

owned by someone else; the kiosk money will most likely go to the underground economy, not to the state in the form of taxes. And if there are no taxes, there will be no investments, no new jobs, no roads, no pensions, no health insurance. The guy in front of the Hotel Dajti will probably be happy, because he has a job. But with this kind of small business, the state is likely to remain poor.

What Albanians are enjoying now is the theoretical possibility of getting rich, very much like the equally theoretical possibility of buying a bottle of whiskey or a good perfume when you know that you don't have money enough even to smell it. In a way, they are living in an illusion of a capitalist society, as they are living in an illusion of freedom or democracy. The extreme poverty of the country makes it all still a dream. Therefore, Albania looks to me like a dormant, dreaming country, a child that has not learned to take care of itself. And no one can tell how long it will take Albania to recover from the long disease of isolation, poverty and despair.

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Rwanda: a history lesson.

THE HORROR

By Frank Smyth

For most of the world, Rwanda's dark spasm of violence seemed to come out of nowhere. It didn't. Though the bloodiness of the killing fields is unprecedented, the country, at least in its post-colonial existence, has been subject to a number of massacres: some took place more than thirty years ago; others occurred just last year.

In any analysis of Rwanda's tortured modern history, all roads lead to Belgium, which governed the East-Central African country as a protectorate after Germany's defeat in World War I. Until the late 1950s Belgium allied itself with the minority Tutsi, who had ruled over the rival Hutu for centuries. Since Rwanda's independence in 1962, Belgian officials claim to have pursued a policy of neutrality; Rwanda's Hutu leadership disagrees. They accuse Belgium of playing a role in the April death of Hutu President Juvenal Habyarimana, which sparked the current fighting. Hutu-controlled Radio des Milles Collines in Kigali has gone so far as to claim that Belgian troops shot down the president's plane. According to *The Washington Post*, Belgian peacekeepers were in such danger of attack that they stripped their uniforms of Belgium's flag-patch and "traveled in undershirts so they could be mistaken for French."

For Belgium, Rwanda has never been much of a prize. "In the darkest days of World War I," *Time* magazine reported in 1959, "about the only consolation that fell to the Belgians was the capture in Africa of two small and scenically beautiful German territories": Rwanda and Burundi. Belgium ruled "Ruanda and Urundi through a master tribe of willowy African giants named the Watutsis. The Watutsis had been for four centuries the lords of the Land of the Mountains of the Moon, and there seemed little reason why they should not continue to be so."

Nomadic pastoralists, the Tutsi did not come in a sudden invasion to the area southwest of Lake Victoria, but slowly in search of land to graze cattle on. The Hutu were already there farming the same land. By the sixteenth century the Tutsi monarchy was established. The Mwami king was said to be the eye of God; his children were born in the heavens but, by accident, had fallen to earth. The king's symbol of divine power was the *kalinga*, or sacred drum, upon which the genitals of vanquished enemies were hung. The Tutsi dynasty lasted eighteen generations. "They are proud, sophisticated and not particularly energetic. Several times we saw Watutsi lords sitting on bicycles and being pushed by their vassals," wrote historian John Gunther in 1953. "They value women highly, almost as highly as cattle, and live on milk and peas."

Although Tutsi and Hutu have distinct origins as people, with time they came to speak the same language, Kinyarwanda. They also evolved into different classes of the same society. According to historian Alison Des Forges, the Hutu and Tutsi were not so much "tribes or even ethnic groups [but] ... amorphous categories based on occupation: Hutu were cultivators and Tutsi, pastoralists." The distinction had much to do with status: a rich Hutu who owned cattle could become a recognized Tutsi, while a Tutsi who lost cattle could wind up being labeled Hutu. But it also had to do with physical appearance: unlike Hutu, Tutsi tend to be tall, with high cheekbones and sharp facial features. "They are not Negroes even though they may be jet black," wrote Gunther. "In any case, tallness is the symbol of racial exclusiveness and pure blood."

In governing the Rwanda protectorate, Belgium's policy was explicitly racist. Early in its mandate, Belgium declared: "The government should endeavor to maintain and consolidate traditional cadres composed of the Tutsi ruling class, because of its important qualities, its undeniable intellectual superiority and its ruling potential." Belgium instituted apartheid-like identity cards, which marked the bearer as Tutsi, Hutu or Twa (pygmy). And Belgium educated only male Tutsi.

Schooling for Hutus was generally undertaken by private Catholic missions. Eventually, the Hutus began to counter Tutsi notions of superiority with a Christian-based liberation movement. This trend was given further impetus by the growing African demand for independence from Europe. By 1957 the Hutu began to organize politically. Fearful, Rwanda's Tutsi rulers wanted Bel-

gium to give them autonomy quickly, before they lost control.

The Tutsi were too late; in 1959 the Hutu rose up in rebellion. *Time* reported: "Though the Muhutut left the Watutsi women and children alone, they showed no mercy to the males: those they did not kill they maimed by chopping off their feet. They put banana plantations to the torch, set dozens of villages afire, left some helpless old people to burn to death in their own huts."

From then until 1964, it only got worse. The philosopher Bertrand Russell described the Hutu rebellion as "the most horrible and systematic massacre we have had occasion to witness since the extermination of the Jews by the Nazis." According to Des Forges, as many as 20,000 Tutsis perished. An estimated 150,000 Tutsi exiles—known as *Banyarwanda*—fled to Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda and Zaire. Most went to Uganda, where they suffered under the tyranny of Milton Obote and Idi Amin.

This repression eventually drove some *Banyarwanda* to join a guerrilla movement started in 1981 by Yoweri Museveni, a former defense minister under Obote. At least 2,000 *Banyarwanda*, including a tall Rwandan by the name of Paul Kagame, fought with him. After five years of fighting, Museveni and his men took power. Over time at least 2,000 more *Banyarwanda* joined Uganda's army. In October 1990 these *Banyarwanda*, with Museveni's silent blessing, declared themselves members of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), and, with Ugandan weapons, invaded Rwanda. (Uganda insists the weapons were stolen.) At the time of the invasion Kagame was Uganda's military intelligence chief; he now commands the RPF.

Until the RPF invaded in 1990, Belgium had been Rwanda's main provider of military assistance and training. But Belgium is unique among former colonial states in that its laws now prohibit it from providing lethal aid to a country at war. After Rwanda's war started Belgium continued to provide boots, uniforms and training, but no arms. Consequently, President Habyarimana turned to France, which had signed military cooperation pacts with most of Africa's twenty-one Francophone regimes. (Because Rwanda is an ex-Belgian protectorate, French is an official language along with Kinyarwanda.) Spurred on by the fact that the RPF was English-speaking and backed by English-speaking Uganda, France rushed in weapons, munitions, paratroopers and advisers to keep Rwanda's government from falling.

While France helped the predominately Hutu Rwandan army repel the 1990 invasion, Rwanda's hard-line Hutu leaders responded by overseeing the killing of Tutsi civilians. Although fighting was limited to northern Rwanda, soldiers staged a battle in Kigali, and used it as a pretext to arrest up to 8,000 people, mostly Tutsi. There were beatings, rapes and murders. Rwandan intelligence distributed Kalashnikovs to municipal authorities in selected villages. They gathered with ruling party militants, most of whom carried staves, clubs or machetes. Sometimes holding cardboard placards of Habyarimana's portrait above their heads, they went field-to-field

in search of Tutsi, killing thousands.

Of course, the RPF wasn't innocent. An international human rights commission report found them responsible for abuses, including executions of up to several hundred Hutu civilians and military prisoners. In response, supposedly pro-Tutsi Belgium withdrew its ambassador, Johan Swinnen, for two weeks in March 1993. "When I returned we put pressure on [all sides] to react to the report," he said last June in Kigali, "because the future of the country . . . depends on it."

At the same time, however, France continued to defend the Hutu regime. "Civilians were killed as in any war," said Col. Bernard Cussac, France's ranking military commander in Kigali. Ambassador Jean-Michel Marlaud was more diplomatic. "There are violations by the Rwandan army," he said. "[But] more because of a lack of control by the government, rather than the will of the government." But Belgian officials said that the French were undermining collective diplomatic efforts to influence the regime. "If they would only use their military presence as a lever," said one. "I would like to see them take a more outspoken policy on democracy and human rights." France never did.

Nevertheless, two months later, in August 1993, President Habyarimana and RPF Commander Kagame signed an agreement to end the war. Habyarimana had already begun to share power with Hutu leaders outside his party. Until then he had run the country with a small group of men, most of whom were related to either him or his wife. Known as the Akazu or "Little House" (as in: the house that surrounded the president), these men controlled the elite Presidential Guard and Radio des Milles Collines. When Habyarimana let opposition members into his Cabinet in 1992, the Little House countered by forming militias called *Interahamwe*, or "Those Who Attack Together" and *Impuzamugambi*, or "Those Who Have the Same Goal."

Soon after, several Hutu opposition leaders were assassinated; terrorist attacks became common. Bombs exploded in public markets, land mines were placed on roads away from fighting. Though no group ever claimed responsibility, all non-French Western diplomats in Kigali suspected the Little House. "We told them it is in your interest to respect human rights," said one Belgian diplomat, "and if you don't, we will not be silent."

France and Radio des Milles Collines, however, blamed the RPF. Col. Cussac said his staff had traced the serial numbers of land mines used in attacks to Belgium, which had sold them to Libya, which in turn had sold them to the RPF. Cussac said Belgium could verify these facts. Belgian officials in Kigali declined comment, referring the query to the Belgian Foreign Ministry in Brussels. There, its spokesman, Ghislain D'Hoop, said that Belgium had sold no land mines to Libya in decades.

In Rwanda now, Belgium and France are even more at odds. Belgium's foreign minister, William Claes, says Habyarimana was killed by Hutu extremists upset at his liberalizations. The rocket that struck his plane came

from the Kanombe army base just east of the Kigali airport; further east are the Presidential Guard headquarters. In April Paris received two of the "extremists"; Brussels denied them visas.

After the president's plane went down, one of the first things Hutu Presidential Guard soldiers did was come looking for Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana, also a Hutu. Hours later, Uwilingiyimana and three of the peacekeepers were found three blocks away, shot dead. A few hours later, at the Kanombe army base, a Canadian general found the remaining seven peacekeepers. They had been hacked to death by machete.

Belgians are upset at their loss of men in Rwanda, and many blame France. They have a point. In arming the Hutu government, France pursued its own linguistic vision while ignoring Rwanda's history; along with Tutsi and Hutu victims, Belgium paid the price. "Is there tension now?" repeated Brig. Gen. André Desmet by telephone from the Belgian Embassy in Washington. "I will be very cautious in the answer." He paused. "There are maybe different approaches."

FRANK SMYTH is author of *Arming Rwanda*, a Human Rights Watch/Arms Project report.

THE PARTY'S OVER

By Weston Kosova

Last Tuesday wasn't exactly Joe Prather's shining moment. In losing Kentucky's special House election to succeed the late William Natcher, Prather surrendered to the Republicans a seat held by the Democrats for 129 years. It hadn't been an easy race. Natcher's district is in the central part of the state, where voters are not known for their love of President Clinton (George Bush took the district in '92). But if the vanquished candidate thought he could find solace in the embrace of the party, he was sorely mistaken. "What we have here is a failure of tactics," fumed Democratic National Committee Chairman David Wilhelm in a statement to reporters. "The first failure was a lackadaisical campaign in which Joe Prather was caught flat-footed, rejected offers of financial assistance and explicitly refused party help."

The point of Wilhelm's diatribe was clear enough. In offering up Prather as a preseason sacrifice, Wilhelm was parroting the White House line, warning other Democratic hopefuls of the perils of straying too far from the president in November. But Wilhelm didn't end his critique there. The DNC chief went on to belittle Prather personally. "Look, I used to be a campaign manager and the earliest lesson I learned is that when you're on the defensive, backpedaling, you're losing. . . . As best as I can tell, Joe Prather got into a defensive crouch and stayed there."

Wilhelm's broadside was a strange sight: a party chief bludgeoning a candidate from his own camp. After all, Wilhelm is supposed to *prevent* Democrats from looking like fools, not lead the jeers. But Wilhelm had a reason for swinging at Prather. Prather is a liability. Not just to the party and the president, but to Wilhelm personally.

What David Wilhelm has done to the Democrats.

He can't afford many more losses on his watch. Since Clinton was elected Democrats have been beaten in mayor's races in New York, Jersey City and Los Angeles, governor's races in Virginia and New Jersey, a Senate race in Texas and congressional races in Oklahoma and now Kentucky. With November approaching, Wilhelm is on edge. The party of the president usually fares poorly in midterm congressional elections, and Wilhelm has plenty to fear from a potential Democratic trouncing in the fall. Congressional Democrats are sweating out predictions that as many as twenty-five seats may be lost in the House and four in the Senate. If Republicans gain working majorities, they could force major changes in Clinton's legislative plans, including health care and welfare reform (see "The Tilt" by Fred Barnes, *TNR*, June 6). And though the party chairman has little if any influence over how elections turn out, it's Wilhelm who will die the scapegoat's death if the Democrats do badly.

Wilhelm has what is arguably the worst job in Washington. The DNC chairman isn't just chief pitchman and fund-raiser for the party, but sanctioned whipping boy. He's expected to take the rap cheerfully for the shortcomings of his betters. Members of Congress harp on him to provide political coverage in their home districts during tough partisan battles and to show up with cash on hand in election years. State party leaders clamor for more money and more autonomy. Big-dollar union and PAC contributors yank their long tethers for access.

Still, a year and a half into the job, Wilhelm is making the worst of a difficult position. Trained as a back-room strategist, he lacks the diplomatic and political skills that Clinton needs. As in so many other areas (foreign policy