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Short film: Genocide worse than war

The reasons for genocide vary from case to case. In Rwanda, the genocide was sparked by ethnic tensions between the Hutu majority and the Tutsi minority. In the Holocaust, the Nazi regime targeted certain ethnic and religious minorities for extermination. In Bosnia, the Bosnian Serbs sought to create an ethnically “pure” Bosnian Serb state. In Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge sought to eliminate anyone perceived as opposition to their radical revolution.

Do you see a pattern in these reasons?

Yes, the pattern is that genocide is more destructive and devastating than war.

Are elements of Civil war, or nationalism, or racism, or religion involved in genocide? Do you see any examples of idinterest? Be specific as to the nation/group and the aspect involved.

Yes, the reasons for genocide vary from case to case, and there can be multiple factors involved. In the case of the Rwandan genocide, there were elements of civil war, nationalism, and ethnicity involved.

The genocide in Rwanda was primarily driven by ethnic tensions between the Hutu and Tutsi populations. The Hutu majority had long been oppressed by the Tutsi minority, who had held power in Rwanda for centuries. This created deep-seated resentment among the Hutu population towards the Tutsi, which was exacerbated by the colonial period when the Tutsi were favored by the Belgians.

In 1990, the Rwandan Patriotic Front, a Tutsi-led rebel group, invaded Rwanda from Uganda, sparking a civil war between the RPF and the Rwandan government, which was dominated by Hutu elites. The conflict escalated, and the government launched a propaganda campaign against the Tutsi, portraying them as a threat to national security.

This campaign created a climate of fear and hatred towards the Tutsi, which ultimately led to the genocide in 1994, Hutu extremists organized and carried out the genocide, killing an estimated 800,000 Tutsi and moderate Hutu. The genocide was characterized by brutal violence, including machete attacks, sexual violence, and mass killings.

The genocide in Rwanda was primarily driven by ethnic tensions and hatred, but there were also elements of nationalism and political power at play. The Hutu elites were desperate to maintain their grip on power and saw the Tutsi as a threat to their control. The government's propaganda campaign against the Tutsi was designed to rally support among the genocide.

In terms of international interest, the international community largely failed to intervene to stop the genocide. The United Nations had a peacekeeping force in Rwanda, but it was understaffed and ill-equipped to deal with the scale of the violence. Many Western countries were reluctant to get involved in a conflict that they saw as a local ethnic conflict. It was only after the genocide had ended that the international community began to take action, with the establishment of the international Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda to prosecute those responsible for the genocide.

How do hierarchies and politics impact genocides? How?

Hierarchies and politics can have a significant impact on genocides. In many cases, genocides are driven by political leaders who seek to maintain or expand their power. Hierarchies, such as ethnic or racial hierarchies, can also be used by political leaders to justify discrimination and violence against certain groups.

In the case of the Rwandan genocide, the political hierarchy played a significant role. The Hutu elites held most of the political power in Rwanda, and they used this power to incite violence against the Tutsi population. The government and military leaders created a

propaganda campaign that portrayed the Tutsi as a threat to national security, and they used this campaign to justify the genocide.

The propaganda campaign was also designed to reinforce the ethnic hierarchy in Rwanda, which placed the Tutsi at the top and the Hutu at the bottom. By portraying the Tutsi as a threat to Hutu power, the government was able to rally support among the Hutu population and legitimize the violence.

The political hierarchy also impacted the response to the genocide. The international community was slow to respond to the crisis, in part because they saw it as a local ethnic conflict rather than a political crisis. The political interests of Western countries also played a role in their reluctance to intervene.

In other cases, political hierarchies have been used to promote genocide as a tool for maintaining power. For example, the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia sought to create a communist utopia by eliminating anyone perceived as a threat to their power. The Nazi regime in Germany used anti-Semitic propaganda to justify the genocide of Jews, Roma, and other groups.

Overall, the impact of hierarchies and politics on genocides cannot be overstated. When political discrimination and violence against certain groups, it creates a climate of fear and hatred that can lead to genocide. It is important for international organizations to address these underlying political factors for human rights and equality.

What do you think can be done to stop genocide from happening in the present/future?

Stopping genocide is a complex issue, and there is no one-size-fits-all solution. However, there are steps that can be taken to prevent or mitigate the risk of genocide in the present and future. Here are some possible actions that can be taken:

Early warning and prevention: Early warning systems can be put in place to identify situations that may lead to genocide. This can involve monitoring media reports, gathering intelligence, and engaging with local communities to understand the dynamics and grievance that may lead to conflict. Early warning systems should be linked to prevention strategies that address the root causes of conflicts and promote social cohesion.

Diplomacy and mediation: Diplomatic efforts can help to resolve conflicts and prevent them from escalating into violence. Mediation can help to bring conflicting parties to the negotiating table and find peaceful solutions to their differences. The international community can play a role in facilitating these efforts and providing the necessary resources and expertise.

Human rights protection: protecting human rights is crucial for preventing genocide. Governments should respect the human rights of all their citizens, regardless of their ethnicity, religion, or political affiliation. The international community can hold governments accountable for human rights violations and support civil society for human rights.

Education and awareness-raising: education and awareness-raising can help to promote tolerance and understanding among different communities. This can involve initiatives such as interfaith dialogues, cultural exchanges, and peacebuilding programs. Schools and universities can also play a role in educating young people about discrimination.

Accountability and justice: Holding perpetrators of genocide accountable for their crimes is essential for preventing future atrocities. This can involve establishing international tribunals or supporting national courts to prosecute those responsible for genocide. It can also involve providing reparations to victims and their families and promoting reconciliation and healing.

These are just some of the actions that can be taken to prevent or mitigate the risk of genocide. It is important to remember that stopping genocide requires a sustained and collective effort from governments, civil society organizations, and the international community.