

Attachment no: One  
To minutes no. 743 / 94  
of the Brussels Legal Detachment.

HEARING REPORT

On 26/05/94 at 1400 hrs, was heard

NAME:	LECOMTE
CHRISTIAN NAME:	Jean-Noel
PLACE AND DATE OF BIRTH:	NAMUR on 29 April 1968
DOMICILE:	Rue Bois des Maires 21 5022 COGNELEE
SERVICEMAN:	Grade and Reg. No.: Lt 42613
	Unit 2 <sup>nd</sup> Commando 14 <sup>th</sup> Company

who states to us :

I wish to speak in French and demand the legal procedure in that language

Background

I was appointed to 2<sup>nd</sup> Commando in 1992, I have had the role of second in command of the 14<sup>th</sup> company since the beginning of March of this year.

I left with my company for Rwanda on 19 March 1994.

Organisation of the company on the evening of the 6<sup>th</sup>.

The company is organised into two operating units ( platoons Alpha and Bravo) and a command cell (PC company)

Alpha Platoon was on a check-point / patrol mission and Bravo Platoon was on guard / picket duty.

Alpha Platoon

PC section:	commanded by sergeant VAN HAMME Stationed at DON BOSCO
Section 1.1:	commanded by sergeant MIGNON From 20.28 hrs Airport patrol
Section 1.2:	commanded by sergeant LEKEU Stationed at DON BOSCO But provided guard NGYLINZIRA
Section 1.3:	commanded by sergeant JORIS Resting at DON BOSCO

Bravo Platoon

Section 2.1:	commanded by sergeant BONELLI Resting at DON BOSCO
Section 2.2:	commanded by sergeant BEN BOUHOUT Provided the guard for: PEGASUS (PC BAT): three men DOLCE VILLA: three men PSD: three men
Section 2.3:	commanded by sergeant DESERT Stationed at DON BOSCO
Section 2.5:	commanded by sergeant BECQUET AXES patrol until 21.27 hrs

1<sup>st</sup> continuation to the Attachment no: One to Minutes no. 743 / 94 coming from the Brussels Legal Detachment.

Attack:

The announcement of the attack occurred around 20.15 hrs. I was told of it by Sergeant LEKEU who received the info over the battalion network.

At 21.34 I took care of a recovery mission of men on a day out at KIGALI NIGHT. I was returning to BBase at 21.53 hours. We came across a roadblock by the FAR 200m to the west of RWANDEX. We crossed this roadblock without any problem.

I cannot say exactly at what time the official announcement of the presence of the President in the shot down aircraft was given.

The guard was reinforced on the initiative of the company.

As regards the airport and the power cuts it seems to me that I heard that the normal situation of the airport was not to be lit up. The lighting was switched on at the approach of an aircraft.

After the attack we were surprised by the speed of reaction from FAR and the police force. It should be known that they were very poor in radio resources. The way in which they reacted only seems possible to me with prior organisation.

Assassination:

As regards the assassination of the ten gunners, I had been listening to the radio throughout the morning. I could hear I think all of the messages exchanged between Lt LOTIN and PC Battalion. It is not possible for me to exactly repeat the words exchanged. I can therefore only re-transcribe approximate views in terms which are faithful to the spirit.

The first thing that I noted was a message from Lt LOTIN which made a reference in speaking of what he saw as "Stalinist purges". I cannot say where he was at that time. This word clearly reflects the mood in which he was.

Later on, I was witness to two exchanges between him and Colonel DEWEZ. It was the latter who personally took the radio at PC Battalion.

Lt Lotin was awaiting a reply, a directive to the situation in which he found himself.

I remember the following exchanges:

- Y6 has lost contact with AGATHE. It can no longer find it.
- Y6 or Y5 signals that AGATHE has fled to the back of the building.
- Y6 signals that the Rwandans demand that they surrender their arms.

... No clear reply.

- Y6 signals that there are three or four men on the ground.
- S6 Colonel DEWEZ: "if you think it necessary, surrender your arms".

2<sup>nd</sup> continuation to the Attachment no: One to Minutes no. 743 / 94 coming from the Brussels Legal Detachment

As regards Lt LOTIN, it seems useful to me to outline his personality in such a way as to better understand the impact of the information that he passed on to the upper levels. He is known to be afraid of nothing and not to lose his cool easily. He expresses himself in a precise way.

What I can say is that knowing Lt LOTIN, when I heard the information he was passing on, I immediately understood that the situation in which he found himself was critical. This feeling was furthermore shared by other people around me.

On the ground, we had the feeling that the command had been outflanked by the succession of events and was no longer capable of managing the situation.

Practically, nothing had been done, to my knowledge, to reinforce, clear, locate, secure the gunners.

I did not hear the Motorola communications.

A priori, he should not have been in possession of a Motorola.

I had confirmation of the death of the 10 gunners on the 8<sup>th</sup> at 06.25 hours over the battalion network.

Other information:

I have to mention the following element which particularly affected me:

More than 1000 Rwandan civilians had taken refuge at DON BOSCO. They were placed under our protection.

At the time of our departure on 11 April, their situation had been mentioned and it was decided (I do not know where the decision came from) not to evacuate them. I do not know what became of these people.

The UN rules of engagement, already very restrictive, were not applied as such to the new Battalion. For example, rule of engagement no. 4, mentioning that armed civilians could be disarmed even by opening fire if that should prove necessary, has never been applied.

The Battalion orders were to limit oneself to a strictly legitimate defence.

Furthermore, on rereading the missions issued at KIBAT, it is clear that Escort missions of persons in KIGALI are only mentioned in the paragraph "EXECUTION". These missions are not covered in the general paragraph "MISSIONS" (even implied). It would be interesting therefore to know the exact chain of command of the Centre. I do not know who took the decision to carry out these missions, nor what the reason for this decision was.

I have nothing further to add.

(After reading, signs with us hereunder)

*Signature*

Duly noted