

Hutus vs. Tutsis

by Murray N. Rothbard

The mass butchery in Rwanda provides several important and instructive lessons to the American people, lessons which – surprise, surprise! – are emphatically *not* being pointed out by our beloved media.

In the first place, we see starkly revealed the idiocy of the New World Order and the attempt of our global social democrats to impose "democracy," multiculturalism and multiethnicity on the entire world. The blue-helmeted troops of the United Nations, mainly French and Belgians as a legacy of Belgian imperialism in Rwanda and neighboring Burundi, have had to stand by helplessly while the massacre proceeded, and some of them were even cut down in the crossfire. So, what next, Slick Willie? Shall it be the usual American "solution": air strikes against Hutu and/or Tutsi, or maybe send in a few hundred thousand ground troops to establish "free elections" and "human rights" in Rwanda and Burundi? Lotsaluck.

In dealing with crime, liberals like to concentrate on "root causes" rather than on crime, whereas conservatives want to zap the criminals. The two concerns are not really mutually exclusive, however; the real problem is that the liberals are concentrating on the *wrong* "root causes." That is, on "poverty" or "child abuse" instead of a rotten immoral character and the factors that may give rise to such a character, e.g., lack of respect for private property, unwillingness to work, and emphasis on short-run "kicks" instead of forethought about the future. In the Rwanda massacres, liberals are again unwilling to face the root causes: clashing tribes in a fairly small territorial area.

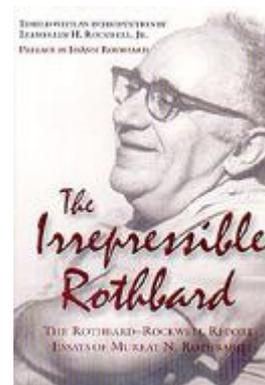
Contrary to myth about the "overpopulated" Third World, African density is generally very low compared to the rest of the world. The reasons are not difficult to figure out: if there is little or no capital equipment or economic development, the African land area will only support a small population. Before the European

imperialism of the nineteenth century, then, various African tribes had a considerable amount of room to roam around in, without getting in each other's hair. European imperialism, however, – British, French, German, Belgian, Portuguese – carved out and conquered land areas, creating various phony "countries," with total disregard for the integrity of the various tribes, most of whom, as in the Balkans, the Caucasus, and nearly everywhere else, have little or nothing in common and hate each other's guts. European imperialism, however, artificially incorporated various clashing tribes into one "country," and, on the other hand, split up the same tribes imposing artificial "borders" within their territory. Setting the stage, of course, inevitably, for bitter conflicts and warfare after the imperialists pulled out after World War II. The manner of pulling out made things worse: for the retiring European empires turned over these "countries" to Marxoid bureaucratic elites who had been detribalized and had been educated – or better, "trained" – in the Marxist-dominated elite universities of the imperial capitals: London, Paris, Brussels, or Lisbon.

The ethno-racial clashes between African tribes have been particularly murderous in Rwanda and Burundi because these two small areas are the densest in Africa. Rwanda, for example, has about seven million people in an area the size of Vermont – not a lot by Western European standards, but very dense for Africa. In this relatively small area there have lived for centuries, side by side and at each other's throats, two very different racial tribes: the Hutu and Tutsi. The Tutsi are familiar to all those who saw the grand epic movie, *King Solomon's Mines* (the 1950 version with Stewart Granger and Deborah Kerr); they are a tall, slender, graceful, noble-looking tribe, there called the Watusi. The Tutsi are an Ethiopid, Nilotic people. The Hutu, on the other hand, are short, squat Bantu, a closer approximation to what used to be called "Negro" in America. "Negroes" are now called "black," but the problem here is that the skin color of both the Tutsi and the Hutu are much the same. The real issue, as in most other cases, is not skin color but various character traits of different population groups.

The crucial point is that, in both Rwanda and Burundi, Hutus and Tutsis have coexisted for centuries; the Tutsi are about 15 percent of the total population, the Hutu about 85 percent. And yet consistently, over the centuries, the Tutsi have totally dominated, and even enserfed, the Hutu. How are we to explain this consistent pattern of domination by a small minority? Could it be – dare I say it – that along with being taller, slimmer, more graceful and noble-looking, the Tutsi are far more i-n-t-e-l-l-i-g-e-n-t than the

Hutu? And yet what else explains this overriding fact? Note: as a libertarian, I neither advocate nor condone the centuries-old pattern of domination by Tutsi over Hutu. I would love to see them coexist peacefully, participating in a division of labor joined together by a free market. But there is not a chance of a whoop in Hell for such a coexistence to take place. Or do you think that the UN or the U.S. or



NATO or some other super-coercive force, should march into Rwanda and Burundi with millions of highly armed troops to impose a "free market" on these people, or even, God forbid, social democracy? Again, lotsa luck.

Speaking of armies and intelligence, it is a remarkable fact that the current race war was touched off by the assassination of the two Hutu presidents of Rwanda and Burundi, who were flying in a plane over the Rwanda capital – and that this assassination was perpetrated by a Tutsi rocket fired from the ground, blowing up the plane. Now here we have a fascinating high-tech innovation in assassination theory and practice.

Usually, heads of state are killed by rifle or revolver; or, sometimes by a bomb placed in a plane. But to assassinate by rocket! Wow! Looking at the recent exploits of our trillion-dollar Pentagon: dropping dud bombs on a Serbian truck, and shooting down our own helicopters over northern Iraq, maybe we should cut the military budget a lot more, and import some Tutsi engineers!