moderator was not allowing anyone to post a hyperlink!

Furthering its protection of Monbiot and its enforcement of a one-sided discussion, the *Observer* (the *Guardian*'s sister paper, which appears on Sundays to complement the *Guardian*'s Monday through Saturday schedule) published Nick Cohen's "[Decline and Fall of the Puppetmasters](#)"⁷ three days before our response appeared. This was a diatribe against "west-hating" intellectuals (Noam Chomsky, Tariq Ali, Harold Pinter, Arundhati Roy, and a "cranky writer called Diana Johnstone") who in Cohen's words "believe that the lackeys of American imperialism were inventing stories of Serb atrocities to justify the expansion of western power." Then six days after it published our response, the *Guardian* published "[To Claim Tutsis Caused Rwanda's Genocide Is Pure Revisionism](#)" by James Wizeye, identified as the "first secretary at the Rwanda high commission" or embassy in London.⁸ No offsetting response has since been published by the *Guardian* that challenged this piece of propaganda from a spokesman for the regime which, we argued, has been the primary mass-killer in Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo for the past two decades.⁹

Some *Guardian-Observer* History¹⁰

The *Guardian* and the *Observer* have long been unable to break loose from the standard, politically convenient, Western party-line narratives on both Yugoslavia and Rwanda. This was made very clear in the case of Yugoslavia when their lead reporter there, Ed Vulliamy, proudly asserted his anti-Serb bias and unwillingness to report in neutral fashion. "I am one of those reporters who cannot see this as just another story from which I must remain detached and in which I must be neutral," he wrote in 1993. "[W]ith Omarska and Trnopolje [in 1992] objective coverage of the war became a rather silly notion. . . . I am on the side of the Bosnian Muslim people against an historical and military program to obliterate them."¹¹ On the other hand, hundreds of Bosnian Serbs were killed and raped in the Bosnian Muslim-run prison camps of Celebici, Konjic and Tarcin (to name three major ones);¹² but Vulliamy never wrote about *them*, though in his voluminous reports for the *Guardian*, he did mention the existence of Tarcin and Celebici once apiece in passing.¹³ Can anybody imagine his and the *Guardian*'s reaction to a Russian journalist who, having visited only Celebici and Tarcin during the wars in Bosnia, declared that these camps make a commitment to the Serb cause a moral imperative, and objective journalism a silly notion? Or their reaction to this Russian journalist were he to publish this plea under the title: "We Must Fight for the Memory of the Bosnian Muslim Camps"?¹⁴

Vulliamy's bias, and no doubt his "journalism of attachment"-derived dishonesty in this theater of conflict,¹⁵ have been demonstrated over many years by his serial misrepresentations in the case of Fikret Alic, whom Vulliamy described as a "young Bosnian whose emaciated torso, behind the barbed wire of Trnopolje concentration camp, became a symbol of the cynical slaughter in Bosnia-Herzegovina";¹⁶ by his refusal to acknowledge Bosnia's Islamic leader and wartime President Alija Izetbegovic's rejection of a multiethnic, tolerant, and secular state and espousal of a closed Islamic polity;¹⁷ and by his long-standing commitment to the early inflated Bosnian Muslim death toll in the face of dramatic downward revisions by establishment sources.¹⁸ The same bias and dishonesty were also reflected in Vulliamy's violent 2009 diatribe at Amnesty International's invitation to Noam Chomsky to deliver its annual Stand Up for Justice lecture, alleging Chomsky's unspecified apologetics for Serbian atrocities in the Balkan wars, including "spitting on the graves of the dead."¹⁹

This Vulliamy perspective and structure of disinformation undoubtedly fed into Emma Brockes's infamous 2005 interview with Chomsky for the *Guardian*,²⁰ an affair that the *Guardian* Reader's Editor (ombudsman) concluded had misrepresented Chomsky's expressed beliefs so egregiously that the *Guardian* expunged the interview from its Web site.²¹ Although Brockes could have asked Chomsky questions about the many issues on which he is well informed, she focused on Yugoslavia and Srebrenica, and on the analyst Diana Johnstone, whose work on Yugoslavia Vulliamy had in the past called "poison."²² One memorable smear in the *Guardian's* handling of the interview appeared immediately below its title ("[The Greatest Intellectual?](#)"), where by way of introducing it, readers found the following sentences:

Q: Do you regret supporting those who say the Srebrenica massacre was exaggerated?
A: My only regret is that I didn't do it strongly enough.

This question-and-answer sequence was nowhere to be found in the published interview. In fact, the answer quoted here was given to an entirely different question, in which Brockes asked Chomsky whether he regretted signing an open letter that protested a Swedish publisher's decision not to bring out a translation of Johnstone's 2002 book [Fools' Crusade: Yugoslavia, NATO and Western Delusions](#) (Monthly Review Press); this letter referred to *Fools' Crusade* as "outstanding," and added that "there are more fundamental issues at stake, namely freedom of expression and the right to express dissenting views."²³ Brockes's and the *Guardian's* language-substitution removed the open letter's focus on freedom-of-expression issues and its broad defense of Johnstone's work, and rewrote Chomsky's actual words into support for "those who say the Srebrenica massacre was exaggerated." Thus was Johnstone's complex and nuanced book pigeonholed by its alleged position on the Srebrenica massacre, which Brockes's biased and loaded question oversimplified to the point of absurdity.

Another memorable smear was Brockes's contention that Chomsky uses scare-quotes "to undermine things he disagrees with," and that he used them around the word "massacre" to suggest that "during the Bosnian war the 'massacre' at Srebrenica was probably overstated." All of this allowed Brockes to make the dishonest and insulting addition that, "in print at least, it can come across less as academic than as witheringly teenage; like, Srebrenica was so not a massacre." But when an external legal investigation pressed Brockes to prove that Chomsky had said what Brockes claimed he did, the audio recording of his verbal exchanges with Brockes was found to have been "partially recorded over" (i.e., erased) some time between the publication of the interview and the *Guardian's* official inquiry into the matter.²⁴

As noted, these kinds of tactics are in the Vulliamy "journalism of attachment" tradition, and it is amusing to see that in her profile of Chomsky, Brockes misspelled Johnstone's first-name as "Diane" rather than *Diana*, just as Vulliamy had misspelled it eight months earlier in a commentary for the *IWPR Balkan Crisis Report*.²⁵ It seems likely that either Brockes and/or her editors had worked from this eight-month-old text while preparing the final draft of the interview, or that Vulliamy himself played a hand in preparing this draft. In any case, no one at the *Guardian* caught the misspelling of Johnstone's first-name prior to publication of Brockes's interview.

In early December 2005, Ed Vulliamy joined 23 other writers and activists who had long advocated for the Western establishment's version of Srebrenica — and the "good" versus "evil" portrayal of the wars in Yugoslavia — in protesting the *Guardian's* decision to

withdraw Brockes's mock interview with Chomsky and to issue a "correction" for the original. The "*Guardian* has unjustly besmirched Brockes's reputation," these 24 figures stated in an open letter, and "bestowed a stamp of legitimacy on revisionist attempts to deny the Bosnian genocide and minimize the Srebrenica massacre." Among Vulliamy's fellow signatories were David Rohde, David Rieff, Marko Attila Hoare, Oliver Kamm, Nick Cohen, and Nerma Jelacic — all veteran maximizers of Serb perfidy and Bosnian Muslim victimhood.[26](#)

Common to Vulliamy's longstanding journalism of attachment and call to "fight for the memory of Bosnia's camps," the forgeries in Brockes's interview with Chomsky, and Monbiot's attack on "genocide belittlers," has been the unspoken premise that any challenge to the establishment narrative about Srebrenica is beyond the bounds of respectable journalism. Disallowed as apologetics or belittling or spitting on graves is anything that invokes historical context regularly suppressed by establishment accounts or questions official claims about the number of persons executed there. [27](#) The journalism of attachment is a rigid party-line journalism.

And just as there has long existed a Western party-line on the dismantling of Yugoslavia,[28](#) in which the roles of perpetrators and victims were cast early (1991-) and adhered to with passionate intensity and certitude by the *Guardian-Observer's* writers, so a party-line on the 1994 mass killings in Rwanda has guided its coverage of this theater of conflict for almost as many years.

Here, again, the casting of perpetrators and victims was clear: These roles paralleled the long-standing U.S. and British hostility towards Rwanda's Hutu-majority government under President Juvenal Habyarimana, and their alignment with the armed forces of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). But in Rwanda, a third role was cast for the alleged *savior* of the country from the Hutu "*genocidaires*," and assigned to the man who, in the words of the *Guardian's* chief Africa correspondent Chris McGreal, is the "former Tutsi rebel leader who ended the genocide [and] has been heralded as the Abraham Lincoln of Africa"[29](#) — Paul Kagame.

These assigned perpetrator-victim-savior roles, followed closely by the *Guardian* since the April-July 1994 period, turn the fundamental realities of the Rwandan conflict upside down, a fact that becomes clearer when one examines the atrocities of those four months within the context of the entire 20-year ascent and geographical spread of Kagame's power. [30](#)

Kagame trained at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas in 1990. When the RPF invaded Rwanda from Uganda on October 1 of that year, even wearing the uniforms of the Ugandan army, not only did the United States and Britain not protest this act of aggression, they also prevented the UN Security Council from taking any action on Rwanda until March 1993,[31](#) following a major RPF offensive that proved its superiority over the Army of the Rwandan government, displaced one million persons, and greatly weakened the Habyarimana government. Through the start of April 1994, it was crucial to what would become the establishment narrative of the "Rwandan genocide" that the RPF's aggression and occupation of the northern part of the country, its rapid increase in troop and weapons strength,[32](#) its political penetration of the Rwandan state under Western-imposed power-sharing agreements, its military offensives, and its massacres and large-scale ethnic cleansing of the Hutu population, all be kept as quiet as possible, and that reporting feature instead Hutu perfidy and Tutsi victimhood. The *Guardian* (along with the rest of the establishment U.S. and U.K. media) met this challenge.[33](#)

The “triggering event” in the mass killings of 1994 and after was the shooting down of Habyarimana’s jet during its landing approach to the airport in Kigali on April 6. In standard accounts of the “Rwandan genocide,” responsibility for this incident is assigned to Hutu extremists around Habyarimana, who, facing a loss of power and privileges under the Arusha peace and power-sharing accords of August 1993, assassinated their president rather than accept the implementation of the accords and then launched their plan to exterminate Rwanda’s Tutsi population.[34](#)

But a serious problem for this Hutu conspiracy model arose in 1997, when Michael Hourigan, a principal investigator for the Rwanda Tribunal, found RPF informants who attested to the “direct involvement” of Kagame,[35](#) and then in 2006, when French Judge Jean-Louis Bruguière also concluded that Kagame had needed and was responsible for this political assassination.[36](#)

In the face of these awkward facts, the *Guardian* stood by the party-line. Despite its passing mentions of Bruguière’s conclusion that “Kagame gave direct orders” to assassinate Habyarimana,[37](#) the *Guardian* has regularly reported that Habyarimana “probably died at the hand of Hutu extremists opposed to the concessions he had made to the Tutsi rebels,”[38](#) in Chris McGreal’s words; years later, when the trial of Hutu Colonel Theoneste Bagosora began at the Rwanda Tribunal in 2002, McGreal wrote that the shoot-down was “probably on Col. Bagosora’s orders,” and “within hours” Bagosora hosted a meeting at which the “extermination of Tutsis” was discussed.[39](#) More striking yet, Michael Hourigan’s name has been mentioned only once in the history of the *Guardian-Observer’s* reporting on Rwanda: By us, in our July 20, 2011 contribution to the *Guardian’s* Response column.[40](#)

Apart from the compelling direct evidence that the shoot-down was Kagame’s handiwork, there are also the facts that Kagame’s RPF mobilized its troops within two hours of the event, and that it was this final RPF offensive that enabled Kagame’s forces to quickly conquer Rwanda, rather than face elections in 1995 that he and his minority Tutsi surely would have lost.[41](#) Moreover, the government of Rwanda at the time was a coalition government that had several strategically placed Tutsi members; Alison Des Forges, perhaps the most important advocate for the Hutu conspiracy model, admitted at the Rwanda Tribunal that there was little likelihood that the coalition Hutu and Tutsi government could have planned the assassination and the extermination of the Tutsi, without the knowledge of its Tutsi members.[42](#) But the *Guardian* never confronts this set of problems. The Hutu conspiracy model is sacrosanct.

In standard accounts, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) is taken as a genuine judicial enterprise, not as the instrument of victor’s justice and guarantor of RPF immunity that it was and remains. This parallels the establishment treatment of the Yugoslavia Tribunal, both tribunals creations of NATO and closely reflecting its biases and political demands. The ICTR’s huge bias has been displayed, first, in the fact that no Tutsi has ever been indicted by it, although vast crimes have been committed by the RPF from 1990 onward.[43](#) In one notable incident, the former ICTR prosecution expert Filip Reyntjens resigned his post in open protest at this unjustified bias and impunity. “It is precisely because the [RPF] regime in Kigali has been given a sense of impunity that, during the years following 1994, it has committed massive internationally recognized crimes in both Rwanda and the DRC,” Reyntjens wrote in his letter of resignation.[44](#) Another dramatic illustration of the ICTR bias and role was chief prosecutor Louise Arbour’s refusal in 1997 to accept Hourigan’s evidence on Kagame’s responsibility for the shoot-down of Habyarimana’s jet, and the ICTR’s failure to address this event to the present. Nevertheless, the *Guardian*

takes the ICTR as a genuine instrument of justice, with Chris McGreal providing testimony for its prosecution of Hutu defendants, just like Ed Vulliamy testified for the prosecution of Serb defendants at the Yugoslavia Tribunal.[45](#)

Another parallel with establishment accounts of the former Yugoslavia (and of Srebrenica specifically) is the belief that the U.S. and U.K. governments were guilty of inaction in Rwanda, when a military intervention to protect the Tutsi was in order. But these governments never just stood idly by. Instead, they actively stood by *Kagame*, shielding his 1990 aggression from international action, vastly expanding his RPF into the armed forces that overthrew the Habyarimana government and conquered the Rwandan state, and preventing the ICTR from bringing any indictments against Kagame's RPF, even firing ICTR chief prosecutor Carla Del Ponte in 2003 to terminate her "Special Investigations" of the RPF.[46](#) The United States even used the Security Council to reduce UN forces in Rwanda as the killings escalated in April 1994, in accord with Kagame's desire for unimpeded war-making and his plans for conquest. But the *Guardian* swallowed the big lie of U.S. and U.K. inaction from the very beginning. "The world said it should never happen again but stood by while genocide took place in Rwanda," David Beresford wrote. "Despite being fully aware of the horrors through television coverage, most countries stood by and allowed the slaughter to happen," *Guardian* editor Joseph Harker added.[47](#) Here again, journalistic nonfeasance has been crucial to protecting both the Kagame regime and U.S. and U.K. support for it.

A central feature of the establishment party-line holds that the victims of the 1994 mass killing were largely Tutsi and "moderate" Hutu, targeted for elimination by Hutu extremists. "Rwanda's civil war saw 800,000 Tutsis slaughtered by the Hutus," a G2 headline proclaimed over a report by Chris McGreal.[48](#) This is not based on serious evidence and is incompatible with the fact that Kagame's RPF quickly overpowered their Hutu rivals, were soon killing 10,000 Hutu civilians a month to clear the ground for Tutsi resettlement,[49](#) and drove a huge mass of Hutu refugees into the Democratic Republic of Congo, where many more were killed in the years ahead. Christian Davenport's and Allan Stam's research found that a "majority of the victims of 1994" were in fact Hutu,[50](#) and census and survivor data also point to majority Hutu deaths.[51](#)

A true picture of the Rwandan genocide would not only acknowledge the predominance of Hutu deaths in 1994, it would recognize that the same pattern of RPF-triggered deaths and displacements stretches from the RPF's invasion of Rwanda in 1990, straight through its major offensive of February-March 1993, its final offensive and seizure of state power in 1994 (Genocide One), and its series of offensives into the mineral-rich Democratic Republic of Congo from 1994 on, resulting in a death toll several times the scale of Rwanda, and creating the greatest theater of atrocities in the contemporary world (Genocide Two).[52](#) But for the past 17 years, no such picture has emerged on the pages of the *Guardian-Observer*, which continues to toe the party-line in the summer of 2011 on both Yugoslav and Rwandan history.

The Wacky World of George Monbiot

The image of the "Abraham Lincoln of Africa" may have suffered some downgrades over the years, particularly with the August 2010 leak of the draft UN report accusing Kagame's RPF of "premeditation and a precise methodology" in its targeted attacks on Hutu in the DRC, resulting in massive losses of life that "could be classified as crimes of genocide."[53](#) But Kagame's embrace by Western capitals and the UN officialdom remains firm,[54](#) and his

minority Tutsi dictatorship relies as much as ever on the myth of his savior role in ending rather than triggering and perpetrating mass atrocities in 1994. Whenever doubts are raised about the reality of this myth, Kagame's many advocates in the English-speaking world are quick to reiterate that the myth is the truth.⁵⁵ Meanwhile, in Rwanda, Kagame uses his regime's laws against "revisionism, negationism and trivialization of genocide" to intimidate his critics and to jail and even silence permanently anyone who challenges his rule.⁵⁶

It is therefore striking that when George Monbiot throws the charges of "revisionism" and "genocide denial" against us for our work on Yugoslavia and Rwanda, or when Ed Vulliamy attacks work more honest than his own for sowing "poison in the water supply of history," and smears Chomsky for "giving the revisionists his blessing" and "comfort to Messrs. Karadzic and Mladic, and their death squads,"⁵⁷ Vulliamy and Monbiot are employing a technique that they share with Kagame.

"The massacre of Bosnians at Srebrenica in 1995 and the slaughter of Tutsis in Rwanda in 1994 are two of the best-documented acts of genocide in history," Monbiot writes.⁵⁸ As our belief to the contrary is that both the "Rwandan genocide" and the "Srebrenica massacre" rank among the most misrepresented events on the past 20 years, it is worth examining the basis on which Monbiot thinks their proof rests.

Monbiot believes (as does the *Guardian-Observer*) that the Yugoslavia and Rwanda tribunals have been trustworthy searchers for truth and unbiased dispensers of justice, and that the narratives of the conflicts each of them codifies are beyond reproach. The contrast between our view and theirs could not be more stark or clear. Whereas we believe that these are *political* institutions, operating with the mandate to deliver guilty verdicts to the Serb targets of the U.S.-led NATO bloc in the former Yugoslavia, guilty verdicts to the Hutu targets of the U.S., U.K., and RPF in Rwanda, and to dramatize all of this with *faux*-legal performances that stick to these two scripts, Monbiot *et al.* accept the tribunals' indictments, judgments, and guilt assignments on an *ex cathedra* basis.

Monbiot also takes the International Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP) as an unchallengeable authority on the body count at Srebrenica, even though its staff is 90 percent Bosnian Muslim and operates under U.S. sponsorship.⁵⁹ He takes at face value the ICMP's claim that, "using DNA screening, [it] has so far identified the corpses of 6,595 of the 7,789 Bosnians reported as missing after the siege of Srebrenica," and adds that the ICMP's "work suggests that the total number of victims is close to 8,100." It never occurs to Monbiot that DNA cannot fix the mode or time of death, so that when those 6,595 or 8,100 individuals died (i.e., in July 1995? or June 1992-March 1993?), and whether they were executed, killed in battle, or perished from natural causes, are legally meaningful differences that in the vast majority of cases remain undetermined. In *The Srebrenica Massacre: Evidence, Context, Politics*, one of the two books which Monbiot purports to be criticizing, Michael Mandel shows that, in its foundational 2001 judgment in the trial of the Bosnian Serb General Radislav Krstic, the Yugoslavia Tribunal itself never found evidence of anything like 8,000 executions at Srebrenica, so it stretched what facts it did have as far as it could, and then stretched them even further in this case's 2004 judgment on appeal⁶⁰ — but Monbiot never mentions Mandel's chapter. In his independent examination of the Srebrenica-related autopsy reports compiled by the Yugoslavia Tribunal through 2002, the Serb forensic pathologist Ljubiša Simic found that these reports covered between 1,919 and 1,985 individuals in total, and that in only roughly one-in-five did the autopsies "indicate that those persons may have been executed."⁶¹ The implication that Monbiot draws for his

readers, that the 6,595 persons allegedly identified by DNA equals 6,595 persons *executed* (i.e., murdered in a criminally meaningful manner, and proof of the “Srebrenica massacre”), is false in the extreme.

As noted, Monbiot also fails to recognize that the staff of the ICMP, which represents one side in a violent conflict, might not be entirely reliable gatherers of evidence, whether in producing a Srebrenica-related list of missing persons, assembling and storing the mortal remains recovered from the Srebrenica-related graves, or interpreting possible matches between the DNA extracted from the bones of these remains and the DNA drawn from the blood donated by living relatives. Nor does he mention the inconvenient fact that, though the ICMP has been publicizing its claims about DNA identifications since 2001, to date it has refused to disclose to defense teams for their own independent analysis any of its purported DNA profiles and the physical evidence on which these profiles allegedly were developed.⁶² We may also be sure that, like Vulliamy, Monbiot has never mentioned the dramatic downward revision by establishment sources in the estimated death toll from the wars in Bosnia, from 250,000 in 1993 to some 100,000 in 2003-2007,⁶³ or pondered what this might suggest about the unchanging stability of the 8,000-figure in the “Srebrenica massacre,” a figure first broached by the Red Cross in early September 1995 on the basis of persons reported to it as missing, yet remaining immutable ever since.⁶⁴

But it is not at all clear that Monbiot actually read [The Srebrenica Massacre](#). He writes, for example, that this book “claims that the 8,000 deaths at Srebrenica are ‘an unsupportable exaggeration. The true figure may be closer to 800’.” What he doesn’t mention is that he took these 11 words from page 8 of the *Foreword* to the book, which was contributed by Phillip Corwin,⁶⁵ at one time the UN Civilian Affairs Coordinator in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Monbiot attributes these 11 words from Corwin’s Foreword to the collection itself, and asserts that “It” — namely, the collection — “claims that the 8,000 *deaths* at Srebrenica are ‘an unsupportable exaggeration’ . . .” (emphasis added). As the seven contributors to the book besides Corwin focus on the issue of *executions*, not simply deaths for which no cause is specified, and as none of them deny the possibility of 8,000 deaths, Monbiot’s attribution of these 11 words from the Foreword to “It” is a lie, and suggests that his reading of the book was even less than cursory.⁶⁶

Monbiot criticizes the British writer Mick Hume for having once said of the May 27, 1992 shelling of a Bosnian Muslim breadline in Sarajevo that “It is quite obvious to anyone objective that Muslims have done it.” Later, Monbiot extends this criticism to [The Srebrenica Massacre](#): “Like Karadzic,” he writes, “the book claims that the market massacres in Sarajevo were carried out by Bosnian Muslim provocateurs.” The “Like Karadzic” is deeply dishonest. Also, it should be noted that there were at least three “market massacres” in Sarajevo during the war: The 1992 incident (15 deaths); the Markale marketplace massacre of February 5, 1994 (66 deaths); and the last on August 28, 1995 (43 deaths). Different contributors to the collection (particularly George Bogdanich⁶⁷) have assembled a variety of sources to support the claim that the second and third of these incidents were “false flag” operations carried out by the Bosnian Muslims themselves at critical junctures in their negotiations with Western powers to provoke NATO’s intervention on their side. The sources referred to include UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali (who himself was citing UN Special Representative for Bosnia Yasushi Akashi and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher) (p. 233); Lord David Owen and the British General Sir Michael Rose (pp. 53-54); U.S. Lieut. Colonel John Sray (p. 57); a U.S. Senate Republican Policy Committee report (p. 35); the then chief Balkans correspondent for the *New York*

Times, David Binder (p. 233); and the Dutch military intelligence expert Cees Wiebes, who interviewed a minimum of 11 NATO military and intelligence figures who told him that both the 1994 and 1995 incidents had been carried out by the Bosnian Muslims, and added that “Even the most important British policy body in the field of intelligence, the Joint Intelligence Committee, . . . came to the conclusion that the shelling of the Sarajevo market was probably not the work of the VRS [the Bosnian Serb army], but of the Bosnian Muslims” (p. 244). But Monbiot ignores these multiple references, mentions an old statement on the subject by Mick Hume, and likens “the book” to Radovan Karadzic because it disputes this establishment truth!

Monbiot writes that “[[The Srebrenica Massacre](#)] insists that the witnesses to the killings are ‘not credible’,” but he immediately drops the matter. But in the passage where these two words appear,[68](#) one of the present writers (Herman) is summarizing the wealth of material collected throughout the book. Herman notes that, in the entire corpus of the Yugoslavia Tribunal’s work, the “only direct participant witness claim that ran as high as 1,000 [executed] was that of Drazen Erdemovic,” a Bosnian Croat mercenary who at different times during the civil wars in Bosnia served on all three sides, and who in late May 1996, entered the Tribunal’s first-ever guilty plea (for “crimes against humanity,” as it turned out). Having heard Erdemovic’s plea (May 31, 1996), the trial chamber ordered him to submit to a psychiatric evaluation; the three experts who examined Erdemovic concluded that he was “insufficiently able to stand trial at this moment” (June 27, 1996). Nevertheless, just eight days later (July 5, 1996), the Office of the Prosecutor called Erdemovic as a witness in the Tribunal’s famous Rule 62, mock-trial-*in-absentia* of Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic. Now, it appears, he was sufficiently able to testify that he participated with seven other executioners (all of whom he named, but none of whom has ever been called before the Tribunal) “at a farm that was at a place called Pilica” on July 16, 1995, where 15 to 20 busloads of Bosnian Muslims were delivered, containing between 1,000 and 1,200 persons, all of whom he and his fellow gunmen shot dead in groups of roughly ten at a time.[69](#)

Herman comments that Erdemovic’s testimony that day “was accepted despite its vagueness and inconsistencies, lack of corroboration, his problematic background and associations, and his suffering from mental problems sufficient to disqualify him from trial — but not from testifying before the Tribunal, free of cross-examination. . . . This and other witness evidence suffered from serious abuse of the plea-bargaining process whereby witnesses could receive mitigating sentences if they cooperated sufficiently with the prosecution” (p. 281). George Szamuely shows in his chapter the extent to which Erdemovic is a charlatan and a fraud, but one carefully protected over many years by the Tribunal. (Matters also developed at length by Germinal Civikov in his book, *Srebrenica: The Star Witness*.[70](#)) At one point during the trial of Slobodan Milosevic in 2003, Erdemovic testified that “his unit was paid lavishly to participate in crimes at Srebrenica, but [he] could not say who made the actual payment,” Szamuely writes, and that he once even told ABC News that “his unit had been promised 12 kilograms of gold” (p. 189).[71](#) In short, not only is Drazen Erdemovic not credible, but as the prosecution’s most important witness in advancing its case for the “Srebrenica massacre” and, ultimately, “genocide,” his long, 16-year career as a plea-bargaining witness-for-the-prosecution reveals the Tribunal’s deeply political and judicially-compromised nature.

Monbiot adds that “[[The Srebrenica Massacre](#)] suggests that the Bosnian Muslim soldiers retreated from Srebrenica to ensure that more Bosnians were killed, in order to provoke US

intervention.” In the endnote that accompanies this passage on Monbiot’s website, he laughs off the book’s sources for this “astonishing claim,” and quotes one paragraph from Herman’s “Summary and Conclusions,” and two endnotes.⁷² Clearly, Monbiot believes that he has discovered a disconnect between the “astonishing claim” and the sources that Herman cites to support it.

In fact, there are two passages in this book where different contributors develop this claim, and where they cite multiple sources to suggest that, as one British Lieut. Colonel assigned to the UN Protection Force for Bosnia told the British military correspondent Tim Ripley: “They [the Bosnian government] knew what was happening in Srebrenica. I am certain they decided it was worth the sacrifice.”⁷³

As with Monbiot’s treatment of the “market massacres,” here he pretends that the book hasn’t provided adequate sources, and counts on his readers not to check for themselves. George Bogdanich (pp. 56-59) cites the testimony of the Bosnian Muslim General Sefer Halilovic on Sarajevo’s orders to withdraw 18 top commanders from Srebrenica, including Naser Oric, in the month before Sarajevo handed Srebrenica over to the Bosnian Serbs; although this diminished the combat readiness of the remaining troops of the 28th Division, Halilovic testified that orders continued to be sent to Srebrenica for its troops to step up “militarily meaningless” attacks on Bosnian Serb positions outside the enclave (p. 58). Herman also points out that, “In his 2004 book, *Les Guerriers de la Paix* (‘Warriors for Peace’), Bernard Kouchner . . . states that on his death-bed, Bosnia’s wartime President Alija Izetbegovic acknowledged to both Kouchner and Richard Holbrooke that he had exaggerated claims of atrocities by Serbian forces to encourage NATO interventions against the Serbs.” These included the Bosnian Muslim leadership’s early and very effective claims in the summer of 1992 about “extermination camps” (recall how well the *Guardian* and Ed Vulliamy took the bait), but the practice belonged to a much larger, ongoing, Western-P.R.-conscious pattern, used many times throughout the wars, and used as late as July 9, 1995, when Izetbegovic started contacting world leaders, warning them about an imminent “genocide” to be carried out by Bosnian Serb forces (pp. 284-285).

Monbiot seems especially troubled by Herman’s contention (also sourced in Bogdanich and Szamuely, a fact unmentioned by Monbiot) that “Bosnian Muslim officials have claimed that their wartime president, Alija Izetbegovic, told them that Bill Clinton had advised him that direct U.S. military intervention could occur only if the Serbs killed at least 5,000 in Srebrenica.” Indeed, in referring to Herman’s “astonishing claim,” this is what Monbiot had in mind. In [The Srebrenica Massacre](#), the oldest source cited for this claim is a 1998 interview with Srebrenica’s wartime chief of police Hakija Meholic, who told the Sarajevo publication *Dani* that he was a member of a delegation of nine persons from Srebrenica who met personally with Izetbegovic in 1993, at which time Izetbegovic asked them for their thoughts about a possible “swap of Srebrenica for Vogosca [a Sarajevo suburb]?” “We rejected it without any discussion,” Meholic told the interviewer. Then, Izetbegovic added: “You know, I was offered by Clinton in April 1993 . . . that the Chetnik forces enter Srebrenica, carry out a slaughter of 5,000 Muslims, and then there will be a military intervention.”⁷⁴ In the book, the sources provided for this story include *Dani* (p. 56, p. 189), a Dutch documentary film that was played in court during the Srebrenica-related trial of the Bosnian Serb General Radislav Krstic (p. 56), and the November 15, 1999 UN report, *The Fall of Srebrenica*, which both Bogdanich and Herman cite (p. 236, p. 284), and for which Monbiot mocks Herman.⁷⁵ Perhaps Monbiot finds the use of this UN report “astonishing” because the UN report adds that “Izetbegovic has flatly denied making such a statement,”

and for Monbiot, Izetbegovic's word more than offsets the other eight witnesses who could confirm Meholic's story.

There is also no evidence that Monbiot seriously read the other book that he purports to analyze: [The Politics of Genocide](#). "Mis-citing a [Yugoslavia] tribunal judgment," he writes, the book "maintains that the Serb forces 'incontestably had not killed any but "Bosnian Muslim men of military age".'" This time, in an endnote on his website, Monbiot cites nine words from the 2001 judgment in the *Krstic* case, which he thinks provides a gotcha moment: "In fact the judgment says that 'only the men of military age were systematically massacred'. . . . Can you spot the difference? Herman and Peterson couldn't."[76](#) But contrary to Monbiot, our quote is exact, and there isn't any substantive difference between these two quotes. We should note, however, that Monbiot, a man so sensitive to genocide-related issues, fails to mention that in the same sentence as the one he quotes from our book, we point out that the Bosnian Serbs "had taken the trouble to bus all the women, children, and the elderly men to safety" (p. 47). Doesn't his suppression of this kind of information (and we can be sure that Monbiot never picks it up elsewhere) constitute a kind of genocide-inflation?[77](#)

In this 2009 interview with Michael Hourigan, the Australian former investigator for the Rwanda Tribunal, Hourigan recounts his experiences with Tribunal Chief Prosecutor Louise Arbour, who, in his words, told him that the "investigation has to come to an end" when he reported to her that his team had found RPF informants willing to testify that the April 6, 1994 shoot-down of Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana's jet had been ordered by Paul Kagame and carried out by agents of the Rwandan Patriotic Front.

Further evidence that Monbiot didn't read our book is found where he writes that, in 2004, Mick Hume repeated a "long-discredited denier's claim" that "Paul Kagame's army 'shot down' President Habyarimana's plane." As we also write about the assassination in our book, and contend that the Kagame-led RPF were responsible for it (pp. 59-61), it is revealing that Monbiot didn't extend his criticism of Mick Hume to us as well. But our book doesn't cite Mick Hume — instead, we cite Michael Hourigan and the French Judge Jean-Louis Bruguière (see the previous section). Although this so-called "denier's claim" has never been discredited, it has been vehemently rejected by Kagame and his many apologists.[78](#) So Monbiot repeats the Kagame party-line, attacks Mick Hume (and some of Hume's old colleagues) for highlighting this crucial piece of evidence against Kagame's RPF, and ignores the serious evidence against Kagame that we put forward in our book.[79](#)

Monbiot takes strong issue with our assertion in [The Politics of Genocide](#) that the "great majority of deaths were Hutu, with some estimates as high as two million," and he calls this "as straightforward an instance of revisionism as [he's] ever seen. . . ." These objections are laughable. In the book, we report that the U.S. academics Christian Davenport and Allan Stam, who studied multiple mortality estimates for Rwanda, themselves "estimated that more than one million deaths occurred in Rwanda from April through July 1994" (p. 58), with the total on *all* sides falling within a likely range between 800,000 and 1 million (if not slightly higher). We also write that Davenport-Stam "have been under attack and in retreat since they were expelled from Rwanda in November 2003, when they first reported that that the 'majority of the victims of 1994 were of the same ethnicity as the government in power', and have been barred from entering the country ever since" (p. 59). Anyone who looks at Table 1, "Differential attributions of 'genocide' to different theaters of atrocities" (p. 35), sees that we use the lower end estimate of 800,000 deaths in Rwanda, not "two million."

But Monbiot takes our single mention of the former RPF military officer Christophe Hakizimana's 1999 letter to the UN, and runs to his readers with the scoop that we are so sloppy in our use of sources, our claims are "comparable in this case only to the claims of the genocidaires themselves"! [80](#)

Monbiot also objects that, in [The Politics of Genocide](#), we place the "Rwandan genocide in inverted commas throughout the text." In fact, we use scare quotes to distinguish between two radically different and incompatible accounts of what happened in Rwanda throughout the period. Thus the "Rwandan genocide" (i.e., inside scare quotes) refers to what in the previous section (above) we call the Hutu conspiracy model — the false and propagandistic party-line advanced by the U.S., U.K., and Paul Kagame-led RPF, and thereafter enforced by the Rwandan Tribunal, of a "conspiracy" by the majority Hutu around Habyarimana to exterminate the Tutsi minority. We, on the contrary, treat the vast bloodbaths of 1994 as resulting from a pre-planned conspiracy by the RPF, hatched no later than 1990, to seize state power within Rwanda by using aggression, terrorism, and an eventual military takeover of the country. The RPF accomplished this plan by July 1994, after launching its final offensive on April 6, when it shot down Habyarimana's jet and rejected all ceasefire efforts by the remaining Hutu armed forces as impediments to its plan. Our use of scare quotes is therefore a clarification device: By "Rwandan genocide," we mean the ideological construct that fills George Monbiot's (and the *Guardian-Observer's* collective) mind about the relevant events. Some readers may find it stylistically a turn-off, but this is a separate matter. [81](#)

In both his June 17 and August 4 rejoinders to the Media Lens group, Monbiot urged them to read the reviews of our book published in 2010 by Gerald Caplan and Adam Jones, [82](#) which in Monbiot's words "contain reams of devastating evidence," make it "hard to see how [Media Lens] could still maintain that Herman and Peterson are not engaging in denial," and show that "Media Lens is now supporting an attempt to whitewash two great crimes and to excuse and justify the killers." [83](#) But our analysis of the death tolls was based on serious evidence which we spelled out, but that Monbiot characteristically ignores. Instead, he latches onto two party-line followers on Rwanda 1994, citing their authority on the subject but never a single detail, and suppressing the fact that, in 2010, we drafted extensive replies to both of them. [84](#) Monbiot is a hit-and-run intellectual.

Concluding Note

On first reading George Monbiot's "[Left and Libertarian Right Cohabit in the Weird World of the Genocide Belittlers](#)," we drew up a list of his errors, misrepresentations, and regurgitations of party-line lies, so as to better equip ourselves to respond to his commentary. But as the original list kept growing each time we looked at his work, we soon realized that our list might be almost indefinitely expandable, depending on how finely we parsed his errors, and how much time we wanted to devote to the project. We are also aware that this one commentary only gives a glimmer of the past 20 years' worth of *Guardian-Observer* biased treatment of these theaters of war, U.S. and U.K. intervention, and mass atrocities. But we have made a start.

Still, a few final comments are in order.

The National Security Strategy issued by the Obama administration in 2010 pledged that "in certain instances" the United States would employ "military means to prevent and respond to genocide and mass atrocities." [85](#) From its advocates' point of view, one of the major

selling points of so-called “mass atrocity response operations” (a.k.a. “humanitarian interventions”) is that, “unlike in many other types of military operations, there is the opportunity to harness true unity of purpose between the humanitarian community and military actors”⁸⁶ — more realistically, to compromise the neutrality of humanitarian actors, co-opt their moral credibility, and reduce their ability to counter war and militarism. We, on the other hand, oppose such “unity of purpose,” and recognize its destructive potential: The ease with which this year’s Western-imperial war on Libya was shepherded through the United Nations under the guise of protecting civilians bears witness to the threat to international peace and security that it poses.⁸⁷

In *The Politics of Genocide*, we noted that the “word ‘genocide’ has increased in frequency of use and recklessness of application, so much so that the crime of the twentieth century for which the word originally was coined often appears debased” (p. 103).⁸⁸

We added that its usage had become 297 percent more frequent in 2008 than it had been in 1990, with the vast majority of this increase fitting the *Nefarious* category (most notably in Rwanda, Srebrenica, and Darfur),⁸⁹ or those theaters in which the alleged “perpetrator of mass-atrocity crimes is our enemy or states targeted by us for destabilization and attack, . . . and their victims therefore *worthy* of our focus, sympathy, public displays of solidarity, and calls for inquiry and punishment” (p. 103).

We also stated that, “when we ourselves commit mass-atrocity crimes,” this principle inverts, and the converse becomes true: then the “atrocities are *Constructive*, our victims are *unworthy* of our attention and indignation, and never suffer ‘genocide’ at our hands,” a near-immutable law of the international arena that applies not only to the “Iraqi *untermenschen* who have died in such grotesque numbers over the past two decades” (p. 103) — but also to the Hutu of Rwanda and the eastern DRC, the peoples of Somalia, Colombia, Turkey, Afghanistan, Yemen, Lebanon, the Israeli Occupied Palestinian Territories, and Pakistan, to name a tragic few.

Just as the evidence indicates that “genocide” is a crime committed by the enemies of the U.S.-led NATO bloc, it also suggests that “genocide denial” and “revisionism” are thought crimes that can be committed only by those who question these rather tidy and convenient political, military, and legal arrangements.

Hence, questioning the number of Bosnian Muslim execution-victims following the fall of Srebrenica is “genocide denial,” but ignoring the Bosnian Serb civilian victims of Naser Oric in the villages outside Srebrenica, where estimates run as high as 2,382,⁹⁰ is neither genocide denial nor genocide belittling — it is keeping everyone focused on the preferred (*Nefarious*) “genocide.”

Similarly, ignoring the “10,000 or more Hutu civilians [killed] per month” inside Rwanda by Paul Kagame’s forces in 1994,⁹¹ the Hutu and other civilians killed on a scale many times greater in the Democratic Republic of Congo as a “direct result of the occupation of the DRC by Rwanda and Uganda,”⁹² and the perhaps one million Iraqi victims of the “sanctions of mass destruction” imposed by the United States and Britain in the 13 years prior to their invasion of Iraq in 2003 (three of the major *Benign* and *Constructive* bloodbaths of the past two decades),⁹³ is not “genocide denial,” much less a willful and complicit apologetics for genocide — it is patriotic eye-aversion in the face of the national pursuit of legitimate economic and political interests.

In these and many other cases we find proof beyond a shadow of a doubt that there really is a *politics of genocide*. This is well reflected in George Monbiot's attack on "genocide denial" and "revisionism."

Notes

[1](#) See George Monbiot, "[Left and Libertarian Right Cohabit in the Weird World of the Genocide Belittlers](#)," *Guardian*, June 14, 2011 (print). At Monbiot's own personal Web site, the title that he had chosen for this attack was more direct: "[Naming the Genocide Deniers](#)" (June 13).

[2](#) For a copy of the *Guardian's* July 5 rejection notice, see David Peterson, "[Boy, Do We Need A Hippocratic Oath For Journalist](#)," ZNet, July 21, 2011. For copies of our separate, original responses, see Edward S. Herman, "[Reply to George Monbiot on 'Genocide Belittling'](#)," unpublished manuscript, June 17, 2011 (as posted to ZNet, July 19, 2011); and David Peterson, "[George Monbiot and the anti-'Genocide Deniers' Brigade](#)," unpublished manuscript, June 17, 2011 (as posted to ZNet, July 19, 2011).

[3](#) See Edward S. Herman and David Peterson, "[We're Not Genocide Deniers](#)," *Guardian*, July 20, 2011 (print). Somehow, the *Guardian* neglected to add the phrase "Damn it!" to this title. As in: "We're not genocide deniers. Damn it!" Or: "We're not child molesters. Damn it!"

[4](#) "[A 'Malign Intellectual Subculture' - George Monbiot Smears Chomsky, Herman, Peterson, Pilger And Media Lens](#)," *Media Lens*, August 2, 2011, esp. its "Postscript." As the Media Lens group described the *Guardian's* efforts: "*Guardian* readers posted comments below the truncated response from Herman and Peterson, with the majority in support and several providing links to the fuller rebuttals posted at ZNet. The [Comment Is Free] moderators swiftly got to work playing 'whack-a-mole' to remove these comments whenever they popped up. Even a comment by Peterson himself, linking to these longer pieces, was removed. Unusually, this was later restored, most likely in response to public complaints." For a copy of the once removed, later restored, comment by Peterson, see *Guardian*, [July 20, 2011, 8:38PM](#).

[5](#) See the Internet pseudonym, "OopsItsMe," *Guardian*, [July 20, 2011, 9:24AM](#).

[6](#) See Edward S. Herman and David Peterson, [The Politics of Genocide](#) (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2010).

[7](#) Nick Cohen, "[Decline and Fall of the Puppetmasters](#)," *Observer*, July 17, 2001 (print).

[8](#) James Wizeye, "[To Claim Tutsis Caused Rwanda's Genocide Is Pure Revisionism](#)," *Guardian*, July 26, 2011 (print).

[9](#) For one powerful response to James Wizeye, see the comment posted by Christopher Black, a Canadian attorney and Lead Defense Counsel at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, *Guardian*, [July 26, 2011, 4:25PM](#).

[10](#) Throughout this manuscript, we will be writing about both the *Guardian* and the *Observer* jointly, whether we write the *Guardian-Observer* explicitly, or simply the *Guardian*.

[11](#) Ed Vulliamy, "This War Has Changed My Life," *British Journalism Review*, Vo. 4, No. 2

(1993); quoted in Peter Brock, [Media Cleansing: Dirty Reporting. Journalism and Tragedy in Yugoslavia](#) (Los Angeles: GM Books, 2005), p. 57.

[12](#) See, e.g., Carl Savich, [“Celebici,” Serbianna](#), November 11, 2003.

[13](#) Here is the totality of Ed Vulliamy’s reporting on the Bosnian Muslim-run camps for Serbs insofar as it turned up on the pages of the *Guardian-Observer* from the start of 1992 through the end of July, 2011: “The principal camps on the Serb list are at Tarcin, near Sarajevo. . . .” ([“Shame of Camp Omarska,” Guardian](#), August 7, 1992.) And: “Who talks now about Bosnian Serb massacres at Zvornik, Vlasenica, Brcko or Bijeljina? (Or, indeed, sites of Croatian atrocities, such as Ahmici, or the Bosnian Muslim camp at Celebici)” ([“The Edge of Madness,” Guardian](#), July 23, 2008).

[14](#) Cf. Ed Vulliamy, [“We Must Fight for Memory of Bosnia’s Camps,” IWPR Balkan Crisis Report](#), February 21, 2005.

[15](#) For a critical discussion of the “journalism of attachment,” see Philip Hammond, “Moral Combat: Advocacy Journalists and the New Humanitarianism,” in David Chandler, Ed., [Rethinking Human Rights: Critical Approaches to International Politics](#) (London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 176-195, especially Hammond’s discussion of “New humanitarianism,” pp. 191-195. Along with the “explicit rejection of neutrality,” the “journalists of attachment” have also “tended to follow the agenda of powerful Western governments,” and their eagerness to “frame conflicts in terms of a good-versus-evil discourse of abusers and victims and call for ever-greater Western intervention performs a valuable service to governments which, having lost the stable framework of the Cold War, couch their foreign policy in the language of human rights and morality” (p. 191). According to Hammond, the *Guardian*’s Ed Vulliamy once “accuse[d] the entire ‘international community’ of ‘meddling with the truths of the war [in Bosnia-Herzegovina] to stifle intervention and foster appeasement’ and of ‘spreading . . . lies and distortions that would equate aggressor and victim’ Western ‘neutrality’, he charge[d], amounted to *de facto* support for the Serbs” (p. 182). We believe that Ed Vulliamy’s journalistic career since roughly the second half of 1992 serves as a very good illustration of everything that is wrong with the “journalism of attachment.”

[16](#) Ed Vulliamy, [“A Destiny Worse Than War,” Guardian](#), April 10, 1993. Here we add that in his original, August 7, 1992 report about the Bosnian Serb-run camps Omarska and Trnopolje, which he and the other British reporters for Independent Television News or ITN (Penny Marshall, Ian Williams, and cameraman Jeremy Irvin) as well as a reporter and a cameraman from Radio Television Serbia visited on August 5, Vulliamy had written: “Trnopolje cannot be called a ‘concentration camp’. . . . One group has arrived from Kereter[m] that morning, claiming that they had been beaten, but showing no signs of it. However, says pitifully thin Fikrit Alic: ‘It is worse than here. There is no food’. Others in the group looked better fed. Another boy, Icic Budo, says ‘they killed 200 people’ at Kereter[m] and ‘many more at Omarska’. He has seen no bodies himself, but another boy had seen one corpse near the main gate” ([“Shame of Camp Omarska,” Guardian](#), August 7, 1992).

But in a February 2, 1997 report that was published around the same time that the English translation of Thomas Deichmann’s “The Picture That Fooled the World” (*LM97*, February, 1997) began to circulate in Britain, Vulliamy wrote: “I was interviewing Fikret Alic while he was filmed. He had arrived from another camp, Kereterm, where he had witnessed the massacre of 200 prisoners in a single night — a crime confirmed by subsequent

investigations” ([“I Stand by My Story,”](#) *Observer*, February 2, 1997).

Then on March 15, 2000, the day after the jury in Britain had decided ITN’s libel case against *LM*, the publisher of Deichmann’s debunking of the Fikret Alic photographs, in favor of ITN, Vulliamy wrote: “There were more important matters, such as the emaciated Fikret Alic’s (accurate and vindicated) recollections of the night he had been assigned to load the bodies of 250 men killed in one night at yet another camp” ([“Poison in the Well of History,”](#) *Guardian*, March 15, 2000).

Finally, on July 27, 2008, shortly after the arrest of the Bosnian Serbs’ wartime leader Radovan Karadzic while riding on a bus in Belgrade, Vulliamy devoted a nearly 3,000-word profile to Fikret Alic. Now, according to Vulliamy, he first “came across Fikret Alic in 1992 at the Trnopolje concentration camp, . . . where Alic languished behind the wire,” and where he “had arrived that morning . . . from yet another camp, Keraterm, where during a single night 130 men had been massacred in a hangar [and] he had been ordered to help load the bodies on to bulldozers, but, weeping, had his place taken by an older man” ([“‘I Am Waiting. No One Has Ever Said Sorry’,”](#) *Observer*, July 27, 2008).

So, here we have an unambiguous case in which Ed Vulliamy’s original descriptions of Fikret Alic and Icic Budo, two different Bosnian Muslim individuals he encountered at the Trnopolje transit camp on August 5, 1992, rapidly merged in Vulliamy’s subsequent reporting into a portrait of the famous *Fikret Alic alone*, with Budo winding up on the cutting-room floor, and Vulliamy’s original description of Budo’s fuzzy, hearsay allegations (“He has seen no bodies himself”) projected onto Alic, and reported as Alic’s firsthand, eye-witness account: Alic “had witnessed the massacre of 200 prisoners in a single night” at Kereterm (February 2, 1997); Alic “had been assigned to load the bodies of 250 men killed in one night” at Kereterm (March 15, 2000); and Alic “had been ordered to help load the bodies” of “130 men [who] had been massacred in a hangar [during a single night at Kereterm]” (July 27, 2008).

(For analyses of the early Western propaganda uses of the original, August 5, 1992 images taken of Fikret Alic at Trnopolje, see Thomas Deichmann, “The Picture That Fooled the World,” *LM97*, February, 1997; and Edward S. Herman and David Peterson, [“The Picture That Continues To Fool the World,”](#) *ZNet*, June 27, 2011.)

[17](#) See Alija Izetbegovic, [The Islamic Declaration: A Programme for the Islamization of Muslims and of Muslim Peoples](#), no translator listed, 1970, 1990 (as posted to the website of the Balkan Repository Project). Expounding on what he called the “incompatibility of Islam with non-Islamic systems,” Izetbegovic explained: “There can be neither peace nor coexistence between the Islamic religion and non-Islamic social and political institutions. . . . By claiming the right to order its own world itself, Islam obviously excludes the right or possibility of the part of any foreign ideology on that terrain. There is, therefore, no lay principle, and the state should both reflect and support religious moral concepts” (p. 30). To the best of our knowledge, Vulliamy has never commented on, let alone criticized, this document on the pages of the *Guardian-Observer* for its avowed ethno-religious intolerance.

[18](#) See Patrick Ball *et al.*, [The Bosnian Book of the Dead: Assessment of the Database](#), Research and Documentation Center, Sarajevo, June 2007. Ball *et al.* estimate 96,895 total war-related deaths, of which 56,662 were military or combatants at the time of death (58.5%), and 39,199 were civilians (40.5%), with 1,034 (1.1%) listed as Policemen. (See Table 23a, “Victims Reported in BBD by Status in War,” p. 30.) Out of the 64,003 Muslims who perished in these wars, approximately 33,000 were civilians, and 31,000 combatants.

(See Table 19, “Ethnicity of Victims Reported in BBD,” p. 29, as well as some previous work by the Research and Documentation Center.) A search of the Nexis database for everything published under Ed Vulliamy’s byline on the pages of the *Guardian* and the *Observer* reveals no record of Vulliamy ever having mentioned the names of the five principal researchers whose work has revised the total number of deaths from the civil wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina to the 100,000 range: Ewa Tabeau, Jakub Bijak, Mirsad Tokaca, Patrick Ball, or Philip Verwimp (i.e., *byline(ed w/2 vulliamy) and [insert name] for all dates*).

[19](#) See Ed Vulliamy, [“Open Letter from Ed Vulliamy to Amnesty International.”](#) as posted to the Web site of the Congress of North American Bosniaks, October 31, 2009. For our response to Vulliamy, see Edward S. Herman and David Peterson, [“Open Letter To Amnesty International’s London and Belfast Offices, on the Occasion of Noam Chomsky’s Belfast Festival Lecture, October 30, 2009,”](#) *MRZine*, November 22, 2009.

[20](#) See Emma Brockes, [“The Greatest Intellectual?”](#) *Guardian*, October 31, 2005 (as now posted to the [Chomsky.Info](#) website).

[21](#) See “Corrections and Clarifications: *The Guardian* and Noam Chomsky,” *Guardian*, November 17, 2005.

[22](#) Vulliamy, [“We Must Fight for Memory of Bosnia’s Camps.”](#) Also see n. 25, below.

[23](#) For a copy of the 2003 open letter, see Al Burke, [All Quieted on the Word Front](#), August 8, 2004, p. 31.

[24](#) See John Willis, [“External Ombudsman Report,”](#) *Guardian*, May 25, 2006, para. 17.

[25](#) Vulliamy, [“We Must Fight for Memory of Bosnia’s Camps.”](#) As Vulliamy had written: “Revisionism over the carnage in Bosnia is rampant and persistent. . . . Last year, [*Ordfont*] carried an interview with the author *Diane* Johnstone, about her book *Fools’ Crusade*, which expresses doubts over the number of victims of the Srebrenica massacre; the authenticity of the Racak massacre in Kosovo; the use of systematic rape in the war in Bosnia; and the true figure of Bosnian war dead (the official estimate is more than 200,000 — Johnstone claims 50,000). And just as before, members of the chattering classes, unbelievably, have hailed this poison as ‘outstanding work’, in a letter signed by, among others, Noam Chomsky, Arundhati Roy, Tariq Ali, John Pilger, *et. al*” (emphasis added). Also see Diana Johnstone, [“Kulturkrieg in Journalism: Using Emotion to Silence Analysis,”](#) *CounterPunch*, November 14, 2005.

[26](#) See Marko Attila Hoare *et al.*, “Protest to *The Guardian* Over ‘Correction’ to Noam Chomsky Interview,” *Balkan Investigative Reporting Network*, December 8, 2005.

[27](#) As George Bogdanich writes: “General Morillon was asked directly by Judge Patrick Robinson at the ICTY: ‘Are you saying, then, General, that what happened in 1995 was a direct reaction to what Naser Oric did to the Serbs two years before?’ Morillon replied: ‘Yes. Yes, Your Honour. I am convinced of that.’” See George Bogdanich, Chap. 2, “Prelude to the Capture of Srebrenica,” in Edward S. Herman, Ed., [The Srebrenica Massacre: Evidence, Context, Politics](#) (Evergreen Park: Alphabet Soup, 2011), pp. 37-65; here p. 47. For the Morillon, see *Prosecutor v. Slobodan Milosevic* (IT-02-54), Trial Transcript, [February 12, 2004](#), p. 31,975.

[28](#) See Edward S. Herman and David Peterson, [“The Dismantling of Yugoslavia,”](#) *Monthly*

Review, Vol. 59, No. 5, October 2007.

[29](#) Chris McGreal, [“Out of Africa,”](#) *Guardian*, March 27, 2009. — McGreal was the *Guardian-Observer’s* chief Africa correspondent from September 1992 through March 2009.

[30](#) See Herman and Peterson, [The Politics of Genocide](#), “Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo,” pp. 51-68. (Also published as Edward S. Herman and David Peterson, [“Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo in the Propaganda System,”](#) *Monthly Review* 62, No. 1, May 2010.)

[31](#) See UN Security Council Resolution 812 ([S/RES/812](#)), March 12, 1993.

[32](#) See Peter Erlinder, “The U.N. Security Council Tribunal for Rwanda: International Justice, or *Juridically-Constructed ‘Victor’s Impunity’?*” *Journal of Social Justice*, Vol. 4, No. 1, Fall 2010, pp. 131-214; esp. “RPF Military Superiority Established: January 1991-February 1993,” pp. 171-174. (For an online copy, click [here](#).) As Erlinder puts it: “By the time of the RPF’s [February] 1993 assault on Kigali the invading RPF had grown from the 3,000-4,000 Ugandan ‘deserters’ in late 1990, to a light infantry fighting force of at least 20,000 troops with unquestioned military superiority. By contrast, the defending FAR [Armed Forces of Rwanda] had the 6,000-7,000 ‘real’ troops who had defeated the initial small RPF/Ugandan invasion in late 1990, augmented by some 25-30,000 recent recruits, which the U.N. commander of U.N. troops, U.N. General Dallaire, characterized as ‘rabble’” (pp. 172-173).

[33](#) The name ‘Paul Kagame’ appeared in only two articles in the *Guardian-Observer* prior to April 6, 1994: Catharine Watson, [“Rebels at the Ready in Fragile Rwanda Truce,”](#) *Guardian*, September 8, 1992; and Mark Huband, [“Voice of the Massacres,”](#) *Guardian*, January 29, 1994.

[34](#) For three iterations of the standard or what we call the Hutu-conspiracy model of the “Rwandan genocide,” see Bernard A. Muna, [The Prosecutor against Theoneste Bagosora, Amended Indictment](#)(ICTR-96-7-I), International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, December 8, 1999; Alison Des Forges *et al.*, [“Leave None to Tell the Story”: Genocide in Rwanda](#) (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1999); and Adam Jones, Chap. 9, “Apocalypse in Rwanda,” in [Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction](#) (New York: Routledge, 2nd Ed., 2010), pp. 346-368.

[35](#) See the [Affidavit of Michael Andrew Hourigan](#), International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, November 27, 2006 (as posted to the Web site of the [Rwanda Documents Project](#) at William Mitchell College of Law, St. Paul, Minnesota). Also see Tiphaine Dickson, [“Rwanda’s Deadliest Secret: Who Shot Down President Habyarimana’s Plane?”](#) *GlobalResearch.com*, November 24, 2008.

[36](#) In Bruguière’s words: “[T]he relationship of political forces, due in large part to the numerical inferiority of the Tutsi electorate, would not permit [Kagame] to win the elections called for in the political process laid out in the Arusha Accords without the support of the opposition parties. . . . [F]or [Kagame] the physical elimination of President Habyarimana [therefore] had become essential as a means to achieve his political ends from October 1993” (Jean-Louis Bruguière, [Request for the Issuance of International Arrest Warrants](#), Tribunal de Grande Instance, Paris, France, November 21, 2006, para. 103 and para. 102.)

[37](#) Rory Carroll, [“Kagame Set Genocide in Motion, Paris Judge Says,”](#) *Guardian*, March 12,

2004; Chris McGreal, [“French Judge Accuses Rwandan President of Assassination,”](#) *Guardian*, November 22, 2006; and Chris McGreal, [“France’s shame?”](#) *Guardian*, January 11, 2007.

[38](#) Chris McGreal, [“For Rwanda, Read Burundi,”](#) *Observer*, July 7, 1996.

[39](#) Chris McGreal, [“Rwanda’s ‘murderer in chief’ on trial,”](#) *Guardian*, April 3, 2002.

[40](#) We base this claim on a search of the Nexis database for mentions of ‘Rwanda’ and ‘Hourigan’ in the pages of the *Guardian* and the *Observer* for all dates archived by Nexis.

[41](#) Depending on the relative percentages of Rwanda’s Hutu and Tutsi population on the date of the national elections to be held in 1995 under the 1993 Arusha Accords, ethnic Hutu would have outnumbered ethnic Tutsi by some six- or seven-to-one. Under these circumstances, the Kagame-RPF-Tutsi stood no chance of prevailing at the polls. This left the Kagame-led RPF no other realistic option of acquiring state power but to seize it militarily, via the assassination of the Hutu President Juvenal Habyarimana, and the launch of its final and decisive offensive of the April-July 1994 period. See n. 36, above.

[42](#) See *Prosecutor v. Augustin Ndingiriyimana et al. (or Military II)* (ICTR-00-56-I), Transcript, September 19, 2006, p. 4, lines 13-22. (Unavailable online.)

[43](#) See the [“Status of Cases,”](#) webpage at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (last accessed on August 15, 2011). All 97 of the individual defendants listed there are ethnic Hutu.

[44](#) Filip Reyntjens’ January 11, 2005 letter of resignation to Hassan Jallow is quoted in John Laughland, [A History of Political Trials: From Charles I to Saddam Hussein](#) (New York: Peter Lang Ltd., 2008), p. 211. The Reyntjens letter continued: “Article 6(2) of the [ICTR’s] Statute explicitly rules out immunity, including for Heads of state or government or for responsible government officials. This principle is contravened when, as is currently the case, a message is sent out that those in power need not fear prosecution” (211-212). The *Guardian*’s Rory Carroll did report Reyntjens’ resignation. Wrote Carroll: “There has been speculation that President Kagame, who led the rebel sweep through Rwanda, and was behind the subsequent incursions into the Democratic Republic of Congo, might have been indicted himself were it not for his links with Washington and London” (Rory Carroll, [“Genocide Tribunal ‘Ignoring Tutsi Crimes’,”](#) *Guardian*, January 2005).

[45](#) Describing his feelings about Rwanda, McGreal writes: “There is a debate among reporters over whether we should take the stand at international courts, but it seemed difficult to me, after writing of the blood on the hands of western leaders for abandoning the Tutsis, to then refuse to make a small contribution to what little justice there was for the dead and survivors.” Having witnessed one day the execution by firing squad of the Hutu Froduald Karamira at a stadium in Kigali, McGreal “thought back on the immense suffering caused by Karamira and his cohorts,” and had an epiphany: McGreal’s “long-held view that the death penalty was wrong, no matter what, fell away. Before Rwanda, I could not have imagined saying this, but I would not have saved Karamira even if it had been in my power. I looked at him and believed he deserved to die” (McGreal, [“Out of Africa”](#)).

[46](#) See Carla Del Ponte, with Chuck Sudetic, [Madame Prosecutor: Confrontations with Humanity’s Worst Criminals and the Culture of Impunity: A Memoir](#) (New York: Other Press,

2009), esp. Chap. 9, “Confronting Kigali: 2002 and 2003,” 223-241.

[47](#) David Beresford, “Who Bears the Guilt of Africa’s Horror?” *Guardian*, July 30, 1994; Joseph Harker, “Holocaust: Just Obeying Orders,” *Guardian*, January 31, 1995. (Both unavailable online.)

[48](#) Chris McGreal, “[France’s Shame?](#)” Rwanda’s civil war saw 800,000 Tutsis slaughtered by the Hutus — armed and supported by France,” *Guardian*, January 11, 2007.

[49](#) See George E. Moose, “[Human Rights Abuses in Rwanda.](#)” Information Memorandum to The Secretary, U.S. Department of State, undated though clearly drafted between September 17 and 20, 1994 (as posted to the Web site of the [Rwanda Documents Project](#)).

[50](#) See Christian Davenport and Allan Stam, “[What Really Happened in Rwanda?](#)” *Miller-McCune*, October 6, 2009. As Davenport said in a statement issued through his university in 2009: “A great deal of effort has been extended to make sure the focus stays exclusively on the Francophone Tutsi victims and their Hutu executioners. But of the estimated one million people killed [in Rwanda], between 300,000 and 500,000 of them were Tutsi, according to best estimates. What about the other 500,000 to 700,000 people? Who is responsible for their deaths?” (in Joan Fallon, “[Research Sheds New Light on Rwandan Killings.](#)” *Notre Dame News*, March 24, 2009).

[51](#) See David Peterson, “[Rwanda’s 1991 Census.](#)” ZNet, June 17, 2011.

[52](#) The continuity in Kagame power’s targeting of Hutu across both the Rwandan and the DRC theaters is the fundamental lesson of the [Democratic Republic of Congo, 1993-2003: Report of the Mapping Exercise documenting the most serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed within the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo between March 1993 and June 2003](#), United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, August 2010, para. 27-33; para. 500-522. As the very last paragraph of this report concludes: “In light of the impunity enjoyed by the perpetrators of serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, and the repetition of crimes within the territory of the DRC, there is a manifest urgency for justice and security service reform. The members of the Mapping Team were able to observe the constant fear on the part of affected populations that history would repeat itself, especially when yesterday’s attackers are returning in positions that enable them to commit new crimes with complete impunity” (para. 1143). (Also see the “[Statement by the High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay.](#)” UNHCHR, October 1, 2010.)

[53](#) Here quoting the final draft: [Democratic Republic of Congo, 1993-2003: Report of the Mapping Exercise . . .](#), para. 515. For some downgrades to Kagame’s image, consider the unassailable evidence of Kagame’s mass killings in the DRC. In 2002, it was reported to the UN Security Council that, in the five provinces of the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo that the Rwandan and Ugandan armies had invaded and occupied, “more than 3.5 million excess deaths” probably had occurred up to September 2002, and that these deaths are the “consequence of a cycle of aggression, the multiplication of armed forces, [and] a high frequency of conflict and its consequences, especially displacement,” all of which are a “direct result of the occupation by Rwanda and Uganda” (see Mahmoud Kassem *et al.*, Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of Congo, [S/2002/1146](#), UN Security Council, October, 2002, para. 96. Also see n. 52, above). Additionally, Kagame won landslide

victories with 95 percent of the vote in the 2003 presidential election, followed by 93 percent in 2010, and in both elections, his regime arrested, forced into exile, and murdered the Hutu majority's opposition parties, candidates, and members of the media.

[54](#) See, e.g., [“UN Human Rights Office to Delay Release of Congo ‘Genocide’ Report until October,”](#) Associated Press, September 2, 2010; [“DR Congo ‘Genocide’ Report Delayed by UN,”](#) BBC News Africa, September 2, 2010.

[55](#) When in the spring of 2010, the Kagame dictatorship arrested, first the Hutu opposition political figure Victorie Ingabire Umuhiza, and then the U.S. attorney Peter Erlinder, who in late May flew to Kigali to take up her defense, the Canadian writer and Kagame apologist Gerald Caplan defended Kagame's actions and attacked both Ingabire and Erlinder: See Gerald Caplan, [“The Law Society of Upper Canada and Genocide Denial in Rwanda,”](#) *Toronto Globe and Mail*, June 11, 2010 (as posted to Adam Jones's Genocide Studies Media File Web site). Later in 2010, when the draft UN “mapping report” on the [Democratic Republic of Congo, 1993-2003](#) was first leaked, an impressive number of U.S. and U.K. commentators were quick to defend Kagame power. “Rwanda's President, Paul Kagame, came to power in 1994 at the head of a rebel army that brought the extermination of Rwandan Tutsis by Hutu extremists to a halt,” Philip Gourevitch wrote, hewing to the Kagame-as-savior script ([“Rwanda Pushes Back against UN Genocide Charges,”](#) *New Yorker*, August 27, 2010). “The UN delegation [to Kigali] would be well aware of the security council's shameful decision to pull its peacekeepers out of Rwanda in 1994, at the height of the genocide of the Tutsi people. It was Kagame's Rwandan Patriotic Front that eventually brought the genocide to an end,” Linda Melvern added, drawing from the same script ([“Taking Sides on Genocide,”](#) *Guardian*, September 16, 2010).

[56](#) See Edward S. Herman and David Peterson, [“Peter Erlinder Jailed by One of the Major Genocidaires of Our Era,”](#) *MRZine*, June 17, 2010. For the relevant “genocide”-related laws in Rwandan, see [Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda](#), June 4, 2003, Article 13. Also see [Law Relating to the Punishment of the Crime of Genocide Ideology](#) (No. 18/2008), Codes and Laws of Rwanda, Ministry of Justice, Republic of Rwanda, July 23, 2008. The Rwandan [Constitution](#) mentions the word ‘genocide’ no fewer than 18 times (excluding its table of contents), three times in its Preamble alone. Article 179 even creates a National Commission for the Fight Against Genocide.

[57](#) Ed Vulliamy, [“I Stand by My Story,”](#) *Observer*, February 2, 1997; and Ed Vulliamy, [“Open Letter from Ed Vulliamy to Amnesty International,”](#) October 31, 2009.

[58](#) From hereon, we will be working from the longer, footnoted-version of Monbiot's *Guardian* commentary as it appears on his personal website: [“Naming the Genocide Deniers,”](#) June 13, 2011. Also see George Monbiot, [“Do As We Say, Not As We Do,”](#) June 17, 2011; and Monbiot, [“Media Cleanse,”](#) August 4, 2011.

[59](#) In late 2007, the *Financial Times* reported that the ICMP's “staff . . . are 93 per cent Bosnian [Muslim]. . .” (Christian Jennings, [“Forensics: DNA Fills Gaps of History,”](#) December 11, 2007).

[60](#) See Michael Mandel, Chap. 6, “The ICTY Calls It ‘Genocide,’” pp. 211-223; here pp. 211-212, in Herman, [The Srebrenica Massacre: Evidence, Context, Politics](#). In Mandel's words: “Of course the execution of even 4,000 or 2,000 or 200 men would have been a horrible crime, mass murder in fact, so on a purely legal basis it would be hard to

understand the Trial Chamber's stretching of the numbers so far past what had been proved 'beyond a reasonable doubt'. It is a lot easier to understand as propaganda, though, because the high-end figure had the benefit of matching the official story both in quantity and, most importantly, in quality, with the horrifying qualification of 'genocide'" (p. 212).

[61](#) See Ljubiša Simic, "Presentation and Interpretation of Forensic Data (Pattern of Injury Breakdown)," in Stephen Karganovic, Ed., [Deconstruction of a Virtual Genocide: An Intelligent Person's Guide To Srebrenica](#) (Belgrade: Srebrenica Historical Project, 2011), pp. 93-108; esp. pp. 94-104, emphasis added. And see Simic, "Analysis of Srebrenica Forensic Reports Prepared by ICTY Prosecution Experts," [Ibid](#), pp. 73-91. And for a summary of Simic's conclusions, see David Peterson, ["Srebrenica-Related Graves through 2002,"](#) ZNet, July 22, 2011.

[62](#) See Andy Wilcoxson, ["Shroud of Secrecy Leaves Room for Doubt on Srebrenica DNA Evidence,"](#) *Balkan Report*, August 8, 2011.

[63](#) See Ewa Tabeau and Jakub Bijak, "War-related Deaths in the 1992-1995 Armed Conflicts in Bosnia and Herzegovina: A Critique of Previous Estimates and Recent Results," *European Journal of Population*, Vol. 21, June, 2005, pp. 187-215. — In section 3.3., "Overall Numbers" (pp. 205-207), they estimated 102,622 total war-related deaths on all sides, of which 55,261 (54%) were civilians at the time of death, and 47,360 (46%) were military or combatants (p. 207). Also see Ball *et al.*, [The Bosnian Book of the Dead: Assessment of the Database](#), Research and Documentation Center, Sarajevo, June, 2007, Table 23a, "Victims Reported in BBD by Status in War," p. 30. And see n. 18, above.

[64](#) See Edward S. Herman, Preface, in Herman, [The Srebrenica Massacre](#), pp. 13-18.

[65](#) See Phillip Corwin, Foreword, in Herman, [The Srebrenica Massacre](#), pp. 7-12. In the passage quoted, Corwin's exact words are: "That there were killings of non-combatants in Srebrenica, as in all war zones, is a certainty. And those who perpetrated them deserve to be condemned and prosecuted. And whether it was three or 30 or 300 innocent civilians who were killed, it was a heinous crime. There can be no equivocation about that. At the same time, the facts presented in this volume make a very cogent argument that the figure of 8,000 killed, which is often bandied about in the international community, is an unsupportable exaggeration. The true figure may be closer to 800. The fact that the figure in question has been so distorted, however, suggests that the issue has been politicized. There is much more shock value in the death of 8,000 than in the death of 800" (p. 8).

[66](#) Monbiot repeated this conflation of *deaths* and *executions* in his June 17, web-only follow-up to his June 14 commentary in the *Guardian*. Attacking the U.K.-based Media Lens group for having once written that "Herman and Peterson were 'perfectly entitled'" to write something that others don't like, Monbiot then quoted what he believes we are not "perfectly entitled" to write: "There is a good case to be made that, while there were surely hundreds of executions, and possibly as many as a thousand or more, the 8,000 figure is a political construct and eminently challengeable." (This quote derives from our ["Milosevic's Death in the Propaganda System,"](#) *Electric Politics*, May 14, 2006.) Next, Monbiot wrote: "Given that 6,500 of the victims have already been exhumed and identified, and that there is very strong evidence (as there has been for years) to suggest that a further 1,500 or so await discovery, this statement is demonstrably wrong and without justification. To describe it as 'talking down' the number of deaths is in fact an understatement: it amounts to the outright disavowal of cast-iron evidence." Of course, contrary to Monbiot and the *Guardian*-

Observer, we do not accept the publicized findings of the International Commission on Missing Persons at face value. But putting aside our concerns about the ICMP's work and claims, Monbiot's errors in this instance are so flagrant that they require something beyond a true believer in the Srebrenica party-line to commit them. Because Monbiot cannot keep the categories of purported *identifications* and actual *executions* separate in *his* mind, he makes the fallacious assumption that whatever number of persons the ICMP claims to have *identified*, this equals the number of Bosnian Muslim members of the Srebrenica "safe area" population *executed* by Bosnian Serbs some time after July 11, 1995. In turn, Monbiot takes the ICMP's purported identifications as proof of the standard account of the "Srebrenica massacre," in which the Bosnian Serbs *executed* (i.e., *murdered in a criminally meaningful manner*) some 8,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys after the fall of Srebrenica — or however many Bosnian Muslim persons the ICMP eventually purports to identify, before its Srebrenica-related work is completed. Because Monbiot is this confused on a topic he knows nothing about, and because his establishment biases are so great that he takes the side of the NATO bloc and its agencies at the Yugoslavia Tribunal and the ICMP, he accuses us of an "outright disavowal of cast-iron evidence" (and worse), even when he quotes us writing about *executions*, not purported *identifications*. As for the Media Lens group, Monbiot adds: "It is this that you say they are 'perfectly entitled to do'. I called you out on it, and I was right to do so." In fact, through this entire episode, Monbiot has outed no one besides himself. (See George Monbiot, ["Do As We Say, Not As We Do,"](#) June 17, 2011. For an important analysis by the Media Lens group, the one from which Monbiot took the quote from our 2006 analysis that he is unable to understand, see ["Dancing on a Mass Grave — Oliver Kamm of the Times Smears Media Lens,"](#) November 25, 2009. Also see ["Our Response to Monbiot's June 13, 2011 Article,"](#) Media Lens, June 16, 2011.)

[67](#) See George Bogdanich, Chap. 2, "Prelude to the Capture of Srebrenica," pp. 37-65; and Bogdanich, Chap. 7, "UN Report on Srebrenica — A Distorted Picture of Events," pp. 224-247, in Herman, [The Srebrenica Massacre](#).

[68](#) See Edward S. Herman, Chap. 10, "Summary and Conclusions," pp. 278-298; here p. 281, in Herman, [The Srebrenica Massacre](#).

[69](#) For Drazen Erdemovic's original testimony, see Judge Claude Jorda *et al.*, *The Prosecutor of the Tribunal v. Radovan Karadzic (IT-95-18-R61) and Ratko Mladic (IT-95-5-R61)*, [July 5, 1996](#), pp. 830-855.

[70](#) See Germinal Civikov, [Srebrenica: The Star Witness](#), Trans. John Laughland (Belgrade: NGO Srebrenica Historical Project, 2010).

[71](#) See George Szamuely, Chap. 5, "Securing Verdicts: The Misuse of Witness Testimony at The Hague," pp. 153-210; here p. 189, in Herman, [The Srebrenica Massacre](#).

[72](#) See Monbiot, ["Naming the Genocide Deniers,"](#) n. 17.

[73](#) Tim Ripley, *Operation Deliberate Force: The UN and NATO Campaign in Bosnia 1995* (Lancaster: Centre for Defense and International Security, 1999), p. 145. See Bogdanich, Chap. 2, "Prelude to the Capture of Srebrenica," pp. 56-59; and Herman, Chap. 10, "Summary and Conclusions," pp. 284-285, in Herman, [The Srebrenica Massacre](#).

[74](#) See George Bogdanich, Chap. 2, "Prelude to the Capture of Srebrenica," p. 56, in Herman, [The Srebrenica Massacre](#).

[75](#) See [“5,000 Muslim Lives for Military Intervention,”](#) *Dani*, June 22, 1998; *Prosecutor v. Radislav Krstic* (IT-98-33-T), Transcript, [April 5, 2001](#), p. 9480; and Kofi Annan *et al.*, [The Fall of Srebrenica \(A/54/549\)](#), Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to General Assembly resolution 53/35, November 15, 1999, para. 115. Separately, one can even view a YouTube video of a 2010 Norwegian documentary in which Meholjic recounts Izetbegovic’s “astonishing claim” to the Srebrenica delegation that met with him in 1993. See Ola Flyum and David Hebditch, [Srebrenica — A Town Betrayed](#), (Oslo: Fenris Film, 2010). Beginning at the 28:18 mark, Hakija Meholjic states: “I will try to tell you exactly what President Izetbegovic said: ‘My dear people of Srebrenica, how are you?’ ‘Fine, how are you, Mister President?’ ‘Clinton has made me a proposal, if the Chetniks enter Srebrenica and slaughter 5,000 Moslems, there will be military intervention by NATO forces on Serb positions throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. What do you think about that?’”

[76](#) Monbiot, [“Naming the Genocide Deniers,”](#) n. 19.

[77](#) Monbiot’s hair-splitting objection is rubbish for other reasons. In criticizing our use of the *Krstic* Judgment, he quotes paragraph 595, and in the passage of [The Politics of Genocide](#) that he disputes, we quote paragraph 598. In No. 598, the trial chamber concluded that the “intent to kill all the Bosnian Muslim men of military age in Srebrenica constitutes an intent to destroy in part the Bosnian Muslim group within the meaning of Article 4 [of the Tribunal’s Statute] and therefore must be qualified as a genocide.” No. 595, on the other hand, opens: “Granted only the men of military age were systematically massacred. . . .” (see Judge Almiro Rodrigues *et al.*, [Judgment, Prosecutor versus Radislav Krstic](#), IT-98-33-T, August 2, 2001.) Furthermore, in [The Politics of Genocide](#), we write with great *disapproval* that *Krstic* “argued that genocide could occur in one ‘small geographical area’ (the town of Srebrenica), even one where the villainous party had taken the trouble to bus all the women, children, and the elderly men to safety — that is, incontestably had not killed any but ‘Bosnian Muslim men of military age’” (p. 47). But Monbiot quotes only the last 12 words, and suppresses the Tribunal’s recognition that the Bosnian Serbs had bussed well more than half of the population to safety. To this we then add York University professor of international law Michael Mandel’s observations that *Krstic* “transformed [genocide] not into mere ethnic cleansing but into the killing of potential military fighters during a war for military advantage,” and that with *Krstic*, the “concept of genocide, except as pure propaganda, lost all contact with the Holocaust — a program for the extermination of a whole people” (pp. 47-48). But because this was the Tribunal’s first case to confirm the “genocide” charge in relation to Srebrenica, Monbiot believes that *Krstic* is intellectually, morally, and legally wonderful, and this is his real objection to what we have written against it — not some non-existent, can-you-spot-the-difference, mis-citation of a few words from one paragraph in the judgment. In juxtaposing our use of one six-word phrase from the *Krstic* judgment with his own use of a nine-word phrase the substance of which says the same thing, Monbiot fabricates a distinction out of nothing, while he pretends that it reveals everything. Of course, it does — but only about *Monbiot*, and how low he’s willing to stoop to try and score a point.

[78](#) See, e.g., Gerald Caplan, [“Who Killed the President of Rwanda?”](#) *Pambazuka News* (No. 466), January 21, 2010. But also see the response to Caplan by René Lemarchand, [“Doubts on the Veracity of Mutsinzi Report,”](#) *Pambazuka News* (No. 467), January 28, 2010.

[79](#) See Rwanda Tribunal Defense Attorney John Philpot’s interview with Michael Hourigan, [“Louise Arbour Was Wrong to Stop My Investigation,”](#) in [The ICTR Legacy from the Defense Perspective - Two](#), The Second International Criminal Defense Conference, Brussels, May

21-23, 2010 (as posted to the Vimeo Web site). (For material archived from its companion conference, also see [The ICTR Legacy from the Defense Perspective – One](#), The First International Criminal Defense Conference, The Hague, November 14-16, 2009.) — As noted, in 1996-1997, Hourigan was working as an investigator for the Office of the Prosecutor at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, where the chief prosecutor was the Canadian Louise Arbour. Hourigan and his team found members of the Rwandan Patriotic Front who volunteered to them the information that it was Paul Kagame’s RPF who shot down the previous president’s jet, assassinating him and the president of Burundi at the same time. Presented with this evidence in early 1997, Chief Prosecutor Arbour quashed the investigation and buried the evidence. In the excerpt that follows from Hourigan’s interview during the May 2010 conference in Brussels, Hourigan is recounting a meeting between himself, Rwanda Tribunal Chief Prosecutor Louise Arbour, and two other members of the Tribunal. We pick up Hourigan’s words at approximately the 12:19 mark of the video, immediately after John Philpot asked Hourigan: “What transpired at that meeting?”

Michael Hourigan: “We had a meeting early in the morning. . . . I presented her a memorandum . . . about informants’ information. She read that. But her attitude was completely different this one week later. She was aggressive, very negative, insisted that the information was probably unreliable. She questioned me as to the sources — of course I couldn’t tell her the names of the informants. I told her of the investigators on my Tribunal team who had the information. She was very critical of them. And, to cut a long story short, she said, in any event, whether the information is accurate or not — inaccurate — it’s outside our mandate, and the investigation has to come to an end. And as I’ve indicated, . . . no one had ever said that to me in the previous year. But in any event, I know that in our own Rwanda Statute, there are provisions that cover acts of terrorism, contrary to her direction, it was clearly within our mandate, and I indicated to her that she was wrong. And she said to me, Are you questioning my authority? I said, No, I’m just questioning your judgment. She said, Well, I’m directing you: This investigation is at an end. She asked me to leave the room, which I did. I left the room, and subsequently returned to Kigali, and resigned.”

We regard this episode as one of the more beautiful confirmations of how so-called “international justice” works in the real world — a point with which we deal at some length in [The Politics of Genocide](#). (See esp. our “Concluding Note,” pp. 103-112.) Witness also the International Criminal Court’s indictments of the Gaddafi regime earlier year, even as the U.S.-led NATO bloc was bombing Gaddafi’s Libya out of existence. (See n. 87, below.)

[80](#) On Christophe Hakizimana’s 1999 letter, see Herman and Peterson, [The Politics of Genocide](#), n. 127, p. 132.

[81](#) On the use of scare quotes, see the powerful letter of rebuttal written by Jonathan Cook to the Media Lens group on June 17, 2001, which Media Lens reproduces in the section titled “The ‘Inverted Commas Problem’,” in [“A ‘Malign Intellectual Subculture’ – George Monbiot Smears Chomsky, Herman, Peterson, Pilger And Media Lens.”](#) In Cook’s words: “It is worth noting that Norman Finkelstein did something identical in his book ‘The Holocaust Industry’. He states in the Introduction: ‘In the pages that follow, I will argue that ‘The Holocaust’ is an ideological representation of the Nazi holocaust. (p. 3)’ He also says in a footnote on the same page: ‘In this text, *Nazi holocaust* [his italics] signals the actual historical event, *The Holocaust* [his italics] its ideological representation.’” In terms of stylistic usage, the

comparison with our use of scare-quotes is perfectly apt.

[82](#) See Gerald Caplan, [“The Politics of Denialism: The Strange Case of Rwanda. Review of ‘The Politics of Genocide’,”](#) *Pambazuka News* (No. 486), June 17, 2010; Adam Jones, [“On Genocide Deniers: Challenging Herman and Peterson,”](#) *Pambazuka News* (No. 490), July 15, 2010; and Adam Jones, [“Denying Rwanda: A Response to Herman & Peterson,”](#) as posted to a webpage associated with the 2nd Edition of Jones’s book, [Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction](#) (New York: Routledge, 2011). We drafted responses to the Caplan as well as to the first of these by Jones (July 15, 2010), but not to the second by Jones, as we were unaware that it existed until early June of this year. We regard the fact that Jones has posted his latter attack to the Web site that advertises the 2nd edition of his book to be significant, in that it shows the kind of steps that practitioners in the field of “genocide studies” are willing to take when they feel that their turf is threatened, and they need to protect their truths.

[83](#) Monbiot, [“Media Cleanse,”](#) August 4, 2011.

[84](#) See Edward S. Herman and David Peterson, [“Genocide Denial and Genocide Facilitation: Gerald Caplan and *The Politics of Genocide*,”](#) *MRZine*, July 4, 2010; and Edward S. Herman and David Peterson, [“Adam Jones on Rwanda and Genocide: A Reply,”](#) *MRZine*, August 14, 2010.

[85](#) Barack Obama *et al.*, [National Security Strategy](#), President of the United States, May, 2010, p. 48.

[86](#) Sarah Sewall *et al.*, [Mass Atrocity Response Operations: A Military Handbook](#), (Cambridge, MA: The President and Fellows of Harvard College, 2010), p, 13. This document is the product of a collaboration between Harvard University’s Carr Center for Human Rights Policy and the U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute; as such, it illustrates the degree to which the substance of human rights has been hollowed out in certain circles, while the empty rhetoric of “human rights” is harnessed for U.S. imperial objectives.

[87](#) See, e.g., Maximilian C. Forte, [“The Top Ten Myths in the War Against Libya,”](#) *CounterPunch*, August 31, 2011; Myth No. 1, “Genocide.” — The March 17, 2011 UN Security Council Resolution 1973 ([S/RES/1973](#)) authorized “Member States . . . to take all necessary measures...to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack in [Libya]. . .” (para. 4). Needless to say, this paragraph was immediately exploited by the United States and its allies to launch a sustained military attack on Libyan government targets within 48 hours of its adoption. In 2011, the U.S.-led NATO bloc’s overthrow of the government of Libya was also accompanied by the UN Security Council’s referral of the Libyan government to the Prosecutor at the International Criminal Court, with the request that he decide whether an investigation of the government’s actions was warranted. (See UN Security Council Resolution 1970 ([S/RES/1970](#)), February 26, 2011, para. 4 – 8. This same resolution declared that nationals “from a State outside [Libya] . . . shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of that State for all alleged acts or omissions arising out of or related to operations in [Libya] established or authorized by the Council” (para. 6), thereby immunizing the NATO bloc from the ICC’s jurisdiction.) The Prosecutor at the ICC quickly agreed to open an investigation (March 3), and formally wrapped up his investigation by May, when he petitioned the ICC to issue arrest warrants for three long-time leaders of the Libyan government (May 16). In late June, the ICC agreed to issue these arrest warrants for

Muammar Gaddafi, his son, Saif, and Gaddafi's brother-in-law (June 27). During this entire period, a state of armed conflict existed inside Libya, such that the Libyan government found itself under attack, first by armed forces sponsored by individual members of the NATO bloc (from February 15-17 on) and, later, by the leading militaries of the NATO bloc itself (from March 19 on). So, in 2011, NATO attacked Libya militarily, and it was joined in this attack by the International Criminal Court, which, for its part, attacked Libya juridically. (For the Prosecution's requests for the indictments, see Luis Moreno-Ocampo, [Prosecutor's Application Pursuant to Article 58 as to Muammar Mohammed Abu Minyar Gaddafi, Saif Al-Islam Gaddafi and Abdullah Al-Senussi](#), ICC-01-11, International Criminal Court, May 16, 2011; ["ICC Prosecutor Press Conference on Libya,"](#) May 16, 2011; and ["ICC Prosecutor: Gaddafi Used His Absolute Authority to Commit Crimes in Libya,"](#) May 16, 2011. For the ICC's acceptance of these requests, see Judge Sanji Mmasenono Monageng et al., [Decision on the "Prosecutor's Application Pursuant to Article 58 as to Muammar Mohammed Abu Minyar Gaddafi, Saif Al-Islam Gaddafi and Abdullah Al-Senussi,"](#) ICC-01-11, International Criminal Court, June 27, 2011; and ["Pre-Trial Chamber I issues three warrants of arrest for Muammar Gaddafi, Saif Al-Islam Gaddafi and Abdulla Al-Senussi,"](#) June 27, 2011.)

[98](#) "New conceptions require new terms. By 'genocide' we mean the destruction of a nation or of an ethnic group. This new word, coined by the author to denote an old practice in its modern development, . . . is intended . . . to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves. . . . Genocide is directed against the national group as an entity, and the actions involved are directed against individuals, not in their individual capacity, but as members of the national group" (Raphael Lemkin, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation, Analysis of Government Proposals for Redress*, Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1944, pp. 79-95; here p. 79.)

[99](#) See Herman and Peterson, [The Politics of Genocide](#), n. 247, pp. 146-147.

[90](#) See Milivoje Ivanišević, [Srebrenica July 1995 — In Search of the Truth](#), Trans. Zivka Novicic (Belgrade: Hrišćinska misao, 2nd Ed., 2010). Therein, Ivanišević writes that the "list [of the Serb dead in the vicinity of Srebrenica] contains the names of 3,262 Serbian victims. According to the latest evidence, approximately 27%, or about 880, of the people who were killed, were members of military and police organizations. The remaining 73% (2,382 victims) were civilians" (p. 6).

[91](#) See Moose, ["Human Rights Abuses in Rwanda,"](#) 1994.

[92](#) See Kassem et al., [S/2002/1146](#), para. 96.

[93](#) See Herman and Peterson, "The Iraq Sanctions-Regime Killings," in [The Politics of Genocide](#), pp. 29-33.

Edward S. Herman is professor emeritus of finance at the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania and has written extensively on economics, political economy, and the media. Among his books are [Corporate Control, Corporate Power](#) (Cambridge University Press, 1981), [The Real Terror Network](#) (South End Press, 1982), and, with Noam Chomsky, [The Political Economy of Human Rights](#) (South End Press, 1979), and [Manufacturing Consent](#) (Pantheon, 2002). Herman is also the editor of [The Srebrenica Massacre: Evidence, Context, Politics](#) (Alphabet Soup, 2011).

David Peterson is an independent journalist and researcher based in Chicago. Together they are the co-authors of [The Politics of Genocide](#) (Monthly Review Press, 2010).

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