

Mayibuye iAfrica The President's Welcome

MID MORNING IN AFRICA

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Staff Writer

Brutal scenes of slain human beings, bodies sprawled across potholed streets, a myriad of emaciated, afraid people hurrying along worn, war-torn, dirt roads as fast as their enervated bodies will allow them to flee the brute savagery they leave in their wake. A pitiful sight of Rwanda.

Scrawny individuals with bone definition distinct enough for easy study in any anatomy class, children with distended bellies and chapped lips, bulging eyes with an empty stare, empty as their unfed stomachs swollen up by malnutrition. Galling scenes from the Sudan, Somalia and Ethiopia.

The constant crack of machine guns, swithering of machetes, cold uncalculated spilling of blood...the anguish and loss caused by the ravages of war, tribal warfare laying African nations barren.

Fertile lands unattended, some rapidly transformed to deserts by over-cultivation. A distinct vivid picture of a continent dangling on shoe strings, clenching to hope, emerges. These are all scenes from the place I call home, one which will ever remain close to my heart, one which is my heart. Indeed you cannot turn on the television and not find those pictures of lost, tired and hungry children, but almost surely you will not find the pictures of all the things that are right with the place I call home, MY HOME AFRICA.

Over the next year, Martin Khamala (Kenya), Thebe Mphenyeki (South Africa) and I (Zimbabwe) will take you on a Word Safari. Together we'll explore the deep dark mystery of the African continent. A place that many would subject to poor or unelaborate judgement, some brush off as lost, and most never think of other than as a habitat for wild animals. While not denying the existence of problems, we do not wallow in them. Rather we seek through creative thoughts and efforts to examine all that is right about our motherland and build on that to create a stronger home for us and our children. Welcome to this expedition through what has sometimes been given the misnomer "The Dark Continent".

Africa sits under the dubious cover of a thick grey black nimbo cumulus. Cracks of machine gun fire and bomb explosions in some of the most volatile parts are like ominous thunder and lightning. Yet surely there are winds blowing

over the continent, breezes of change. Areas of light and sunshine are becoming ever more common as they peep through those clouds of despair. Those patches of sunlight...hope and achievement...are becoming more commonplace. Egypt, Ghana, Mauritius, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Botswana, and most recently South Africa, all nations ushering in a new era of African success.

Many of Africa's successes go by unnoticed. In the recent past we have seen subsiding and ending civil wars. Eritrea, Angola, Mozambique have emerged from carnage similar to Rwanda. Successful fair and free transitions to democracy have occurred in Zambia, Ghana, Namibia, South Africa, and most recently Malawi; very few are cognizant of this factor. The Africans here at Guilford are seen proudly displaying their heritage, unflinchingly proud ambassadors of their nations. We herald a new generation of Africans committed to the amelioration of our individual nations, and that, manifest in the stability and peace of the whole continent.

Africa has been the victim of colonial exploitation and extortion. Following the imperial tragedy many countries have suffered at the hands of unscrupulous dictators and slanderous leaders who, in cohorts with Western neo-colonialists, maliciously drove a giant sword through the heart of their nations. Yet the enduring spirit of the people lives on, undaunted by the cruelty. Despite the greyness and forecasts of doom, African people are buoyed into freedom by their joy-filled hearts and hopeful spirits. As sunny and beautiful as the climate are the hearts of the people, all this seen in abundance in the warmth of the African's smile.

Equally abundant is a plethora of resources that have fallen into the hands and management of inept, greedy men and women. Africa cannot, however, take a back seat and cling to a mentality that will incarcerate us in the spell and web of the "victim syndrome". Instead, as we are beginning to see, we Africans will increasingly act to take our own destiny into our hands. This will be a process of re-instilling pride in the heritage that is ancient, and civilization that was developed well before Westernization. The integration of indigenous principals into the character fiber of the continent and more particularly the nation states of Africa,

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Bill Rogers

Special to The Guilfordian



Joe Wallace

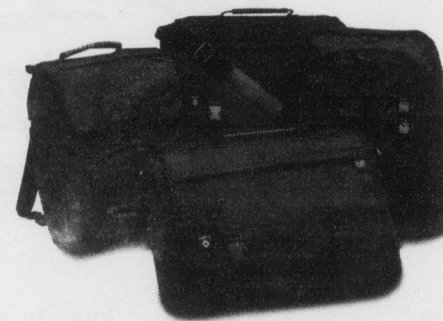
A warm welcome to all students and faculty!

Getting away each summer for a few weeks in Maine, as Bev and I do, helps bring perspective to Guilford. Sailing quietly on Penobscot Bay, we reflect on the friendships and great sense of community that pervades the college -- the sense of academic purpose, and the strong convictions that we share for an open, just, and humane society. Returning to the intensity of our lives here, we bring (as we hope you do) a sense

of gratitude for the people and the support that Guilford provides in our cooperative life together around these purposes.

May this year prove to be one of creativity and significant personal growth for each of you. And may you find the balance of thoughtful work and fun, of physical and spiritual development, of meaningful solitude and enjoyable social outreach that is genuinely fulfilling! Carpe diem! - or as the Quakers say, Be there fully in each moment!

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than the taste
of bad
meatloaf.



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