



Madeleine Albright

She was the U.S. ambassador to the U.N. at the time of the genocide and later served as secretary of state in the Clinton administration.

Where does Rwanda sit for you, on a personal and emotional level?

It sits as the greatest regret that I have from the time I was U.N. ambassador and maybe even as secretary of state, because it is a huge tragedy, and something that sits very heavy on all our souls, I think.

Why a regret?

Because I wish it had been possible for us to do more, and President Clinton has said how much he has regretted it. I have reviewed the record a lot, and I don't think actually that we could have done more. I just wish that it had not been something that the international community was not capable of dealing with. So it's a huge regret.

I have been to Rwanda many times. I went and I met with orphans and widows. I went to see the mass graves. I saw the blood in the stadiums. So it's just a horrible, horrible story.

I think we've learned a lot. But the other problem was that, in many ways, the lessons of Somalia did not apply to Rwanda. This was a very different kind of a situation -- this did not require a peacekeeping operation. It required a humanitarian intervention of major scale by a force led by a major country.

But we were occupied in Somalia and Bosnia. The British were in Bosnia. The French, I think, were willing to do it, but they were more associated with the Hutus, which is one reason I think that Kagame probably said they didn't want [U.N. intervention]. The Belgians were the colonial power and they left. So it all seems easy in retrospect, but was not at the time.

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