

Fear is Still Pervasive in Rwanda Countryside

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In a thicket of tall weeds, thorny bramble, dead cornstalks and eucalyptus trees, a few ferns have been laid. It is where three men have been sleeping and hiding for more than two months, since Hutu militia attacked this village in April, killing scores of Tutsi and forcing others.

A week ago, a journey along almost any road in this area was perilous. There were road blocks every 200 or 300 yards, manned by young men in civilian clothes, armed with machetes, clubs and rifles. While most of the roadblocks and armed militias have vanished, checkpoints are still ubiquitous. At a roadblock just east of Nyungwe Forest, a teen-ager in a checkered red shirt held a grenade in his right hand, as his comrades searched vehicles. The roadblocks are a nuisance for every traveler; they are potentially fatal for a Tutsi. The safety of Nyarusishi refugee camp is just over a hill from Ruganda, less than three miles distant. A woman in the camp said today that her mother was still hiding in Ruganda – she is protected by a Hutu family, her daughter said, and would like to come to the camp but that she could not do so safely.

Mr. Rwakazina's wife and children are also in the camp, and today he be-

seehed american reporters who found him and his friends to escort them to the camp "It is not safe to go on the road", said one of the men, who was barefoot and whose torn and soiled clothes were all he had. A Hutu intellectual in the village, a political centrist, agreed that it was not safe for Tutsi to travel unescorted.

"The French are here, but I am still afraid", Mr. Rwakazina said. "I don't know if I would be alive tomorrow". A French colonel, Didier Thibaut, said, "We don't have orders to disarm militias"

Asked about the Tutsi who were hiding in fear of the Hutu – no one has any idea how many like Mr Rwakazina there are – Colonel Thibaut said they should come to the camp.

But the question is how they get there. If French paratroopers find Tutsi while on their patrols, they bring them to the camp. But the French do not go on missions in search of those hiding.

Colonel Thibaut maintained, "The province of Cyangugu is calmer," referring to this region in the south-western corner of Rwanda, on the southern tip of Lake Kivu. "The civilian population is protected."