

A Trip to Rwanda

General Eisenhower was going to visit his troops in Rwanda. (It might have been Borneo. It might have been General MacArthur. The names meant little to me then.)

The governor wanted all the native women to stand by the side of the dirt road and cheer and wave to welcome Eisenhower as he drove by in his jeep. The only problem was that the native women never wore any clothes other than a necklace of beads and sometimes a little thong belt.

No, no, that would never do. So the governor called the headman of the tribe and told him the predicament.

'No worry,' said the headman. If the governor could provide several dozen skirts and blouses, he would see to it that the women dressed in them for this one-time special event. And these the governor and local missionaries managed to provide.

However, on the day of the great parade, and just minutes before Eisenhower was to drive down the long road in his jeep, it was discovered that while all the native women dutifully wore the skirts, they did not like the blouses, and had left them at home. So now all the women were lined up and down both sides of the road, skirted but bare-breasted, and with not another stick on and no underwear at all.

Well, the governor had apoplexy when he heard and angrily summoned the headman, who assured him that the headwomen had conferred with him, and assured him that the women had agreed on a plan to cover their breasts when the general drove by.

'Are you sure?' yelled the governor.

'I am very, very sure,' said the headman.

Well, there was no time left to argue and we can only guess at General Eisenhower's reaction as his jeep came chugging by and woman after bare-breasted women gracefully lifted up the front of her full skirt and covered her face with it.