

closed in case of a terrorist attack with chemical or biological weapons, then surely more can be done to increase the survivability chances for the average citizen. As Falkenrath and his colleagues point out, "the lethality of most biological weapons can be reduced more than a thousandfold if the members of the target population simply put on \$5 respiratory masks for the duration of the attack."

In at least one respect, the authors of *America's Achilles Heel* may have underestimated the difficulties of preparing for an NBC attack. They claim that if NBC weapons "are detected in advance, covert attacks are relatively easy to defend against." The history of counterterrorist operations, however, is filled with cases where the terrorists were able to set off their explosives or fire their weapons before they were captured or killed. These were risks that were deemed worth taking when the counterterrorist mission was launched. But if that happens with NBC weapons, killing the terrorist won't do the rest of us much good. For that reason alone, *America's Achilles Heel* is a warning well worth heeding.

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Heart of Darkness

by Joshua Hammer

GREAT CRIMES PRODUCE great devils, but the Rwandan genocide was a singular exception. There was no Pol Pot, Radovan Karadzic or Idi Amin—only a faceless cabal of men with long, unpronounceable names hatching a plot in obscurity. Who has ever heard of Theodore Sindikubwabo? Jean Paul Akayesu? Four years after the fact, the Rwandan cataclysm is still perceived by many in the West as a spasm of

tribal warfare, not a calculated campaign of extermination.

But a campaign it was, carried out with diabolical efficiency and brutality. Now Philip Gourevitch, a *New Yorker* staff writer and son of Holocaust survivors, has written a terrifying account of the genocide and its aftermath entitled *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will be Killed with our Families: Stories from Rwanda*. Gourevitch's exhaustively reported book provides the most lucid account yet of the plot concocted by radical Hutu ideologues to wipe out the country's minority Tutsi tribe—and the international community's paralysis as the slaughter spread.

There had never been anything like it. Over one hundred days between April and July 1994, one million people were butchered at roadblocks, in

churches, in their homes—killed by neighbors and friends, torn apart by grenades, bullets, and machetes. I covered the genocide for *Newsweek*, and the enormity of the slaughter often left me groping for words to describe it. (Full disclosure: I have worked with Gourevitch in Rwanda and am quoted in his book.) But Gourevitch, who didn't arrive in the country until May 1995, convincingly captures the look and feel of the genocide: the lush beauty of the landscape juxtaposed against the stench of death, the repose of skeletons in churches, the eerie stillness in village after village, the chorus of denial issued by the murderers. He humanizes the slaughter, attaching names and faces to both victims and perpetrators. And as he wanders through the charnel house, he repeatedly asks one question: why?

There is no simple answer, but Gourevitch debunks the notion that the genocide was the inevitable result of "ancient" tribal enmities. The hatred was of a more recent vintage. For centuries Tutsis and Hutus were porous constructs—based on class as well as

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THAT TOMORROW WE
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Stories from Rwanda

by Philip Gourevitch

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racial distinctions—until Rwanda's Belgian colonizers rigidly divided society along tribal lines. The Belgians granted Tutsis superior status and relegated the Hutus to virtual serfdom. Then, in 1959, the colonizers abruptly switched allegiances, backing the Hutus in an uprising that toppled the Tutsi overlords—and led to 35 years of increasingly brutal majority rule.

Rwanda was thus a polarized society even before a rebel army of Tutsi exiles invaded from Uganda in 1990. The invasion set the stage for the rise of Hutu Power, an ideology of tribal supremacy that proved as virulent as Nazism. With the pacing of a suspense novelist, Gourevitch reveals how anti-Tutsi rhetoric and paranoia culminated in Rwanda's Final Solution. Hutu academics, journalists, and other extremists joined forces to portray all Rwanda's Tutsis as "cockroaches" who must be wiped out to save the country. A shadowy inner circle known as the akazu, led by First Lady Agathe Habyarimana, almost certainly hatched the plot to shoot down the president's plane on April 6, 1994—a Hutu Power *coup d'état* that set the genocide in motion. And Rwanda's tightly organized hierarchy of governors, mayors, teachers, civil servants, and malleable peasants carried the plot forward, masking calculation behind a facade of spontaneity.

The Hutus are not the only culprits in this book. Gourevitch issues a damning indictment of the United Nations, whose top bureaucrats received unequivocal evidence of an imminent Holocaust, but cut and ran after 10 Belgian peacekeepers were murdered and mutilated the first night of the massacres. The United States government behaved with equal cowardice. The Clinton administration went to absurd lengths to avoid using the word "genocide"—a qualification which would have obligated it to intervene as a signatory to the 1948 Genocide Convention. But for dastardly behavior, nobody matched the French. Driven by his friendship with Habyarimana and his distaste for the Anglophone rebels, the late French President Francois Mitterand embraced the genocidaires. The French funneled arms to the Hutus, and in

June 1994 they launched a last ditch pro-Hutu intervention dressed up as a humanitarian aid mission.

There are heroes as well. Gourevitch introduces us to the manager of the Mille Collines Hotel in central Kigali—the Rwandan army's ground zero—who mans telephones and dispatches a blizzard of faxes around the world in a Schindler-like attempt to save the lives of Tutsis huddled inside. And he draws a compelling portrait of General Paul Kagame, the quietly charismatic leader of the rebel army, which crushed a force twice its size and then had to rebuild a destroyed country. Kagame's victory was certainly one of the most brilliant military campaigns of the modern era. One of the few shortcomings of Gourevitch's book is his failure to shed light on Kagame's military strategy.

Was Kagame's army guilty of excesses? No question. There was the infamous 1995 massacre at the Kibeho refugee camp, as well as reported killings of several thousand Hutu civilians during the 1996 Rwandan-backed war that overthrew Mobutu in Zaire. But one of the most satisfying aspects of Gourevitch's book is that he places these crimes in their proper perspective. They stemmed largely from strategic imperatives gone wrong—rousting killers from U.N.-run refugee camps, countering the spread of anti-Tutsi pogroms into Zaire—not an ideology of hatred. To draw a moral equivalence between Rwandan Patriotic Army acts and the Hutu-organized slaughter—to say, as one Belgian academic told the *New York Times*, "they're all bad guys"—is sophistry.

In the end, it's the sheer pervasiveness of Hutu guilt that weighs heaviest on the mind. Visiting packed jails and villages where victims and killers live side by side, Gourevitch testifies to the morbid absurdity of Rwanda's plight. How is it possible, he asks, to achieve justice or reconciliation in a country where nearly every person over the age of 12 is a murderer? Under the moral leadership of General Kagame, Rwandan society has limped towards a measure of reconstruction. *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will be Killed with our Families* offers a few

glimmers of optimism within the darkness. But is the darkness that lingers: the spectacle of an entire people roused by their leaders into a methodical campaign of murder. Gourevitch's book is likely to take its place alongside Hannah Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem* as a monumental study of evil in our time. JOSHUA HAMMER is the NEWSWEEK L.A. Bureau Chief

Master Plans

by Gideon Rose

JAMES C. SCOTT'S BOOK, *Seeing Like A State* is an important and powerful work that deserves to be read by anyone interested in large-scale public planning. The author, a political scientist and anthropologist at Yale, sets out to discover why so many well-intentioned efforts at social engineering in the twentieth century have misfired so dramatically. After surveying planning disasters around the world, he concludes that the answer lies not in case-specific accidents or faulty execution but rather in the planning project itself.

The thesis of the book is simple. "High modernist ideology," according to Scott, consists of the belief that planners can and should redesign the social order in accordance with supposedly scientific laws. The fatal flaw is always the same: the planners' devotion to broad general rules in preference to practical or local knowledge. For this latter kind of expertise Scott imports the ancient Greek term "metis," the ability to adapt successfully to changing situations that enabled Odysseus to triumph over adversity time and again. High modernist planners, in Scott's view, are so entranced by the aesthetic appeal of precise, universal, "rational" designs that they scorn metis and forget that flesh-and-blood societies are always messy and unique.

Among the book's virtues are its lucid style, deep learning, and wide range of fascinating cases. Scott traces the dire effects of high modernist ideology in realms as diverse as Soviet collectivization, Tanzanian ujamaa villages, scientific forestry,