

KING KONG:**Extra, Extra: STOP the Mainstream Press!
Gorillas “Executed” Stories front for Privatization and
Militarization of Congo Parks, Truth of Depopulation Ignored****July 30, 2007**

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The story began the way they all do: *DATELINE*: Virungas National Park: “IN EASTERN CONGO OASIS, BLOOD AMID THE GREENERY. In Africa's Oldest National Park, Gorillas Are Being Killed and Their Guardians Are Endangered, Too.”

Published July 22, 2007, it was yet “another gorilla murdered” story. This time it was the Washington Post, and one more “news” feature that invents the desired reality and runs cover for fortunes lost and found in Central Africa.

“They heard the gunshots around 3 p.m., at least two pops that echoed across the green mountains of this vast park tangled up in vines, fallen trees and years of war. The park rangers knew immediately what it was... This time it was Ribinga... the rangers found her hulking, lifeless body, her 2-month-old baby, barely alive, was still clinging to her chest.”¹

While pulling on our heart strings for this one gorilla, the Washington Post has manufactured yet another public relations piece for the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund, for Conservation International, for Wildlife Direct, and for all the other self-perpetuating western institutions—for USAID and multinational corporations—who are ripping off American and British taxpayers while exploiting and devastating Central Africa.

¹ Stephanie McCrummen, “IN EASTERN CONGO OASIS, BLOOD AMID THE GREENERY,” Washington Post, Jull 22, 2007.

MASS EXECUTIONS, RARE GORILLAS SLAUGHTERED

From Africa to China, the news headlines of Wednesday July 25—just three days after the front page Washington Post feature—screamed out that three more female mountain gorillas had been killed. Not just killed, *executed*. A fourth gorilla—a Silverback alpha male—was discovered dead later. By July 29, Newsweek—the Washington Post Corporation’s sister publication—had manufactured a major article. Some world news outlets declared “MASS GORILLA EXECUTION” suggesting that maybe hundreds of gorillas were dead.

“Mass Gorilla ‘Execution’ Discovered in Congo,” announced the National Geographic News. “Three female mountain gorillas were found shot dead this morning in the Democratic Republic of Congo’s Virungas National Park.” There is a certain moral indignation expected from the public when someone is “executed”—it is the language that should be attached to human beings, but here it is attached to gorillas.

Photos on CNN and at least 100 web sites show the gorilla bodies displayed on stretchers, while seemingly appalled conservationists look on.

Meanwhile, 113,000 people have fled fighting between government forces, rebels and local militias since February 2007 in the same region of DRC. Some human rights organizations count 250,000. On July 20, 2007, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon called for action to resolve the crisis in the DRC’s volatile eastern region, where the United Nations on July 20 counted 700,000 people as internally displaced.

At least 1000 people a day die in this region due to war, malnutrition, disease and lack of basic medical care. Some of these deaths are executions by soldiers from varying militias and armies. Congolese journalist Serge Maheshe was executed on the street in Bukavu, South Kivu, on June 13, 2007, but there was no comparable outcry.² OpEdNews.com was the only U.S. or European media outlet that published a photo of the murdered journalist. There is little moral indignation for a single dead Congolese person, and usually the Congolese victims are blamed for their own suffering. It is the same for poor Ugandans and Rwandans across the porous border.

“The rare mountain gorilla had been shot execution-style—once in the back of the head and a second time in the hand,” reported Nairobi correspondent Stephanie McCrummen in the Washington Post article of July 22. McCrummen told us that she visited the Park and “climbed six hours” to “observe how the rangers do their work.” But McCrummen arrived weeks after Rubinga the gorilla was killed, and she is telling an old story previously told, and retold, by Richard Leakey’s new “conservation” organization, Wildlife Direct.

Washington Post reporter Stephanie McCrummen refuses to any questions about her

² Georgianne Nienaber, “Congo soldiers arrested for Radio Okapi journalist’s murder,” OpEdNews.com, June 15, 2007.

relationship with Wildlife Direct. “I think what is important is the rangers, above all, and the gorillas,” McCrummen replied tersely, on July 24.

Is that journalism?

Wildlife Direct’s Emmanuel de Merode said via email that Wildlife Direct supplied logistics to McCrummen, but “was not in a position to supply security.”

These “gorillas executed” stories are truly sensational and heartbreaking to Western animal lovers. Four highly endangered mountain gorillas killed the week of July 22 from perhaps less than 700 remaining in the world. But we find the motives and methods for the killings unbelievable, and so do gorilla experts with years of field experience.

SLICK MACHINE GUNS

According to McCrummen and the Washington Post, the “beleaguered” Congo rangers—who have been blogging from the “wilderness” to feed Wildlife Direct’s web site and help raise funds abroad—“have not been paid in a decade.”

Why? What has happened to the millions and millions of dollars and euros and pounds and yen pumped into gorilla conservation by USAID, the European Union and other bodies in the past seven years alone?

Correction: Newsweek now says that Wildlife Direct has been paying the rangers. Which is it?

Forget about the onslaught of press releases from Wildlife Direct and Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund, or the breathless articles from the Washington Post, National Geographic News, and Newsweek all blaming local “militias” and “charcoal gatherers,” and “Mai Mai” and “poison bananas” and “rebel leaders” for the gorilla killings.

There is something else going on here.

Our February-March investigative visit to DRC revealed a different picture than the one regurgitated by the Washington Post from press releases provided by Wildlife Direct, the mercenary “conservation” organization supporting the “beleaguered” “ranger force.” We were in the Virungas in February and photographed well-stocked storerooms of food in the rangers’ encampments.

Post reporter McCrummen laments about the rangers wielding “rusty machetes,” but the truth is that there is a private “conservation” army in the Virungas, and they are outfitted with new uniforms and automatic weapons, including Ak-47s and what appear to be well-oiled .50 caliber machine guns on tripods.

Wildlife Direct's Robert Muir provided us a photo in January 2007, when his employer, the Frankfurt Zoological Society, was touting the "success story" of the ranger program. Obviously well-fed, well-clothed, and well-armed, with machine guns ready, and fresh from training by British mercenaries and soldiers-of-fortune, Conrad Thorpe and Robert Poppe (see Guns for Hire: Congo 2006; www.vonplanta.net), this mercenary army has more than "rusty machetes" as reported by the Washington Post. It is a flashback to the mainstream reporting on genocide in Rwanda: no guns, just a bunch of machete wielding savages.

There have been at least ten mountain gorillas killed since this Wildlife Direct publicity photo was taken: indeed, the upsurge in gorilla killings is synonymous with Wildlife Direct's arrival on the scene. It is obviously a failed policy to have mercenary rangers in Virunga Park. The current press releases plea for more money for suddenly under-equipped rangers.

It seems likely that the gorilla killings are elemental to the public relations strategy—a few gorillas sacrificed for a walloping perception management coup against the Western public.

PRIVATIZATION OF AFRICAN PARKS

Wildlife Direct operates under the mantle of the Africa Conservation Fund (ACF), a tax-exempt (501-c-3) non-government organization registered with the US Internal Revenue Service. Beyond Richard Leakey, a survivor of an elephant attack whose family achieved fame unearthing anthropological and paleontological specimens in East Africa, there are some very prominent and notable people on the ACF board.

The late (2006) board member of ACF, Paul Van Vlissingen, worked for years to privatize all of Africa's national parks for tourism. The BBC reported in 2003 that Van Vlissingen's company "planned to take over a string of national parks throughout Africa," through a private firm, African Parks Management and Finance Company. At a press conference, Zambian Member of Parliament, Sakwiba Sikota, called for an investigation, saying the scheme "borders on theft and plunder of the resources of the people of Barotseland [Zambia/Angola] and should be thrown out."

ACF director Francois-Xavier de Donnea is a Belgian Minister of State, having held Defense and International Development portfolios. Belgium's plundering of Congo began with 10 million dead under Leopold's Congo Free State, proceeded through decades of colonial rule, and prospered greatly under the dictatorship of Col. Joseph Mobutu (1965-1997). Belgian interests in DRC today are very powerful and hidden but involved in diamonds, plantations, mining, timber and defense.

Most significant however is the involvement of Walter H. Kansteiner III, an ACF board member since their founding in 2004. Kansteiner has been a constant presence behind the scenes in Central Africa's wars since at least 1993. His background and experience are

not in conservation: Kansteiner was a major force for privatization in the Clinton and Bush governments, and his work continues in this vein with think tanks and policy institutes. He is tied to all kinds of deep intelligence and national security people, and entities, and like many of them he was a top level White House official in national security and intelligence in both Bush I and II administrations, and in the Clinton Administration.

Walter Kansteiner III has over 20 years' experience in African and emerging market business issues and has advised corporations on a wide range of mergers, acquisitions and privatizations throughout Africa in virtually every business sector from forestry and mining to aviation. Kansteiner advised the buy side on the \$1.3 billion privatization of Telkom South Africa, to date the largest privatization in Africa.

Kansteiner was formerly Executive Vice President of a commodity trading and manufacturing company specializing in tropical commodities in the developing world: his family trades in coltan, or columbium-tantalite, the precious ore used for Sony Playstations, cell phones, laptop computers and myriad state-of-the-art devices—developed under the exploding but secretive “nanotechnology” developments of the defense and intelligence sector—behind the bloodshed in eastern Congo.

The Democratic Republic of Congo has the world's purest and largest deposits of strategic minerals, including gold, coltan, niobium, cobalt, heterogenite and columbite. Heterogenite exports coming out of Congo are alone valued at between \$260 million (at \$20/lb.) and \$408 million (at \$30/lb.) *per month*.

The Great Lakes region is also seeing an assault by oil and gas companies affiliated with mercenary firms: this may be a partial impetus to “conserving” and “protecting” the Lake Albert basin and the Virungas. Heritage Oil and Gas, Tullow Oil and Hartmann Oil are exploiting oil reserves on both sides of the DRC border, while Lake Kivu is being targeted for major natural gas (methane) production by Rwanda. The region is one contiguous oil field—the Semliki basin—under the Great Lakes and north through Darfur to the Red Sea.

Among other State Department posts he held, Walter Kansteiner III was the Africa specialist on the Secretary of State's Policy Planning Staff under President Clinton, and he worked on the Department of Defense Strategic Minerals Task Force. The Clinton Administration was deeply involved in the conflicts in central Africa from 1993-2001.

Kansteiner is on the Board of Directors of the Corporate Council on Africa—the “who's who” of corporate exploitation in Africa piloted by Israeli American diamond magnate Maurice Tempelman. He is a director of the African Development Foundation, Sierra Rutile Mining, and Moto Gold Mines. Sierra Rutile has a long and sordid history of involvement with mercenaries and mining in war torn Sierra Leone; Moto Gold Mines is now operating in the killing fields of DRC's blood-drenched Orientale Province just north of the Virungas.

Kansteiner is also a director of the African Wildlife Foundation, a big non-government organization partnered with the big gorilla “conservation” organizations Conservation International, World Wildlife Fund, Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund, Jane Goodall Institute and Fauna and Flora International.

Kansteiner’s connections, affiliations and interests run much deeper than those outlined here (see below: *SIDEBAR: Walter Kansteiner III*). He is a founding Partner of the Scowcroft Group, whose principals are all top-level former intelligence or White House insiders.

Kansteiner’s wife Francine was or is a board member of the US-based WILD Foundation, whose directors include James Dunlap, an Associate Partner at Scowcroft and Associates in Washington, DC. Dunlap was formerly the principal US Department of State aide to Assistant Secretary of State for Africa (Walter Kansteiner III), and he worked in every African country. WILD director David Barron is founder and President of the International Conservation Caucus Foundation, a policy pressure and lobby group in Washington DC, working to “inform and educate policy-makers on critical issues in international conservation and environment.” Barron has led Congressional tours to Africa and played a central role—with National Geographic Society “explorer-in-residence” and WILD trustee J. Michael Fay—in “creating” national parks in Central Africa through the Congo Basin Forest Partnership supported by General Colin Powell, the DOD and US mining and logging firms. The centerpiece of the CBFT is the USAID-funded Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment—CARPE—supporting all the major conservation organizations involved in Congo, from the Jane Goodall Institute to the World Wildlife Fund. National parks “created” in Gabon are rapidly moving toward privatization.

The massive ongoing propaganda front peddling the recent gorilla “executions” has fast-forwarded the privatization process, which today appears to be unfolding through increased military surveillance, boundary protection, mercenary operations, and the use and proliferation of surveillance devices and sensors—developed for military and intelligence applications—for anti-poaching and periphery defense.³

The Washington Post covers for such interests, just as they have ignored the machinations behind the scenes and put their own self-interested spin on the “Congo Rangers” and “gorillas executed” stories coming out the Virungas National Park.

DIRECT PATH TO WILDLIFE DIRECT

“Richard Leakey, the African Conservationist credited with putting an end to the slaughter of elephants in Kenya during the 1980s, has taken on the cause of Congo’s Mountain Gorillas,” reads a press release from the Africa Conservation Fund, which backs Leakey’s Wildlife Direct. “His programme, www.wildlifedirect.org, has been supporting the rangers of this gorilla park through the provision of equipment, training

³ See e.g.: <http://www.wildlandsecurity.org/>

and funds, and was active in the campaign to save the gorilla sector during the park invasions of 2004.”

“The Congo rangers have continued their work without interruption throughout the war, and during that time the gorillas have increased by over 14%,” reads the press release from Wildlife Direct. “But this has come at a cost: 97 of Virunga’s rangers have died protecting the park’s Wildlife against poachers since 1996.”

Some ninety-seven “rangers” killed in 10 years? Some 1,000 ordinary people perish daily? Two gorillas killed and eaten by starving people in January—when Wildlife Direct arrived? Three gorilla females, and one Silverback male, shot and killed July 23, and three more gorillas missing? One gorilla shot and killed and another missing in May 2007?

“Carnage” reports Wildlife Direct—as the hippo population is slaughtered on Lake Edward in January. One gorilla death “equates to a massacre.” Millions of dead people equates to silence in the international community.

What is happening here? Are desperate local people retaliating against a foreign invasion by wildlife “conservation” interests? Or is there something else going on?

“In recent months, the rangers’ work has included destroying poison bananas left by poachers to lure the gorillas,” reported McCrummen in the Washington Post, “they were scattered near Rubinga’s family the day before she was shot.”

The trail of bananas McCrummen regurgitated from press releases and the Wildlife Direct web page are very telling. Bananas are exotic food sources for gorillas and were introduced by humans.¹

“In the thick forests of central and west Africa, [gorilla] troops find plentiful food for their vegetarian diet,” notes National Geographic. “They eat roots, shoots, fruit, wild celery, and tree bark and pulp.”⁴

Roving bands of militias do not carry perishable poisoned bananas on the off chance that they will encounter a gorilla to lure. Militias are themselves hungry and desperate. The unfortunate gorilla female “Rubinga” of the McCrummen story knew her attacker. It is very telling that the male silverback did not make a stand. The attacker was probably a trusted individual in the gorilla’s experience. Dian Fossey, the murdered American naturalist credited with saving the species, wrote extensively about gorilla group cohesion and how members will fight to the death to protect their “family.”

This group of gorillas is also under constant watch by the “elite” Congo Rangers trained by Wildlife Direct, and this is touted on their websites, blogs, in the international press—and it would be on bathroom walls if they had any bathrooms there. While a premeditated killing by poachers or militias after tracking these gorillas is possible, this new infant was

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already a media star and probably not far from the watchful eyes of Wildlife Direct.

“Where were the rangers who are supposed to be protecting them when this was occurring?” said a gorilla expert, who—like all of our sources—will not go public in fear of retaliation by conservation organizations or ostracism from the incestuous primatology community. “You would think such expert trackers would have noticed and/or heard disturbances before the killers were able to murder the gorillas???? Something doesn't add and/or subtract here!”

Further, if rangers found poisoned bananas “scattered near Rubinga's family the day before she was shot,” as McCrummen and Wildlife Direct have claimed, then why didn't they step up surveillance given the obvious and imminent threat? Where were the rangers?

The Newsweek feature, “Gorilla Warfare: Even after 10 years of war, rangers are stunned by the mysterious killings of great apes in Africa's oldest park,” appeared on line on MSNBC.com on July 29, 2007, with a dateline denoting its imminent appearance in the August 6 print issue. The story describes rangers with “billowing green ponchos” and “AK-47's,” not the Post's previous fiction of rusty machetes.

One of the rangers, Paulin Ngobobo, 43, is photographed quite elegantly dressed, as if for a Vanity Fair portrait. He is “a devout Christian” says Newsweek, clearly grooming him for the next Conde Nast Traveller Environmental Award—given in 2005 to Central African hero Pierre Kakule of Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund fame in the Virungas—or the National Geographic Society/Buffer Award created by “philanthropist” Howard Buffet and awarded in 2004 to Rwanda Country Director the Wildlife Conservation Society and a close associate of the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund in Rwanda. The Newsweek portrait of debonair Congo ranger Paulin Ngobobo stands in sharp contradiction to the starving rangers described by the Post's Stephanie McCrummen a few days earlier.

In the corner of the on-line Newsweek feature—below the picture of a dead silverback sprawled out on a stretcher—like KING KONG himself—carried by a team of very well dressed “conservationists”—is a little “READER'S VOTE” asking: “*Would you be willing to pay higher taxes in order to protect endangered species?*”

Check: () “yes” (x) “no” or () “not sure.”

GUNS FOR HIRE: CONGO

It seems the local populations resent the uninvited intrusion into their homes, their communities and their lands. The Congolese take exception to white “conservation” mercenaries from Wildlife Direct and the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund and the Frankfurt Zoological Society and the British Special Forces and UNESCO—and they want them out of Virunga Park.

The local people want the white mercenaries and their elite first-world agenda—with all the dishonesty, corruption and vested interests behind it—gone. Period.

One glance at the mercenaries' promotional materials makes it clear why.

On their self-promotional web site the white mercenaries and their elite Congolese “rangers” can be seen terrorizing the local fishermen—whom they call “poachers”—forcing them to “confess” their crimes and threatening them with death. The Von Planta video “Guns for Hire: Congo 2006” at www.vonplanta.net shows the poorest women in the world running for their lives from armed gangs otherwise defined as “rangers” and their white Wildlife Direct “trainers.” The white mercenaries are always portrayed as “selfless” and “compassionate” but heroic white men dedicated to “saving” this part of the African “wilderness.” In real life, mercenaries like these employed with security firms are known to shoot poor Congolese for sport in the diamond mining areas controlled by large foreign firms.⁵ The Virunga rangers are on videotape committing human rights violations against innocent villagers who have a few wire snares in their meager huts—their only means to feed their families.

The “Guns for Hire” video also makes it clear that the white mercenaries believe that Congolese officials are fanning the flames of the violence, encouraging local people to cultivate inside the park, because park officials receive “payoffs”—albeit pitifully meager—for each cultivated plot. Congolese government soldiers are blamed with running a charcoal operation offering incentives for peasants to make charcoal or collect wood inside the park. Poor Congolese communities rely on charcoal as a staple energy source, and while they are the victims of an unjust international system exploiting and forcing them off their lands, they are blamed for wanting and needing heat and fuel to survive.

“The rangers also suspect people associated with the country's \$30 million charcoal industry,” wrote McCrummen, “who depend on the park's trees and would rather Virunga be unprotected.”

The Newsweek article of July 29 cites Richard Leakey calling it a “a corrupt mafia of charcoal merchants,” while simultaneously playing the tired refrain accusing Hutu extremists responsible for Rwanda's genocide.

The Newsweek article (reaching 4.2 million people worldwide) is a propaganda fabrication serving as both a fundraiser and cheerleader for Wildlife Direct—and its backers, like Walter Kansteiner, and their corrupt mafias of “conservation” and “humanitarian” interests.

The international logging sector in Congo is another scandal never illuminated with similar zeal by the Washington Post and Newsweek—who target Congolese charcoal as the problem. The Portuguese Trindade brothers—Jose Albano Maia Trindade and João

⁵ See Keith Harmon Snow and Rick Hines, “Blood Diamond,” Z Magazine, June (part one) and July/August (part two), 2007.

Manuel Maia Trindade—are the owner-operators of four companies: SODIFOR, SOFORMA, FARABOLA and *Compagnie Forestière et de Transformation*. Their concessions total 5,959,817 hectares in four Congo provinces. Logging operations of other Western companies—the American Blattner family, George Somja of Belgium, George Forrest, the German Danzer Corporation (2,421,871 hectares), and others—comprise an additional 26 million hectares, and the World Wildlife Fund rubber stamps their operations. The profits and the expropriation of Congolese land for the international logging sector swamp the \$30 million a year charcoal industry run by and for Congolese people. While there has been much fanfare in the international media about “canceling” logging and “reexamining” mining contracts—rewriting the mining and logging codes—little substantive change has been made. The question of land belonging to the Congolese and their access to it must be seen in the light of the logging industry in DRC—one big Western corporate mafia.

At one Blattner operation (SAFBOIS, Isangi, DRC), the WWF field station is located within the deep forest compound of the company. The BBC publishes WWF press releases verbatim, and WWF has actively undermined indigenous people’s resistance in the face of the logging onslaught in Congo. Like the massive rainforest rip-off underway, the Washington Post, New York Times, Newsweek and BBC have reported none of this.

Similarly, the framework of such stories shields the true reasons for poverty and suffering of Congolese soldiers. International mining in Congo is a scandal reaping hundreds of millions of dollars in profits monthly, and the problem of non-payment of soldiers “salaries” lies with those who make this possible: international business cartels, the World Bank, IMF, European Union and with powerful individuals in Europe, North America, and Israel. Foreign interests and their Congolese agents have expropriated local people’s livelihoods and rights, and the Mai Mai militias are known for taking a nationalist stance against foreign interests and for Congolese people.

However, one Congolese conservation expert with the Congolese Institute for the Conservation of Nature (ICCN) attributed all responsibility for the massive failure of conservation and community development in Congo to institutionalized corruption in Western “conservation” organizations and high-level ICCN officials they have corrupted.

The Congo rangers trained by Wildlife Direct are mostly outsiders with no ties to the local communities around the park. In a place like Congo, this ethnic influx is tantamount to a foreign invasion.

The “Guns for Hire” video also makes a big production out of Wildlife Direct mercenaries and their Congo Rangers dumping sacks of “ore” they purportedly confiscated from Congolese miners and artisans operating inside the Virungas National Park. This stands in sharp contrast to the massive corporate mining operations of companies like Moto Gold, AngloAshanti, Banro and Mwana Africa, and the alleged involvement of “conservation” officials in the coltan and cassiterite mining in the areas in and around the Virungas, Maiko and Kahuzi Biega National Parks. The inference is that white mercenaries and “conservation” organizations are intolerant of mining: the entire

video segment appears staged. But staged or not staged once again we have elite white mercenaries targeting the lives and industries of poor black people struggling to survive by any means necessary, and never providing equitable options, but instead lording over them with force and intimidation.

The “Guns for Hire” video shows white British SAS forces giving smug interviews and sharing lofty ideals, based in privilege and backed by the badge of their skin color, and sneaking around in the bush—wearing flak jackets and carrying automatic weapons—peaking through tall grasses and spying on peasant fishermen in old rickety boats and skinny boys on rusty pedal bikes whose only set of clothes are rags.

The people of Congo are not stupid, and someone is sending a very clear signal: we don’t like what you are doing, and we don’t want you here.

That is the sad, hard truth, never mentioned in mainstream media like the Washington Post. Why?

SKELETONS IN THE (POST) CLOSET

Consider this: Washington Post director Barry Diller is a director of Conservation International and the Coca Cola Company, one of the big partners of the aid organization CARE International, and the defense company IAC/Interactive. Diller’s wife, Diane von Furstenberg is also an IAC/Interactive director.

CARE is a USAID partner involved in “conservation” and “humanitarian” projects in Congo, Uganda, Somalia, Rwanda and Sudan. Through the Congo Basin Forest Partnership and Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE), USAID has funded scores of millions of dollars in big conservation projects in the Great Lakes region in the past decade.

Oracle Corporation, also an intelligence and defense contractor, is another big partner of CARE. Oracle’s CEO, Lawrence Ellison, is on the board of directors of Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund-International. Three IAC/Interactive directors are directors of Oracle Corporation. One is former Washington Post director and Newsweek President Alan Spoon; another is General Norman Schwarzkopf, a director of NBC/Universal, the makers of the film KING KONG. Another NBC/Universal director is Henry Kissinger’s son David Kissinger.

Oracle was involved in Donald Rumsfeld’s “Corporate Fellow Program,” where the US Department of Defense planted military officers in business positions inside top multinational corporations. Oracle “customers” include nineteen DOD entities like the beyond-top-secret Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command, National Security Agency, National Reconnaissance Office, and National Imagery and Mapping Agency.

Conservation International (CI) directors include Louis Cabot, whose firm Cabot International was cited by the United Nations Panel of Experts for dealing in coltan coming out of Congo, and Lewis Coleman, a director of US defense giant Northrup Grumman.

Turner Broadcasting and CNN are major affiliates of the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International, in terms of funding, partnerships, and preferential media coverage.

In a telling statement reported in the Washington Post, bullet holes riddle the entrance signs to Virunga Park. The locals are not happy with private militias limiting their already minimal options for food and survival, or forcing them out of the only shelter they have in eastern Congo. Most want only a few hectares to grow maize for their starving children.

“We drove from Uganda to Congo through the Virungas,” said Oscar Kashala, the renowned Congolese medical scientist from Harvard who ran for president in Congo’s 2006 elections. “This is a very celebrated park. Everything was green but there are no lions in Virunga. No gazelles. People here have eaten everything. We didn’t even hear any birds singing. We were seeing half naked kids coming out of the bush. For me—a doctor—to see malnutrition like that is very hard. The kids all have wounds on their feet, and their bellies are swollen. They are all sick.”

The gorillas have become hostages in a propaganda war, and the people of Central Africa have become irrelevant, non-people.

On the other side of the fence—quite literally, the park boundary—the well-fed Congo Rangers and their families rely upon a sympathetic Western public for donations to keep themselves supplied and protected in former colonial encampments within the Virunga Park. In fact, Wildlife Direct recently put out a plea for more funds. The rangers were running out of food and an infusion of funding would certainly help.

It’s a jungle out there, and we will merely peep into the deep, dark money hole hidden by the heart of darkness mythology.

Another Washington Post director is Melinda Gates, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation gave at least \$10,000 to the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund Europe—renamed The Gorilla Organization after a legal attack from Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund-International wrested control of the name of the murdered American naturalist Dian Fossey.

Washington Post director Warren Buffet—worth \$43 billion—is also a director of Coke, and his son Howard Buffet is on the Advisory Council for the National Geographic Society, whose press office is all over the “gorillas murdered” story. (Get your National Geographic mountain gorilla IMAX DVD for just \$12.95 at their online store!) Buffet’s investment firm Berkshire Hathaway owns substantial stock in the Washington Post. Gilbert M. Grosvenor, the veritable grandfather and Board of Trustees member of the

National Geographic Society is also a trustee of Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International (DFGF-I).

“This is a disaster,” National Geographic News quotes Mr. Emmanuel de Merode, Nairobi director of Wildlife Direct, to say. It is a massive understatement. Where are the editors for these stories coming out of Congo? Whatever happened to VETTING a story? You know—the process where a story is fact-checked and confirmed by numerous sources?

PIGGY BANKS FOR PROFIT

“Joseph Aloma Major is a foot soldier in the war to save the world’s critically endangered mountain gorillas,” wrote Mike Pflanz, correspondent for The Christian Science Monitor, in “Web Charity Helps Save Congo Gorillas,” on March 9, 2007.

“Before the money started flowing from Colorado, directly donated online via a new charity website, WildlifeDirect.org,” Pflanz wrote, Mr. Aloma could barely do his job.”

Turns out some 43 children at Stratton Elementary School in Colorado Springs have emptied their piggy banks and raised money for Wildlife Direct programs sporting elite white mercenary soldiers and their “starving” African ranger protégés.

“Together, the 43 children in the second-grade class give \$244 a month to support a rarely paid and poorly equipped Wildlife ranger half a world away in the Democratic Republic of Congo,” Pflanz reported.

The Frankfurt Zoological Society—a Wildlife Direct partner—acts as a conduit for the money channeled from trusting children in American schools who believe that their efforts will help save the rare gorillas—an investment in their own future.

“In the first 72 hours after Wildlife Direct started working with gorillas in Congo in January, the group received \$38,000,” reported Pflanz.

Robert Muir, a British conservationist working in Congo for the Frankfurt Zoological Society, told Pflanz that all funds collected through the new program go straight to Congo. “We buy the boots in the market and hand them over straight away. We buy the food, the uniforms, the tents, and they’re in the rangers’ hands in a day or two. Then Wildlife Direct pays us back later.”

The initial kickstart of \$38,000—raised in the first 72 hours—went to Congo in January and by March, when the Pflanz article ran in the Christian Science Monitor, they must have raised quite a pretty penny. And Wildlife Direct does not take a percentage of donations, Pflanz reported; they are covered by donors who separately fund their administrative and running costs.

Back to the future, we find McCrummen and the Washington Post reporting on July 22 that the Congo rangers “are desperately poor,” they “occupy run-down posts” and “use old, rusty machetes.”

Where is all the money going? How much do the white mercenaries with automatic weapons get paid? How much is spent on petrol for the zebra-striped airplane operated by the Frankfurt Zoological Society on its surveillance missions for Wildlife Direct?

“Congo Ranger Aloma Major had not been paid for several months,” Pflanz went on, in the classic public relations fundraising mold, and without questioning such platitudes. “His patrol post had no fuel and no vehicle to put it in. And, until last month, he faced the danger of attacks from rebels...”

The Wildlife Direct “Guns for Hire” video shows piles of guns acquired for the beleaguered rangers. Where did the guns come from? Who paid for the piles of guns? Stratton Elementary School second graders like Kori Hernandez?

“And thanks to generous donations from people like Stratton second-grader Kori Hernandez, who donated her entire piggy bank (about \$30), Congo rangers like Aloma are now getting the money to make protection of the endangered gorillas possible again.”

And thanks to generous taxpayers like Stratton second-grader Kori Hernandez’s mom and dad—who responsibly paid their annual taxes, supporting the USAID coffers behind the conservation scandal in Congo—the powerful beneficiaries of this rainforest rip-off are swindling this American family on both ends.

And little Kori Hernandez will grow up to find that one day in the not so distant future, her cherished gorillas—along with millions of ordinary people in the Congo—came to an abrupt and brutal finish. And little Kori Hernandez will always wonder who lied.

SIDEBAR:

PLUNDERING AFRICA: WALTER KANSTEINER & FRIENDS

An understanding of the decade of warfare and depopulation in Central Africa can be gained by examining the positions of power, corporate directorships and new corporations and alliances that have quietly emerged from the killing fields in the past several years.

While the mass media, policy institutes like the International Crises Group, human rights agencies like Human Rights Watch, and “humanitarian” organizations like the International Rescue Committee appear to offer some coverage of events in Central Africa, they barely scratch the surface. More often, they offer only limited critiques of

events, interests or developments, without ever challenging any significant deeper interests, or holding them to account.

One of the key agents behind the machinery of change in Central Africa is Walter Kansteiner III.

In the 1980's Kansteiner was director of Economic Studies at the far-right Institute on Religion and Democracy. The IRD called itself "centrist" but was deeply hostile to social movements around the world, particularly in Africa, and it attacked mainstream Christian religious institutions.

In his 1990 book Kansteiner systematically attacked Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress (ANC), characterizing the ANC as a group of violent revolutionaries engaged in an "unjustified" and "Marxist" struggle against the government, without a mandate from the South African people.

Kansteiner was a member of the George H.W. Bush State Department's policy planning staff from May 1989 to June 1991, Director for African Affairs at the National Security Council, 1991-1993, and the Special Assistant to the President and Deputy Press Secretary for Foreign Affairs from April 1992-1993.

Kansteiner also served in the U.S. government as director of African Affairs on Clinton's National Security Council staff. He was President Clinton's personal representative to the G8 Africa Process.

Kansteiner was Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs under George W. Bush from June 2001 until November 2003, advising on U.S. foreign policy in Africa.

Walter Kansteiner and Maurice Tempelsman—and Corporate Council on Africa members from Halliburton, Boeing, Cargill, Exxon-Mobil, Freeport McMoran and Oracle Corporation—were the architects of the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), America's NAFTA for Africa. The AGOA destroys local markets, erects discriminatory trade barriers, undermines local economies to enrich elites and impoverish the masses—a.k.a. in the language of doublespeak, the AGOA promotes *free trade*.

The Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund has an ongoing technology project through the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute: Maurice Tempelsman on the board of trustees of the Woods Hole Corporation.

Beyond Sierra Rutile's forays into bloody Sierra Leone we find that Sierra Rutile directors include Sam Jonah, President and director of AngloGold-Ashanti, which has formal partnerships with the infamous Bush-affiliated Barrick Gold, and also operates in bloody Orientale Province. AngloGold-Ashanti has reportedly backed the Rwandan allied Congolese Rally for Democracy in eastern Congo, and likely still supports chaos in the region by backing Rwandan military interests. One AngloAshanti director is Jerry John Rawlings, the U.S. military's former autocratic ruler of Ghana.

Sam Jonah serves on the International Investment Advisory Councils of President Thabo Mbeki (South Africa), President Kufuor (Ghana), and President Obasanjo (Nigeria). He is also a member of the United Nations' Secretary General's Global Compact Advisory Council, a likely reason why Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon has merely issued lukewarm communiqués expressing “concern” about 700,000 refugees in eastern Congo, and never takes any hard action to help Congo's people and expose the interests exploiting them.

As a founding principal of The Scowcroft Group, Kansteiner's ties to the intelligence and defense sector run still deeper. Brent Scowcroft is a former National Security Adviser to George H.W. Bush (1989-1993) and Gerald Ford (1975-1977), and National Security Council member under Henry Kissinger.

Kansteiner is also a Fellow at the Forum for International Policy, a think-tank whose Chairman of the Board of Trustees is Lawrence S. Eagleburger, a director of numerous corporations—including Halliburton—and the former Deputy Secretary of State (1989-1992) and then Secretary of State (1992-1993) under George H.W. Bush. Other FIP notables are deep intelligence insiders, including John Deutch and Brent Scowcroft, and Archers Daniels Midland director Dwayne Andreas.

Lawrence Eagleburger is also president of Henry Kissinger's consulting firm Kissinger Associates, which has a “strategic alliance” with global PR firm APCO Worldwide.

Henry Kissinger is today on the board of the International Rescue Committee, known to be a “humanitarian” front for intelligence interests; the IRC is involved in Congo and in the “grass-roots” Congo Global Action Campaign organized with the support of the International Crises Group (ICG), a flak organization which also uses humanitarianism as a front for deeper interests.

On the ICG board, for example, are some of the world's leading military strategists. ICG directors include former Supreme Allied Commander General Wesley Clark; former National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski; and Thomas Pickering, formerly special assistant to Henry Kissinger, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs in the Clinton White House, and now a Boeing Corporation executive.

The International Crises Group executive John Prendergast's role in manipulating world consciousness around war and genocide must be situated not in the “humanitarian” front that the ICG gives him, but in his role as National Security Council during the Clinton Administration, with Walter Kansteiner III. The ICG is silent about the proliferation of dubious and illegal mining by firms like Moto Gold Mines, and their “crises group” research papers never identify any of the significant players behind the scenes in Congo (or Darfur).

APCO Worldwide counts three former Democratic and one Republican congressman as directors, and former Senator Robert Dole as a senior counselor. Dole's involvement in

Central Africa is well hidden but tied to Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni through the euphemistically named Partnership to Cut Hunger and Poverty in Africa, whose direction involves directors Peter Seligman and Olivier Legrand of Conservation International—deeply involved in gorilla “conservation” in Central Africa. The PCHPA ties in another faith-based relief organization, Bread for the World, and the two entities sport numerous Baptists, Methodists and other Christian fundamentalist “missionary” organizations involved in Central Africa, East Africa and Sudan. PCHPA director Peter McPherson is also a director of Conservation International.

Money for Bob Dole’s campaigns for years has come from National Public Radio sponsor and agribusiness Archers Daniels Midland—supermarket to the world. Former Senator Dole and his political foundations reportedly collected \$178,000 in contributions from Dwayne Andreas, members of Andreas’ family and A.D.M. executives between 1981 and 1994. Andreas and A.D.M. also gave more than \$2 million to the Democratic and Republican parties between 1991 and 2006.

Walter Kansteiner III is also a Senior Associate of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), which today counts among its members Alexander Haig, Brent Scowcroft, John Deutch, Donald Rumsfeld, Henry Kissinger, and many other deep intelligence and defense insiders.

Many of the same players noted above are involved behind the scenes in Somalia, Chad, Ethiopia and Sudan—the “Save Darfur” interests and lobby behind “genocide” in Darfur—and profit from warfare and “humanitarian relief” while millions and millions of Africa’s people suffer and die.

At this writing there are 700,000 Congolese people uprooted and forgotten in the Kivus region of DRC. Across the border there are 1.2 million Acholi people suffering miserably in death camps in Northern Uganda subject to terrorism as policy orchestrated by Ugandan People’s Defense Forces (UPDF) and Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni. One hundred fifty additional U.S. Special Operations forces were deployed in Uganda in March 2007, and Museveni has now instituted compulsory military training in support of the DOD’s AFRICOM and the US/UPDF military campaigns in Sudan (Darfur), Chad, Congo, Uganda, Ethiopia and Somalia. Petroleum operations in western and northern Uganda are expanding: Bechtel subsidiary Nexant is one of the companies building the pipeline across Uganda to the US military port in Mombasa, Kenya. The genocide against the Acholi people in northern Uganda is in media whiteout.