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Amin's Shadow

By Andrew Rice

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KAMPALA, Uganda—One morning in early July 1972, Idi Amin's men came for police officer Joseph Ssali Sabalongo. As usual, there was no warning, no explanation. A group of soldiers simply burst into Ssali's offices at the Buganda Road Courthouse in Kampala. Ali Towili, one of Amin's thuggish sidekicks, waved a gun in the police officer's face, marched him outside and forced him into the trunk of a black Peugeot sedan.

"I do not know the reason why I was picked up," Ssali would tell a government commission in 1988, nine years after the dictator's overthrow. "I was put into a wet [trunk] containing fresh human blood; then I was led up to Naguru Public Safety Unit."

Ssali may not have known why he was taken, but he certainly would have known where he was headed—everyone was aware of what happened in Naguru. "The names of [Amin's] torture centers had a certain black humor: Makerere Nursing Home, Nakasero State Research Center, Naguru Public Safety Unit," the Uganda Commission of Inquiry into the Violation of Human Rights would write in its report. "Very few places in the country were less safe to the public who inhabited them than this last."

And if Ssali retained any illusions about what was in store, he later testified, they were dispelled as he lay in the trunk:

Ssali: While being driven, I could hear Mr. Towili saying that "I am going to kill this inspector"—he was talking in Swahili.

Chairman: In the car? He was in the car?

Ssali: Yes, he was there in the car with some of his officers. Reaching the Public Safety Unit at about midday, I was taken out of the wet [trunk] and lined up … with five other people I found there.

Counsel: You mean arrested people?

Ssali: Yes, they were arrested.

Counsel: Police officers?

Ssali: No, they were civilians. [Towili] was calling them robbers. Then he told me he was going to kill me. I kept on praying. …

Chairman: Sorry, did he tell you the reason why he was going to kill you? What had you done?

Ssali: Well, he said I had lost a police file in connection with the Public Safety Unit. … We were lined up under a mango tree … I kept on praying, saying "I am innocent, I am innocent." But he said, "I am going to kill you." Then he started firing. Because I was standing on the left side of the line, he shot the first one with

a pistol, he fell dead, the second, the third, the fourth, the fifth. But still I was just crying saying that "Please, I am innocent, I am innocent, you are killing me, but I am innocent." Then when he reached me, it is when he said that, "*Kama mimi nawuwa wewe bure Mungu atamupa mimi adhabu*." Meaning that if I am killing you for nothing God will punish me.

Chairman: To punish who?

Ssali: Towili. Then when he raised up the pistol it jammed. He threw his pistol to the orderly and the orderly removed the remaining bullets, then [Towili] pulled some more bullets from his jacket and gave [them] to the orderly, and he loaded the pistol. And then he fired once in the air and then said, "You will bring this man at two o'clock, I will kill him at two o'clock."

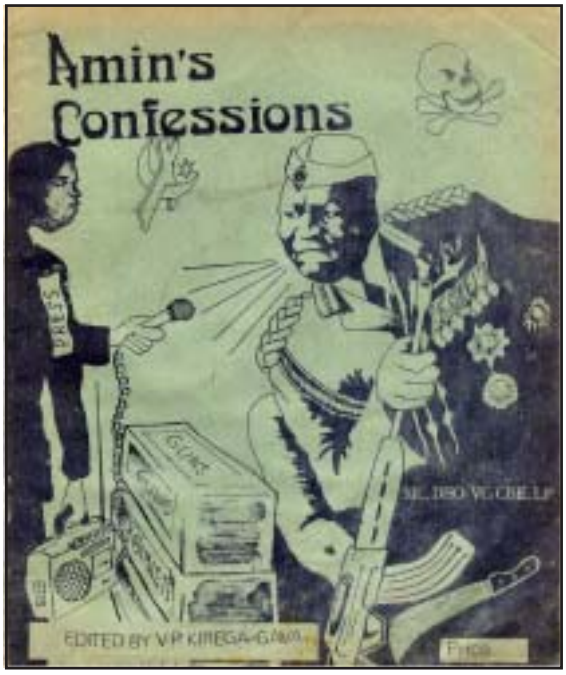
Chairman: At two o'clock?

Ssali: At two o'clock. Because it was then approaching lunchtime.

* * *

One evening not long ago, my Ugandan friend Allan and I were sitting on my porch, having an evening drink and watching the sunset, when our discussion strayed onto the topic of Amin. "You know," he said, "there are probably corpses beneath this very house."

He may be right. You see, I live in Naguru, home of the Public Safety Unit, the place where Joseph Ssali was taken. In the 1970s, it was an overgrown hill, a place where Kampalans dumped their trash and bandits went to hide. Today it is a fast-developing suburb favored by expatriates and Kampala's well-to-do. I had learned of my neighborhood's past via a casual reference in a newspaper column, and I had been intrigued. On my way home from buying groceries, I'd crane my neck to size up dilapidated, whitewashed buildings. I'd wonder, was this the place where Ssali was taken? If not, where is it? What stands there now?



"Amin's Confessions," a satirical pamphlet published in 1979, when the memory of the terror was still fresh. These days, a few apologists argue for a reassessment of Amin's record, and there is even talk of allowing the old dictator to return home from his Saudi Arabian exile.

The question wasn't merely one of morbid curiosity. History is grounded not just in time, but also in place. It is a deep human need to seek out the place where history happened as we search to understand how and why it unfolded as it did. It is this homing instinct that brought medieval pilgrims to Canterbury, where Becket was killed, and which brings their modern counterparts to Auschwitz or Ground Zero. I wanted to understand the why of Idi Amin's Uganda, and I thought the best way to begin would be by reconstructing the where of it—by mapping the physical geography of terror.

This, I quickly discovered, was easier said than done. Uganda has no Amin museum to visit, no death camps to tour. Kampala boasts no monument to Amin's victims. There is no plaque on the High Court building in the center of Kampala to mark the spot where agents from the Bureau of State Research dragged the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Ben Kiwanuka, out of his chambers in broad daylight to be murdered—some say shot by Amin himself. There is no sign along Baker Road, where the country's Anglican archbishop and two cabinet ministers were killed in a "car crash" no one heard or witnessed, or along Buganda Road, to mark the spot where a vice chancellor of Makerere University was kidnapped as he waited to pick up his children from school.

That night on the porch, I asked Allan if he knew where the Public Safety Unit used to be. He said he couldn't quite be certain. "Down there," he said, gesturing into the middle distance. At 24**,** he wasn't alive in 1971 when Amin took power in a coup, and he doesn't remember anything before 1979, the year the dictator was finally overthrown. "Young people now don't know Amin," Uganda's Minister of Internal Affairs Eriya Kategaya, who in his own youth fought the dictatorship as a member of the underground resistance, told me. "And some of them can't believe that we could have a government of that deplorable quality. They don't believe."

This is not the case with Allan—he's interested. But he says his teachers only mentioned Amin cursorily in school. His parents haven't told him much, either: bits and pieces, little stories. His mother was once imprisoned for violating Amin's decree against wearing miniskirts; his father narrowly escaped trouble at a roadblock because he was dark-skinned and so not readily identifiable as a Munyankole, a western tribe that is

stereotypically more brown than black. But, like most people who lived through "Amin's time," as the era is universally referred to here, they don't like talking about the subject.

It's not as if Ugandans have forgotten Amin. How could they? He is the most famous Ugandan who ever lived. In his heyday, tales of the dictator's buffoonery and cruelty captivated the world. Barbet Schroeder made a documentary about him, with background music by Amin himself on the accordion. Writers churned out books with titles like *A State of Blood*, mixing pseudo-history with pseudo-journalism to produce a cartoon African dictator, complete with the ridiculous title (Life President Field Marshal Al-hajji Dr. Idi Amin Dada, VC, DSO, MC, Conqueror of the British Empire), bluff pronouncements (telegram to Richard Nixon: "I am sure that a weak leader would have resigned or even committed suicide after being subjected to so much harassment because of the Watergate affair. I take this opportunity to once again wish you a quick recovery …") and outlandish displays (at a 1975 gathering of African heads of state in Kampala, he had a group of British businessmen carry him around on a litter, and staged a mock invasion of South Africa on an island in Lake Victoria. His planes dropped their bombs harmlessly into the lake; the air force commander was liquidated soon after). Everyone here has heard the lurid (and perhaps even true) tales of how Amin killed and dismembered a wife who'd been cheating on him, how he kept human heads in his freezer, and how he enjoyed eating his victims for dinner.

What's happened, then, is something more subtle than amnesia. The past isn't denied—it's just treated as if it's passed. When the rebel leader Yoweri K. Museveni marched into Kampala in 1986 and named himself president, he called on Ugandans to set aside their old grudges and put a stop to the cycle of killing and reprisal that began with Amin, but continued through a bloody seven-year interregnum after his overthrow. Then he showed that he was as good as his word. He offered amnesties to many of Amin's generals, some of whom had joined guerrilla rebellions. And to the world's surprise, Museveni's forgive-and-forget strategy worked. The generals came home and settled into peaceful lives. Stability came to most of Uganda (though its north is still gripped by a low-intensity civil war) and the country became a much-cited model for other hopeless-case nations.

Ugandans moved on, Kategaya said. "We talk about it," he said. "But it was how many years ago? [Since] '79?"

But are Ugandans really over Amin? Superficially, the forgive-and-forget policy seems to have worked. But the more I talk to people about Amin's time, the more evident it seems that something more complicated is going on. It's as if, having found themselves unable to forgive, Ugandans have concentrated on the forgetting, and that when they've failed at forgetting, they have chosen to believe what they want to believe.

Take the case of this important question: Who was

responsible for the killing? It depends on whom you ask. "It is these northerners who have caused us so much suffering," a former member of parliament who is from a western tribe told me. "Those Nubians," said a northerner, fingering the tribal subgroup Amin belonged to. It was all the doing of Sudanese mercenaries, replied a Nubian who was a high-ranking army officer under Amin. And on it went, each group forever shifting blame outwards, away from themselves, their friends and their tribe, toward those "other people."

It's not that any of these statements are false—Amin was a northerner, he was a Nubian, and many of his intelligence agents were recruited from the Sudan—but that they are used to telling a larger lie, which was that Amin was someone else's fault. The truth is that there was dancing in the streets of Kampala and throughout the country when Amin overthrew Prime Minister Milton Obote in 1971, and that collaboration with the regime was widespread, at least in the early years. "The several thousand full-time agents" of Amin's secret police, writes Uganda-born political scientist Mahmood Mamdani, "plus several times as many part-time informers, came from every nationality and religion of the country, and from both sexes too." But over time history has been rewritten, transmuting an essentially political phenomenon—and government-sponsored terror is nothing if not political—into a purely tribal one.

Eriya Kategaya is an old school chum of Museveni's, and worked surreptitiously to aid the current president's efforts to overthrow Amin's regime. Today, he works under Museveni (pictured above left) as Uganda's first deputy prime minister and internal-affairs chief. He says some people have forgotten about Amin, but thinks this is only natural. "It was how many years ago?" he asks.

Estimates of the number of people killed during Amin's eight-year reign vary from 100,000 to 300,000. But a full count of the victims will probably never be known. Many families are still reluctant—out of reflexive fear of the government, or simple weariness—to report the names of their disappeared relatives. Many bodies were quietly recovered and stealthily buried. Some were never found at all.

Like those bodies, much of the real history of Amin's time remains buried, the subject of whispers and innuendo. "We depend on oral history, which is very unfortunate," said Arthur H. Oder, the earnest, graying Supreme Court justice who chaired the Commission of Inquiry.

I met with Oder in his cluttered chambers in mid-October, after reading his commission's report. It struck me as a lengthy refutation of his own opinion—thousands upon thousands of pages of testimony, recorded for posterity. Oder had testified about his own brush with death: One day in 1977, men from Amin's Bureau of State Research had visited the office where he worked as a government lawyer. There was a general roundup of his tribe, the Langi, going on. But Oder was lucky. He had gone out on an errand. When he returned to his office, he found a note from his secretary written in red ink. "It said, 'Sir, do not go to your home tonight. Some people came looking for you. It is not safe.'" For several days he hid out at friends' houses, sleeping in a bat-ridden attic at one point, before someone figured out a way to smuggle him across the border to Kenya. He left his wife and children behind, and did not return until after Amin's overthrow.

The commission, Oder said, "gave people … the opportunity to speak their mind out. To tell their story." And a government-sponsored Human Rights Commission had grown out of it. Yet when I talked to him, the judge seemed surprisingly downcast. For all his efforts, he believes the lessons of Amin are being forgotten, that the whisperers have won. "If there was written history … then people would know more," he said. "But rather than that, they depend on distortions. Some fabricated."

Not long after I talked to Oder, I happened to see a small article in *The Monitor*, a local newspaper, which starkly illustrated his point. The story described a seminar that had taken place at a teacher-training college in Kampala, where a Makerere University professor had given a lecture lauding Amin's management of the economy, his stands on issues of "morality," and his progressive attitudes towards women. (He named a couple of them ministers.) One of Amin's wives then spoke, making the case for her husband to be allowed to return home from his exile in Saudi Arabia. "She said Amin did so

Justice Arthur H. Oder, in his chambers in Uganda's Supreme Court Building. When Amin came for him, he fled into exile. He returned to lead a commission charged with investigating human rights abuses during the Amin and Obote regimes. Over eight years, his commission compiled thousands of pages of testimony. "Some people actually rewrite history, to invent history," he said. "This failure to recognize what other people did in the past—that is ingrained here."

many good things for Ugandans," according to the article. "She added that no leader is absolutely 100-percent perfect. She said the [Museveni] government shall also be seen to have done negative things when it ends."

Indeed, in recent years, as memories have faded, more and more Ugandans have begun calling for recognition of Amin's "accomplishments." A textbook for university-bound high-school students lists six pages of them: "Amin tried as much as possible to make Islam popular"; "he fought tooth and nail to uplift African culture"; "[crime] subsided when he ordered the army and the public to shoot or stone to death the thieves." One well-educated Ugandan told me recently that he thought Amin's decision to expel Ugandan-born Indians, the young nation's shop-owning class, was a smart move, as it had given the Africans a chance to enter businesses they had been excluded from under colonialism. (In reality, Amin's army cronies looted the businesses, and the economy collapsed.)

Or take the case of the recent spirited debate on the letters page of *The Monitor* about what, precisely, Amin built:

October 31, 2002

Amin did not even have any academic qualifications … [but] he did some remarkable things during his nine-year [sic] rule. …Uganda Cranes [the national soccer team] was the runner-up the 1978 Africa Cup of Nations. … It was then that the International Conference Center was built … His was a result-oriented management which should be commended.

—Obol Sylvester Awach, Gulu.

November 19, 2002

There was a very misleading letter … by one Obol Sylvester that Idi Amin built the Nile Hotel and Conference Centre … The Nile Hotel and Conference Centre was built during the Obote I government, specifically to host the June 1971 OAU [Organization of African Unity] Summit during which Dr. Apollo Milton Obote was to become chairman. He was however overthrown by his best friend Amin in January 1971. …

—Hudson Sembeguya, Kampala.

November 26, 2002

I concur with Obol that Idi Amin built the Nile Hotel and Conference Centre prior to the hosting of the OAU Heads of State Summit in 1975. That year, Amin became chairman of the OAU during the summit, which took place in a new Kampala International Conference Center. …

—Henry Akiiki-Mugisa, Kampala.

The truth is that construction of the hotel complex began under Obote, and that Amin finished building it after he took power. Yet the very fact that such arguments continue—and that Obol's claim about his "result-oriented management" went unchallenged—shows how much has already been forgotten. "They don't write what they know," Oder said. "They just propagate what they have heard, second-hand or third-hand."

Until this year, there had never been a public celebration to mark the date that Tanzanian troops marched into Kampala, sending Amin into exile. "Even some people don't like that," Oder said. "They say, 'Why glorify the overthrow of Amin?'"

Why this lack of commemoration? Many Ugandans fall back on a variation of the throw-up-your-hands answer: This is simply the way things are in Africa. "People in Africa, they've got so many immediate problems," said Charles Kabagambe, whose father was killed by Amin's men in 1972. "They don't know why they should bother with someone who's been dead for a long time."

There is clearly more to it than culture or economics, though. In neighboring Rwanda, smaller and poorer than Uganda, the countryside is dotted with memorials to those killed in its 1994 genocide, and a strange sort of necrotourism industry has developed in the places where the worst atrocities occurred. To be sure, these memorials commemorate a tragedy of a different scale than Uganda's, and are the product of the most un-

impeachable of human sentiments. But they also serve the political agenda of its Tutsi-dominated government, which came to power by defeating the genocide's Hutu perpetrators in a civil war.

In Uganda, the politics are different. Today, one of Amin's top henchmen, Brigadier Moses Ali, is one of the most powerful ministers in Museveni's cabinet. Others occupy similar positions of prominence. And there has even been intermittent talk that Amin's wife might get her wish, and that the old dictator himself might one day return from his exile in Saudi Arabia—if only to be buried.

If there were parades and memorials celebrating Amin's overthrow, if there were a widespread debate about his crimes, life might suddenly become a lot more uncomfortable for Amin's former supporters, and the fragile balance of forgive and forget might be upset.

"That's the problem—history is what somebody in power sees now," Oder said. "Not what he *did*. Not what anyone else *did*."

* * *

So what did Amin really do? Part of the answer can be found at the library of Uganda's Human Rights Commission. Amin the man may have possessed a certain cinematic flair, but wading through the heavy tomes of testimony, you can't help but be struck by how banal the mechanics of his evil were. People were killed because they made a joke to the wrong person, or because they lent money to the wrong person, or just because the wrong person happened to stop them at a roadblock, and happened to be drunk and cranky, and happened to like the car they were driving. Onesimus Nshekanabo, a hotel manager in the town of Tororo, was arrested after he had the temerity to present a Lieutenant Colonel with a bill for his drinks. So was a local government official who stood up for him. Their bodies were found floating in a nearby river two weeks later. Ben Ochan, a popular newscaster, was taken from a bar on Kampala Road, where he was having a drink with a girlfriend. When people wondered why, they remembered that once, as a young heavyweight, he had floored Amin in a boxing match.

Still, to me, an outsider, these events might as well have happened in some fairytale dimension—a time devoid of place. What I needed was someone who knew Amin's Kampala, who could show me around. And I wanted to begin by locating the Naguru Public Safety Unit, the torture chamber next door.

Finding a guide wasn't easy. I started by looking for an organization that represents Amin's victims and their families; I discovered that none exists. I stopped by the office of the Human Rights Commission's public relations officer. He handed me a small booklet about the Amin regime's abuses and explained, very politely, that the commission concentrates on more recent matters. I asked Oder to help me find a survivor who might be able to show me around. He said he'd try, but didn't sound terribly optimistic; Amin didn't leave behind a lot of eyewitnesses. We traded phone calls for more than a month. Then, finally, he called back with a name: Michael Okwalinga.

Okwalinga was a cop, the former head of the police department's homicide division. In the mid-1980s, he was assigned to be the lead investigator for Oder's Committee of Inquiry. He had revived cold cases, dug up old evidence, and convinced reluctant witnesses to appear. When the committee finally issued his report in 1994, he had decided he liked his work, and eventually got himself detailed to the Human Rights Commission. Today, he travels the country investigating atrocities. He keeps busy.

Okwalinga was willing to take me to Naguru, so one morning I picked him up from the Human Rights Commission's offices in downtown Kampala, and drove the familiar route back toward my home. My guide was tall and balding, and he spoke about the killings with a cop's deadpan, unsentimental affect. "Ugandans have

Michael Okwalinga, outside the old headquarters of the Public Safety Unit, in Naguru. Prisoners there were routinely whipped and tortured. When it came time to kill them, hammers were often used. "There was a staff," he said. "There were special people who knew what to do, where to beat."

passed through hardship," he told me as we went. "Regimes and … you know."

Okwalinga joined the police force in 1970, right out of high school. It was a tumultuous time in Uganda. Milton Obote, the pipe-smoking, hard-drinking prime minister who had led the young nation to independence, had by this time alienated much of the country. Obote had imprisoned opposition politicians, had sent the army (under Amin's command) to roust the *kabaka*, the king of the powerful Baganda tribe, from his palace in Kampala. Indian shopkeepers felt threatened by his move to nationalize industries and move the country towards socialism. Ordinary citizens lived in terror of a wave of violent crime, or *kondoism*, which was sweeping the country.

More and more, Obote had come to rely on the army, which was filled with his fellow northerners, and particularly members of his Langi tribe and the Acholi tribe, which is closely related. But then the army turned on him: In January, 1971, while Obote was off at a conference in Singapore, Amin staged his coup.

Like Amin himself, the place where we were going had originally been a popular innovation. Amin set up the Public Safety Unit shortly after taking power, at a time when the general was still wooing the populace; opposition politicians were being given cabinet jobs, and there was talk of free elections. Amin had promised, too, to put a stop to *kondoism*. So the Public Safety Unit's officers were instructed not to bother with legal niceties like arrests and trials. Criminals were to be shot on sight. Not surprisingly, the robberies subsided, and Kampalans applauded.

This was Amin's pattern—he went after popular targets first. And many Ugandans obliged him by looking the other way. In the first few months after the coup the political killings were concentrated in the army, among Langi and Acholi soldiers, Obote's power base. "Then Amin consolidated his powers" Oder told me. "People became scared. They started hunting. First of all it was Langi and Acholi, but later on it spread. Anybody they suspected." Indian shop-owners were kicked out of the country. Opposition politicians began disappearing. Under Ali Towili's direction, the Public Safety Unit broadened its focus from criminals to all enemies of the regime—real, suspected or imagined.

A little short of the road to my house, Okwalinga told me to turn. We ringed around the foot of the hill, and came to a sign for a police post. Okwalinga told me to pull in. I stopped alongside a row of weathered-yellow, slate-roofed buildings.

"This is Naguru," Okwalinga said. "Where Public Safety Unit used to be."

The notorious Public Safety Unit, it turned out, hadn't been torn down, or abandoned like some old haunted house. It had simply changed its name, and remained a police station. Okwalinga got out of the car and ran into the headquarters building, looking for permission to proceed from the commandant. I looked around as I waited. A few uniformed officers were lingering near the car, staring quizzically at me. Off to the left, a group was loudly cheering a game of dice. The station doubles as a barracks, where the officers live with their families, and children were playing all along the dusty road.

After a few minutes Okwalinga returned to the car in the company of a round, mustachioed, uniformed man, who introduced himself as Staff Officer Collins Komakech. He directed me to drive down the road in front of us, past the round, sheet-metal shacks and mud huts where the officers live. We turned a corner, and reached a squat, orange-brick building, ringed by a barbed-wire fence. I drove in the gate, and we got out. This was the stockade where Joseph Ssali was taken.

We walked past a group of officers playing Scrabble at a table, and into the stockade. The cells ran along the outside of the building, their barred doors looking into a concrete courtyard. More barbed wire ringed the top of the walls. The whole place was perhaps 60 feet by 90 feet.

"These were the cells," Okwalinga said. "People were arrested, brought in, tortured. Some were killed."

I stepped over a concrete rain-gutter, toward the door of one of the old cells. I peeked in. A target-practice poster—a white man with a moustache and a 70s haircut, menacingly brandishing a pistol—hung directly in front of me. Off to the right were racks stacked with machine guns. "Currently we use it as our storage," Komakech said.

We walked back outside, into the grassy yard. Okwalinga and I stood in the spot where Ali Towili had pointed his gun at Joseph Ssali, and promised to come back and kill him. As we talked, a group of children slipped through a gap in the fence and came to gawk at us.

Okwalinga told me that, a year or so after he joined the police force, he had attended a training program at a police school in Naguru, not far from the camp. He never saw the building—it was a restricted area—but he could tell what was going on. "You could hear people crying, being tortured," he said. "New arrivals, you really hear them making noise."

"This was well known," Komakech said.

"When you come here … mmmmmm," Okwalinga said.

"It was your luck to go back alive," Komakech said.

"It was very rare," Okwalinga said.

Somehow, Joseph Ssali didn't die. Ali Towili never

came back to kill him, as he had promised. Ssali was merely imprisoned and tortured, beaten so badly he once lost consciousness for three days. Every night, he would recall, the soldiers would come to the cells singing, "Who wants to go away today?" If there were no volunteers, the soldiers would pick out two or three prisoners to kill. Amin himself paraded Ssali before the press as a "corrupt police officer" at a ceremony where he announced promotions for his tormentors.

Then, after a month or so, Ssali was released, for reasons no less mystifying to him than why he was arrested in the first place. That was the thing about Amin's terror. It was arbitrary. There didn't have to be a reason why.

Abdul Abdallah Nasur and his grandson, Aljabu, in the garden outside Nasur's home. He said the entire time he was on death row, he never lost hope. "There was nothing to do but put myself in the hands of God."

"Me, I used to compare Amin with a leopard," Okwalinga said. "You know, with a leopard, if it is on a tree, and you are passing under that tree, the only thing you do, don't let your eyes meet with it. If the eyes meet, it will take for granted that you have seen it, and it will come rushing down to scratch the meat from the back of your head. ... That's how it kills."

* * *

Abdul Abdallah Nasur, 59, flipped through his album of black-and-white photos with the giddy enthusiasm of an older man remembering the best days of his life.

"You see this one? That's the president of Somalia, General Siad Barre," Nasur said. The president was greeting a young Nasur. The pictures were taken on a trip to Mogadishu, where Nasur had traveled for a soccer tournament in his capacity as chairman of the National Council on Sports.

He turned the page: Same trip, an outside scene. Nasur was walking down the street, wearing dark sunglasses and the type of open-necked suit favored by a certain brand of African dictator. He looked so young: thick but not yet fat, flush with the confidence of youthful success. He was waving to the people lining the street. "I'm here," he said, pointing to his younger self, "walking through the jubilation."

I had come to Nasur's house in Bombo, a small town outside of Kampala, to talk to him about his boss, Idi Amin. It had been a spur-of-the-moment thing. Earlier that day, I had been reading the collected diaries of Peter Allen, a British expatriate who served as a judge during Amin's regime, and had come across an entry from 1977:

The military governor of Central Province, which includes the City of Kampala, is a certain Major Nasur. As an army private he was promoted to sergeant when he was appointed football coach. He is uneducated, vain, conceited, immensely arrogant and has become fat, which is regarded here as an outward and visible sign of accumulated wealth and power. He is also an inveterate meddler and, since he became Governor and realized what power he had or could seize for himself, he has established a reputation for arbitrary and often extremely unpleasant behavior with the civilian public; most especially with those who have the misfortune to displease him in any way.

I remembered I had seen an article in the paper some time back about Nasur. I looked it up. The headline read "One Year Later," and the article told how Nasur, recently pardoned and released from prison by President Museveni, had settled into life outside. The article described the location of Nasur's house, so I drove to Bombo, and, with some trepidation, knocked on his door. Nasur answered it himself, carrying his infant grandson, Aljabu. His still-ample belly flowed out from under his yellow, smiley-face t-shirt, and over the top of the plaid *kikoyi*—a kind of wraparound skirt favored by some Muslim men—he had knotted about his waist. He smiled and invited me into his turquoise-painted living room.

Maybe the years had mellowed Nasur, maybe Allen didn't know what he was talking about. ("Allen was the best friend of Amin," Nasur told me when I mentioned

the writer's account of his behavior. "Maybe now he's turning.") But Nasur turned out to be a friendly, garrulous fellow. He laughed a lot, and cuddled his grandchild.

It was only when I tried to move to the topic of his tenure as governor that I saw a flash of something darker. I asked him what kind of policies he had initiated. His eyes narrowed.

"What policies?" he asked. I told him that, for instance, I heard that he had banned the wearing of flip-flops in the city, and had forced those caught wearing them to eat them.

"This is just rumors," he said. And before I could go on, he yelled to his wife to bring in the photo album.

Now he turned the page again. This picture showed him, sunglasses on, laying his hand upon the forehead of a young girl, like a faith healer. "Those are orphans," he said.

Nasur joined the army in 1964. He had roughly a high-school education, and he was from West Nile province, like Amin. He had risen quickly through the army. As Allen wrote, he owed his rise to his success in sports. Amin was a former boxer, and he dreamed of building Uganda into an athletic powerhouse. "He used to come in to practice, during boxing, football, rugby," Nasur said.

"Amin was friendly to everyone, including the British and Americans," he said.

Indeed, at first, Amin was enormously popular in the army. "The soldiers were happy for him," said retired Lieutenant Colonel A.M. Tabu, who served as an officer in Amin's army, and now works in Uganda's Ministry of Internal Affairs. "Even up to today, [some] are crying for him."

The general had one major problem, though: the Acholi and Langi officers who had been promoted by Obote. Immediately after the coup, barracks massacres began. "This coup, the Baganda went out and said it was a 'bloodless coup' and so on, and the British took it up," said Justice Oder, who himself is a Langi. "You wonder why people parade lies like that. It's just sickening. A lot of people were killed. People were slaughtered."

In February 1971, for instance, a group of Amin's elite soldiers arrived at the barracks in Moroto, a garrison town in the wild northeast. According to witnesses, the roll was called, and Acholi and Langi soldiers were told to move to one side. Then they were forced to board trucks. Villagers would later tell Oder's commission about seeing the trucks pass through town, full of dead bodies. Moses Ali, now a government minister, was the commander of the operation. He testified that he didn't accompany his troops to the barracks, and that "nobody told me about the killing of anybody."

"You didn't ask if someone you knew wasn't there," Tabu said. People would just euphemistically say the missing person had gone to "Singapore," like Obote, off to his conference. "Singapore meant someone had gone out. Nobody would ask much about him."

As time went on, Amin's grip on the army would weaken, and there would be coup tries and assassination attempts. These led to ruthless purges, and serving in the army became scarcely less dangerous than being a civilian.

Tabu told me a story about the kind of paranoid place it became: Once, as young cadet, his personnel file had disappeared just as Amin himself was due to commission Tabu as an officer. In Amin's army, even such an everyday mishap could be taken as a menacing signal. Tabu became convinced that someone was out to get him. He thought about fleeing the country, but eventually decided to hide out at his brother-in-law's house until the matter sorted itself out. "My fear was, how could they misplace those?" he said. "Definitely, something was wrong. Someone wanted to get rid of me."

Nasur remembered things differently. "When Amin called me, I could not be scared," he told me. "He was the commander-in-chief, and he was the president. Also, he was interested in football. So how could I be scared?"

Amin was friendly and beloved, he said, someone who could ride the streets of Entebbe on a bicycle without fear. This is true—Amin could be engaging and forgiving when he wanted to—but, quickly and unpredictably, his mood could change to brutally menacing. When I asked Nasur about this other side of Amin, however, he said he had no idea what I was talking about.

"No. I have been with Amin," he said. "I used to drive Amin around in a car. He was friendly to everyone."

Nasur prospered under Amin. But then, in late 1978, the president finally overplayed his hand. He invaded Tanzania, setting off a war that would culminate in his being overthrown by an invading army of Tanzanians and Ugandan exiles. (Milton Obote would eventually end up becoming president again.) Nasur fled to Kenya, where he was apprehended and sent back to Uganda. He ended up in jail, accused of murder.

Gingerly, I tried to ask him who, exactly, he had been accused of murdering. He yelled to his wife again. I prepared for another batch of golden memories, but instead, she returned with a dog-eared file folder.

"I want you to see some documents," he said. He put on a thick pair of reading glasses. The first piece of paper he handed me was a Xeroxed newspaper story from 1991. It told how the son of one Francis Mary Jo-

seph Walugembe, the former mayor of Masaka, had admitted he had lied when he said he witnessed Nasur killing his father. Nasur had been imprisoned in 1979, and sentenced to death in 1982, for the crime. "For 22 years—it was this thing," he said.

Then he handed me another sheaf of papers. These were affidavits written by other witnesses to the killing. I read through them, and got a rough idea of what happened. On September 21, 1972, shortly after an aborted invasion of the country by rebels based in Tanzania, Walugembe was picked up by a group of soldiers led by one Ali Nyege. He was paraded around town and taken to the army barracks, where Nasur was then the commander.

It has been almost 24 years since Idi Amin fell. Yet bits of his legacy can be found all over Uganda. Here, an armored personnel carrier sits rusting by the side of the road between Kampala and Masaka. When the Tanzanian army invaded in 1979, Amin's troops retreated in terror, leaving behind large portions of the dictator's massive, Soviet-supplied arsenal.

"Francis Walugembe was taken out of the army jeep," one witness wrote. "He was ordered to sit down and he did. Ali Nyege advised Walugembe to say his last prayers to his God and added: You are going to die now. Walugembe then said to Ali Nyege: 'Take me to the president. If not that, call Nasur.'" Nyege stabbed him in the stomach. "Walugembe endeavored to rise up, but Ali Nyege stabbed him again, this time in the throat, and slit it. … Holding the knife, Ali Nyege licked the blood [off], then cleaned the knife on the grass." Shortly afterwards, the witness testified, Nasur pulled up in his Fiat and talked to Nyege. The witness did not hear what they said to one another.

Nasur sat back as I read, wearing a look of satisfaction. This witness placed you at the scene of the crime, I said. "After the death!" he replied. "I just found them when people were leaving."

Nasur walked out of Kampala's Luzira Prison on September 11, 2001, a date that would become famous for other reasons. Some suspected there were political motivations behind Museveni's pardon—Nasur has since become a vociferous supporter of the President's ruling "Movement"—but the pardoned man himself dismissed any such implication: "What, you don't believe the president can have mercy?"

Indeed, under Museveni, mercy has been the order of the day. There have been isolated prosecutions of the more odious of Amin's henchmen, but nothing like what is happening in, say, Rwanda, where two separate tribunals have been set up to try the alleged perpetrators of the 1994 genocide. Oder's commission passed the files of many cases it investigated on to the police to follow up. But Okwalinga told me not a single implicated person, to his recollection, had ever been prosecuted.

The investigation of Moses Ali's role in the Moroto massacre never went anywhere. "Of course it didn't," Oder said. "For political expediency."

What it came down to, Oder said, was simple calculation on the government's part. "There is a dilemma" he said. "You can pursue justice at the cost of perpetuating conflict. Or you can pursue peace by excusing some of the things that happened. Although atrocities should never be condoned. We expressed this dilemma and said that when it is weighed, when you put it on a scale and balance it, you see that there is a case for prosecuting the main culprits. To serve different purposes. One, to satisfy those who were wronged. Two, to maybe be a deterrent for the future, so that people know that if they do such things they will not get away with it with impunity."

The government pondered this same dilemma, and chose not to disturb the peace.

Once he became a free man again, Nasur resettled in Bombo. He put a new roof on his house—the old one was looted in 1979—and furnished it with wooden furniture made by his former fellow prisoners. He bought three cars. (He denies rumors he has been given financial support by the government.) He seems to be a happy man. Of his three wives, only one remains: One died while he was in prison and another left through divorce. But

he says he has more kids than he can count, and his yard is always filled with frolicking grandchildren.

In his living room, he has a wooden plaque, made by another Luzira prisoner. "Long Live His Excell YK Museveni," the painted inscription reads, in part, "who rescued U from the hot cave."

"Amin loved me so much," Nasur said as I was leaving. "Museveni also loves me so much."

* * *

Follow any road out of Kampala, and after about 15 minutes you come to a place where the unruly sprawl of the city dissipates, giving way to banana groves and verdant rolling hills. Okwalinga and I had just reached this border between urban Africa and postcard Africa, when he told me to stop the car. We had reached the spot where the journey ended for many of Amin's victims.

"All of this was the forest," he said. "Before they cut the trees." I pulled the car over, across a street from the Coca-Cola bottling factory. Our side of the road was covered with tall weeds and small gardens. Yellow birds flitted among the scrubby trees and wildflowers. We got out and walked up a dirt track covered with puddles, into the former forest. A barefoot woman passed us, a large sack balanced on her head and a child tied to her back.

"This was Namanve," Okwalinga said. "It was a completely thick forest. It was easy to throw dead bodies there."

It was a routine: In the morning, Amin's men would come driving trucks full of corpses. And in the afternoon, the families of the disappeared would come to try to recover their dead. "The people nearby would say they saw a vehicle dumping dead bodies here," Okwalinga said.

"Some cases weren't even reported," he said. "A body is found in Namanve or is found floating in Lake Victoria. Or is found floating along the River Nile. You just pick your person, go and bury, and keep quiet."

And those who found bodies were considered the lucky ones. The unlucky families never found anything, and were left to wonder in silence: Whatever happened?

Charles Kabagambe was an unlucky one. In 1972 his father, Peter, a county chief in the far west of Uganda, was picked up from his home. He was taken to the army barracks in Mbarara, a western town, and held for several days. Then someone interceded on his behalf, and he was released. He went and stayed with another son, a businessman in town, for a few days, then went home. Soon after, soldiers picked him up a second time. This time, he didn't return, and his body was never found.

Charles Kabagambe was teaching law in Kampala at the time it happened. Later on, he discovered the reason his father had been taken. Someone had accused him of plotting to help the rebels who had invaded from Tanza-

Namanve was once a thick forest, a place where Amin's men would dump dead bodies. Today, the trees are gone and a billboard for Coca-Cola is the only landmark around. (There's a bottling factory across the street.) The government plans to develop the area as an industrial park someday.

nia, holding meetings at his house. Kabagambe knew what the meetings were really about: his sister's wedding to a prominent doctor in Kampala.

One evening, not long after I visited Namanve Forest, Kabagambe told me what happened afterwards. "Our father's death had an effect on everyone, although we never discuss it," he said. His father had 12 children. Those who could flee, did. One night, his sister and her husband, the doctor, loaded their things into a car and drove off to Tanzania. But Kabagambe stayed behind for a while. It was hard. "When your father was killed during Amin's time, if you ran away, you would find that people were sympathetic to you," he said. Inside Uganda, it hardly made you special. "So many people were dying."

A tall, lanky man of 57, Kabagambe talked with an emotional frankness I hadn't seen often in Uganda. Perhaps speaking about his father's death had a cathartic effect, or perhaps it was an openness he had learned at Alcoholics Anonymous, which he said had helped him overcome a drinking problem. "I used to think about what happened every day," he said. "Even if I was talking, even if I was drinking, even if I was making love to a woman."

People began to avoid him as if he was bad luck. "Even people who used to be friends were scared of being with you," he said. For his younger siblings who were still in school, it was even more difficult. "The other children would laugh at them," he said. They began failing tests, and the family, deprived of its principal breadwinner, found it difficult to continue paying their tuition.

"You could not build a house. You could not buy a good car. If you had a beautiful wife, and you go to a bar and a soldier sees her, she could be taken from you." He quit his job at the law school. "I didn't see how I could teach law anymore, when my father could be disappeared, killed," he said.

He began to drink heavily. "We used to go to the Rugby Club," he said. "We used to drink until morning." This was not just because his friends were drunks. Amin's men prowled the streets at night. "We feared if we went home, we might be picked up at the gate. …

Charles Kabagambe, outside the Pearl Restaurant in Kampala. "I know my family is a dysfunctional family because of what happened to our father," he said.

"And it was not only me," he said. "Many people died of drink." His older brother Dennis was also a drinker. He fled the country and settled in Botswana. One night, he and some friends got together to celebrate Ugandan Independence Day. He had a few too many. On his way home, he crashed his car and died.

Kabagambe's sister and the doctor eventually divorced. The doctor filed papers in court saying she had never been the same person after her father's death.

Before his mother died, Kabagambe sometimes used to talk with her about his father's disappearance. "It would be in a kind of secretive way," he said, always in low, conspiratorial tones, as if what had happened was shameful or dangerous. "There are some people, something that hurts you so much, you want to keep it away," he said. "There's something artificial about it. You pretend it didn't happen."

Kabagambe leaned forward across the restaurant table. "For me, maybe because it happened when I was a lawyer, I'm interested in doing something about it," he said. He calls his idea the Public Law Resource Center. Right now, the center exists only on a business card, but if he gets some money together, he thinks he can create something unique in Uganda: a private organization to advocate and litigate for those who suffered from the human-rights abuses of the past. He talks about compensation and reparations. "I want to devote the rest of my life to this thing, when I get the money," he said.

"I always hear on the BBC that in South America, Argentina, the people rise up … The Jews. They have written down everyone who died and where," he said. "If there are so many people like my father, who disappeared, their bodies never found … we should get together to talk about it."

I asked Kabagambe what his family thought about the project. He said most of his siblings still live abroad, and seldom come back to Uganda.

"Not all of them are interested. Maybe they think it is a waste of time," he said. "With us, we never talked about it, the way I talked with you."

* * *

Okwalinga told me at the outset that there were a few places we couldn't go on our tour. The Makindye military barracks for one, where the notorious prison known as "Singapore" was located. Those cells are still in use: Nowadays, suspects rounded up in a government anti-crime offensive known as "Operation Wembley" oc-

The Nile Hotel. The men from the Bureau of State Research liked to live there, Okwalinga said. Even after the Tanzanian invasion restored Milton Obote to power, the hotel continued to be used for torture. Oder's commission found that one unfortunate man was imprisoned on a hotel-room balcony for almost a year by Obote's security agency, NASA.

cupy them. Critics say Wembley bears more than a passing resemblance to the old Public Safety Unit: Alleged robbers are often shot on the street or while "trying to escape" from prison. At a recent press conference held by a human-rights group, one former detainee described being tortured for days in a government safe house codenamed "Liverpool." (Uganda's soldiers are big fans of the English soccer league.) He had been accused of stealing a doorknob.

The most feared place in Amin's Uganda, the old Bureau of State Research building, was off-limits too. All we could do is steal a glimpse of it over the wall of the presidential complex as we drove by. Today the building is the headquarters of President Museveni's Internal Security Organization. No one in Uganda is quite certain about what now goes on inside those old cells.

It is not uncommon these days to hear Ugandans say Museveni is "worse than Amin" when it comes to human rights. This is absurd. The very fact that people here can say such things in public without being stuffed in an automobile trunk proves things have changed immensely for the better in Uganda over the past 16 years. But the frequency of the comparison shows just how much the collective memory of the terror is fading from the public consciousness—even as the reports of alleged abuses suggest the government has forgotten something, too.

The Nile Hotel isn't far from the old Bureau of State Research building, so Okwalinga and I drove down there to have a drink and talk some more. We walked across the vast, grassy grounds, and sat down at an outside table, in the shadow of the pristine white building. All around us workers were busily sprucing things up in preparation for the arrival of Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi, who was to pay a state visit to Uganda the next day.

Okwalinga had brought me here because this, he said, was where Amin's story began. The dictator claimed he was born in a police barracks that once stood on the site, where his father was stationed. This is just one of several accounts of Amin's birth. But what is undisputed is that he grew up and joined the colonial army, the only means of advancement for a northerner in those days. (The British had the notion that Nubians were a "martial people.") He fought in Burma during WWII, and was singled out as a promising young soldier, beginning a rise through the ranks that would culminate in the coup.

"Amin was produced in this place, Nile Hotel," Okwalinga said. "So he wanted to build something for remembrance of where he was born." The hotel, once he'd finished it, became the place where he would *fete* visiting heads of state, and was the scene of many of his audacious shows of self-importance. It was also where many of the top agents in his Bureau of State Research preferred to live. It was convenient to work: A few rooms—Room 305, Room 311, Room 320, Room 326—doubled as torture chambers.

Of all of Amin's instruments of terror, State Research was the most feared. The men weren't secret police—quite the contrary. Everyone knew who they were. "These

people were identical," Okwalinga said. They wore bellbottoms and sunglasses; many of them bore scars on their cheeks from a Nubian coming-of-age rite. "They were well armed, and arrogant," he said.

Okwalinga was a police officer, and he saw the signs of what was going on: the unmarked cars that cruised the streets; the bodies that washed up on the shores of Lake Victoria. "It was a very difficult situation," he said. "Because you feel that if you investigate a case involving one of these [terror] organizations, you risk your life. You can be kidnapped, and you can be killed. So when they appoint their investigation team for a particular case you don't need to dig a lot."

As he sipped his soda, Okwalinga told me about his own run-in with Amin's men. He had come to Kampala for a training course, and there was a guy from the Bureau of State Research in his class. Needless to say, the State Research guy wasn't too concerned about his grade. "He just wrote his name there and sent the paper to the front," Okwalinga said. One day, the State Research guy was joking around about the class with some of the cops, and Okwalinga made a little crack—what are you worried about passing for?

That was dumb. "He got annoyed and pulled a pistol out of his briefcase. He kept me at gunpoint." Okwalinga said. "I went and covered myself with a sheet. I said, 'You just shoot me where you want.'" Okwalinga's friends pleaded with the guy, and eventually he put the gun away. But he told Okwalinga he would be coming for him one day soon. Fortunately, fate intervened, and Amin was overthrown before he had the chance.

Okwalinga can now laugh about what happened. But he realizes he got off easy. Looking out across the lawn, he told me one more story about the Nile Hotel. One day in February, 1977, a bulletin went out over the radio summoning all soldiers and police officers above a certain rank to Kampala. About 3,000 of them, including Okwalinga, gathered at the hotel, where they were shown an immense arsenal of rifles, machine guns and bazookas. "The arms were put from here up to there," he said, waving his arm across the lawn where today traditional dancers entertain the tourists on Sunday evenings.

"The president came," Okwalinga recalled. "He was very annoyed." Amin claimed that some people in the audience had been plotting his overthrow, and that the arms had been recovered from the home of one of them: Archbishop Janani Luwum. Two government ministers were accused of being in on the plan. "So they were escorted and put in a car."

Okwalinga didn't see what actually happened next, but James Kahigiriza did. Then the chairman of the Lands Commission, Kahigiriza had been whisked from his office by shades-wearing security men earlier that day, for reasons he's still unsure of. He was taken to a prison in the basement of the Bureau of State Research, on the grounds of the presidential lodge in Kampala. (Amin had a secret tunnel that went there from his house.) The cell was a narrow corridor; the handcuffed prisoners were jammed in so tightly that their knees touched.

"The place was very dark," Kahigiriza, now 81, told me. "We couldn't even tell what time it was of the day." No one was talking. "Nobody asked you your name. Once you were locked in there, that was the end of it."

After a while, the cell door opened, and the two ministers were pushed in. The other prisoners were told to move to another cell, across the hall. Archbishop Luwum, dressed in a gray pants and a clerical collar, was led inside as they filed out. "A certain young guard, a Muslim, tried to ask him 'Who are you? Who are you?'" Kahigiriza said. "He said, 'I'm the archbishop of Uganda.' Then this young man slapped him hard. … [Luwum] told these people, 'You beat me because you have power.'"

Across the hall, Kahigiriza and his fellow prisoners were offered a rare meal. But they refused to eat, in protest against the treatment of the archbishop. "When they removed the plates, they told us, 'You think you are big people. You'll see.'" The prisoners were led back into the cell.

Later, a guard came in and gave the archbishop his robes, and told him to put them on. And a little after that, he came back and called the archbishop and two ministers to go. Kahigiriza, who assumed they were being released, tried to fall in behind them. "Then suddenly the guard told me: 'First of all, you wait,'" he recalled. "I got a bit annoyed at that time. I thought they were being released. I didn't know that was the end of their lives." Later that night, he said, a guard came down and shouted to the prisoners, in Swahili, "I am a hyena." To Kahigiriza and his cellmates, his meaning was clear: "What does a hyena do? It eats people. He came to tell us they were killed."

Soon afterwards a somber announcement went out over Radio Uganda: Archbishop Luwum and the two ministers had perished in a car accident along sleepy Baker Road, as they attempted to overwhelm the driver of their car and escape. "Everybody wondered how," Okwalinga said. "Which kind of accident was that? The road was not busy. There was no traffic there.

"Later on we learned that they were shot and killed at Makindye."

* * *

It was late afternoon, and Okwalinga and I had decided to make one last stop on our tour: Makerere Nursing Home. The name itself had interested me; it seemed to be a particularly devilish distortion of the truth. Okwalinga wasn't exactly sure what the place was now,

but he said he'd know it when he saw it.

On the way over, he told me about the nursing home. It functioned, he said, as a sort of branch office of the Bureau of State Research, convenient to the university. "Most of the activities, anti-government, started from this institution of higher education," he said. We saw a sign reading "Makerere Clinic," and he told me to stop. This was it, he said. Then he went and talked to a nurse sitting out front. Wrong place, she said.

"I know now where it is," Okwalinga said, when he returned to the car. "I know it very well. I know it very well, where it is now. Let's go."

We drove around the university, turned at a traffic light, passed the men selling grasshoppers. ("Fry them in a little bit of cooking oil," Okwalinga said. "Very, very nutritious. And they are better than white ants.") We stopped again. He looked confused. "We better ask some people," he said. "I will find out."

A few minutes later, he got back in the car. "Maybe it has changed its name," he said, shaking his head. We drove along, and stopped again, and picked up a young man who was welding a steel gate by the side of the road and said he knew the place. He didn't. We dropped him back off.

"*Maker-ere Nur-sing Home*," Okwalinga said to himself, rolling the words off his tongue. "Let's go this way."

I followed Okwalinga's directions, and we pulled up in front of another medical clinic. He disappeared for a good 15 minutes, and then reappeared. A nurse had given him a lead, another hospital back the way we came. I didn't really care about finding the place anymore, but it was clearly becoming a point of professional pride for Okwalinga. "I have to use all my tactics of investigations to get to Makerere Nursing Home," he said.

Outside the university, we stopped again. Okwalinga disappeared inside the gates. This time I followed him. He walked into the carpentry shop, where apparently he knew someone. He explained what we were looking for to his friend, a short man with large thick glasses. "And let me help you—it used to be a place for State Research." The man's face twitched a little. Then he furrowed his brow. He consulted with the others sitting around the shop. They arrived at a conclusion. "If you say it's for the army, it is the one," he said.

We drove to the place his friend told us about. It was a dingy yellow building now, apparently, an army hospital. Okwalinga flashed his badge and we went inside, looking for confirmation that this place was, in fact, once called Makerere Nursing Home. We made our way through a warren of hallways, until we found a camouflage-clad soldier who seemed to be in charge. "I don't know," he said, referring us to his commandant, who worked at an army base across town.

Okwalinga and I agreed that absolute confirmation wasn't worth the drive. Earlier, as we had been driving around looking for the place, he had suddenly said to me: "How happy that people don't know the place!"

Now he looked back over his shoulder.

"But this is it." ❑

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Fellows and their Activities

Alexander Brenner (June 2002 - 2004) • **EAST ASIA**
A linguist who has worked as an French-language instructor with the Rassias Foundation at Dartmouth College and also has proficient Mandarin and Spanish, upper-intermediate Italian, conversational German and Portuguese, and beginning Cantonese, Alex received a B.A. in History from Yale in 1998 and has just completed a Master's degree in China Studies and International Economics at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. He is prepariing for his two-year ICWA fellowship in China with four months of intensive Mandarin-language study in Beijing. His fellowship will focus on the impact of a new government and a new membership in the World Trade Organization on Chinese citizens, institutions and regions both inside and far from the capital.

Martha Farmelo (April 2001- 2003) • **ARGENTINA**
A Georgetown graduate (major: psychology; minor, Spanish) with a Master's in Public Affairs from the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton, Martha is the Institute's Suzanne Ecke McColl Fellow studying gender issues in Argentina. Married to an Argentine economist and mother of a small son, she will be focusing on both genders, which is immensely important in a land of Italo/Latino machismo. Martha has been involved with Latin America all her professional life, having worked with Catholic Relief Services and the Inter-American Development Bank in Costa Rica, with Human Rights Watch in Ecuador and the Inter-American Foundation in El Salvador, Uruguay and at the UN World Conference on Women in Beijing.

Andrew Rice (May 2002 - 2004) • **UGANDA**
A former staff writer for the *New York Observer* and a reporter for the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and the Washington Bureau of *Newsday*, Andrew will be spending two years in Uganda, watching, waiting and reporting the possibility that the much-anticipated "African Renaissance" might begin with the administration of President Yoweri Museveni. Andrew won a B.A. in Government from Georgetown (minor: Theology) in 1997 after having spent a semester at Charles University in Prague, where he served as an intern for *Velvet* magazine and later traveled, experienced and wrote about the conflict in the Balkans.

Matthew Z. Wheeler (October 2002-2004) • **SOUTHEAST ASIA**
A former research assistant for the Rand Corporation specializing in South and Southeast Asia, Matt will spend two years looking into proposals, plans and realities of regional integration (and disintegration) along the Mekong River, from China to the sea at Vietnam. With a B.A. in liberal arts from Sarah Lawrence and an M.A. from Harvard in East Asian studies (as well as a year-long Blakemore Fellowship in Thai language studies) Matt will have to take long- and short-term conflicts in Burma, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia into account as he lives, writes and learns about the region.

James G. Workman (January 2002 - 2004) • **SOUTHERN AFRICA**
A policy strategist on national restoration initiatives for Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt from 1998 to 2000, Jamie is an ICWA Donors' Fellow looking at southern African nations (South Africa, Botswana, Mozambique, Zambia and, maybe, Zimbabwe) through their utilization and conservation of fresh-water supplies. A Yale graduate (History; 1990) who spent his junior year at Oxford, Jamie won a journalism fellowship at the Poynter Institute for Media Studies and wrote for the *New Republic* and *Washington Business Journal* before his years with Babbitt. Since then he has served as a Senior Advisor for the World Commission on Dams in Cape Town, South Africa.

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