

"*Genocide* is the best book yet written on the subject and represents a significant contribution to scholarship in an area of great societal importance. It is well-written, the issues are clearly and imaginatively analyzed, the available literature is used to advantage, and the interpretation of the subject is generally balanced and persuasive. It will provide, at least for some years, the single indispensable reference work on the subject."

—Richard Falk, Princeton University

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GENOCIDE

KUPER

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1981

1915
800,000 ARMENIANS

1933–45
6 MILLION JEWS

1971
3 MILLION BANGLADESHIS

1972–75
100,000 HUTU

GENOCIDE

LEO KUPER

Genocide

Its Political Use in the Twentieth Century

Leo Kuper

Genocide and political massacres in the twentieth century have already resulted in the annihilation of 800,000 Armenians, 20 million Soviets, 6 million Jews, 3 million Bangladeshis, and 100,000 Hutu. Yet the world's official attitude seems to be one of indifference. In the first systematic treatment of this appalling phenomenon, Leo Kuper analyzes the nature of genocide, provides detailed information about instances of genocide from ancient times to the present, and calls for an end to the outrageous willingness of the world community to turn a blind eye to massacres taking place even now.

Kuper finds many different situations in which genocide occurs—religious, racial, and ethnic conflict, colonization and decolonization, struggles for power in which defenseless groups become scapegoats, and antagonism between economic classes such as farmers and nomads. He shows how modern technological change has facilitated genocidal massacres and how the great powers have encouraged genocide by supplying the contending parties with sophisticated arms for mutual destruction. Finally he describes the feeble role played by the United Nations in the prevention or punishment of genocide; the U.N. has, for all practical purposes, defended sovereign territorial states that have claimed the right to commit genocide against people under their rule.

This book is not only a thorough investigation of genocide but an eloquent plea for its restraint—for the continuous and mounting pressure of international opinion that is the world's only defense against genocidal atrocities.

Leo Kuper is professor emeritus at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles and former director of the African Studies Center there. He is the author of several books on South Africa.

Genocide *Its Political Use in the
Twentieth Century*

LEO KUPER

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*To Herbert Machleder
with my deep gratitude*

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