

'As goes Africa, so goes humanity'

The Schiller Institutes internationally have launched emergency mobilizations demanding immediate action to halt the genocide in Africa. Central to the effectiveness of such a mobilization, declare the institutes, is that the United States break with the geopolitical rat's nest created by the French and British and their media retainers, whose malicious lies about "Zairean rebels," "Hutu militias," and "returning refugees," have deliberately sown confusion and encouraged inaction.

In a call to U.S. clergy, "As Goes Africa, So Goes Humanity," the institute demanded of the U.S. government that, contrary to allowing a racist, neocolonial division of Africa, "national borders must be protected right now at all costs, or else millions will certainly die. The United States must insist upon this. Our nation must offer, separate from any international force, to work with the Zairean government to preserve the territorial integrity of that nation through logistical support, and food and medicine delivery, in the eastern provinces. If we do not act immediately, we could see Zaire, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, and other nations disappear from the map, just as Poland, Czechoslovakia, and many of the nations of Europe disappeared in the 1930s and early 1940s.

... "The United States must immediately dispatch all necessary food aid to this area to keep the refugees—80% of whom are women and children—alive. At least 300 human rights observers must be sent to the area to monitor the behavior of the Tutsi-based military regime in Rwanda, as the refugees return, so that there is in fact no further threat of 'ethnic cleansing.' . . . If this is not done, world civilization will have crossed the threshold of decency. It will perish, because its merciless indifference will have proven it morally unfit to survive." The institute has called for weekly candlelight vigils at America's houses of worship.

At a Nov. 14 demonstration at the White House, the Schiller Institute was joined by Burundi's former ambassador, Jacques Bacamurawanko, who was interviewed at the site by French television. A statement sent by Bishop John Ricard, chairman of the Catholic Relief Services, was read, demanding relief for the "over 80,000 children and their families—over 700,000 people— . . . at imminent risk of death from starvation and disease as a result of war in eastern Zaire." A joint call for action by CRS and the National Council of Catholic Bishops was similarly issued to Secretary of State Warren Christopher on Nov. 22.

In Europe, the Schiller Institutes are circulating a call for action in Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Italy, and France. At a Nov. 2 demonstration by Rwandans living in Germany, institute representative Uwe Friesecke was asked to speak on the demand for action sent to Chancellor Helmut Kohl. At a candlelight vigil in Bonn on Nov. 21, the institute unfurled a banner: "Stop the Genocide in Africa."



A joint demonstration of Rwandans and the Schiller Institute in Bonn, Germany, Nov. 2, 1996. Schiller Institute leader Uwe Friesecke (left) carries a sign that reads, "Thousands are dying in Zaire—and the West looks on! A shocking scandal." The Rwandans' banner reads, "Rwanda needs democracy."