

Oil in Darfur? Special Ops in Somalia?

The New Old "Humanitarian" Warfare in Africa

By [Keith Harmon Snow](#)

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No matter how you look at it, people are dying in Sudan. The questions of who is dying and how many, of who is doing the killing, and why, all fly around. For most everyone associated with the "Save Darfur!" or "Stop Genocide!" movement for Sudan, the questions do not matter. Act now—to stop the killing—argue later: we are talking about *genocide*.

But there have been many remarkable and contradictory claims made about the conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan, and many remarkable positions taken. Is there oil in Darfur? Does it matter? As one concerned fellow told me: "If I were in Darfur I wouldn't care who was killing people. I'd want to get my family out of there as fast as possible, and so would you."

Seems reasonable enough. However, I disagree. If my family and I were at risk in a conflict zone like Darfur, or anywhere, I would be sure to know as much as possible about who the perpetrators are, and from where the threat was coming. Otherwise, I wouldn't know where to run or who to run to. You don't turn to the arsonist to put out a fire...unless you don't know that the arsonists and fire department are one in the same.

Western Public Opinion

People in the United States and Europe are convinced that the conflict in Darfur is an egregious and indisputable campaign of genocide that the Islamist Government of Sudan (GOS) is waging against black African tribes in Darfur. The National Islamic Front has ruled Sudan from its capital, Khartoum, since the early 1990s, and according to Human Rights Watch and other Western rights agencies, it has pursued foreign petroleum exploration and extraction in parallel with a scorched earth campaign marked by genocide against the impoverished landowners of South Sudan and, now, Darfur.

However, a sizeable few westerners see the Darfur conflict as merely the latest campaign to overthrow an Islamist government by any means necessary, where the necessary means, in the case of Darfur, might be described as a conspiracy to wage war on Sudan by using "peacekeeping" or "humanitarianism" as policy instruments in combination with international threats of military action. The respected bi-weekly journal, *Africa Confidential*, has described the recent "peace settlement" of March 2002—which ostensibly brought to a close the decades old war between north and south Sudan—as "regime change by stealth." Darfur was not included in the deal, and explosion of violence in Darfur, the journal noted, was rather suspect in its timing.

Nonetheless, Darfur is the *cause celebre* amongst people on the both sides of the political spectrum in the United States, and it is perceived as new Apartheid taken to the ultimate

final solution: genocide. Indeed, Mel Middleton of the Christian faith-based organization Freedom Quest International makes the Apartheid model explicit:

“What we have advocated all along is the kind of international pressure that was placed on apartheid South Africa, and which, in the end, brought about the peaceful overthrow of the apartheid racist regime. But every western government that we’ve approached to adopt that method have rejected it. Why? The only logical answer short of alien reptilian race conspiracy theories is that they don’t want to jeopardize their standing with China, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the Islamist world.”

Both the political right and left in the U.S. have embraced the cause: Darfur is the new anti-Apartheid movement engineered as an anti-genocide movement seeking to “stop the slaughter in Darfur.” Millions of people have jumped on the bandwagon, and the campaign has reached new heights. You can buy T-shirts and buttons and bumper stickers to support the cause, and even play “Save Darfur!” video games. Early February 2007 saw a new thrust to bring the “Save Darfur!” movement into every high school in America. And you can purchase the freedom of a Sudanese slave, a black boy or girl captured by ruthless Arabs, through Christian AID charities and “Anti-Slavery” groups. What’s the price of freedom? Fifty bucks. Or even twenty.

But not everyone is buying.

Staunch supporters of the Palestinian cause have claimed that the “Save Darfur!” movement is a Zionist conspiracy backed by Israel. An extension of this theme is the claim that Israel covets uranium reserves in Sudan for its nuclear programs. The leading advocates of the “Stop Genocide!” and “Save Darfur!” campaign point out that there is no substantive evidence of uranium in Darfur, or Sudan, and—anyway—that the moral imperatives of “Never Again” demand that politics be put aside in order to stem the tide of mass murder. These advocates appear to be correct: one is hard pressed to find any evidence anywhere of uranium reserves or interests in all of Sudan. It appears that there has not been a single article in the Western press that validates the uranium claim.

But that does not prove that the uranium claims about Israel aren’t true. For example, a U.S. Library of Congress Country Study for Sudan reports that uranium ores were discovered years ago around the Nuba Mountains and at Hufnat an Nahas in southern Kurdoan. If this is true, the war in the south has prevented them from being exploited. Minex Company of the United States obtained a 36,000-square-kilometer exploratory concession in the Kurdoan area in 1977, and the concession was increased to 48,000 square kilometers in 1979. Uranium reserves are also believed to exist near the western borders with Chad and Central African Republic—is that Darfur? Sure looks like it. Uranium prices have surged recently, and western companies are chomping at the bit for uranium concessions everywhere.

According to an interview with the ruler of North Darfur, Othman Yosuf Kibir, published in the United Arab Emirates’ Khaleej Times, the Darfur conflict revolves around oil and minerals, including uranium discovered in Hofrat an Nihhas. Kibir stated that these resources have set off fierce competition between the U.S. and France. The U.S. has started to invest in oil industry in Chad, France’s former colony, while France’s Total Corporation obtained drilling rights in Sudan.

Petroleum and other companies targeted by the Save Darfur divestment movement for their alliances with the Government of Sudan in Sudan include Total, Agip, Talisman Oil,

PetroChina and Asea Brown Baveri. The latter company has close ties to former U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld: in the 1990's Rumsfeld was on the board of directors.

Is there uranium in Darfur? Is there copper? Is there oil? According to some of the most vocal leaders of the "Save Darfur!" movement there are definitively NOT any natural resources up for grabs in Dardur. For others the presence or absence of natural resources in Darfur is irrelevant. For those who first vigorously reject the possibility of natural resources being in Darfur, but eventually accept that natural resources likely are up for grabs in Darfur, or at least might be found there, the point quickly shifts to the declaration that such resources are definitively NOT the issue in Darfur: what is important is to stop the ongoing genocide.

"Save Darfur"

On the "Save Darfur!" issue there is dissension within many ranks. Rabbi Michael Lerner, a leader of the Tikkun Interfaith community, whose main platform for advocacy seems to be Tikkun Magazine, is also a champion of the Palestinian cause, yet unlike the Palestinian supporters who see a clear Zionist plot in Darfur, founded on uranium or otherwise, Rabbi Lerner is a leading spokesman and advocate for the "Stop Genocide!" and "Save Darfur!" campaign.

"For many years Tikkun has been a lone voice calling on the US to support international action to save the people of Darfur from genocide," reads a March 2006 story on the Tikkun web site. Another online Tikkun story, dated January 2007, puts forth the controversial thesis, under the same title, that "There is apartheid in Israel." *[F]ormer Israeli Minister of Education Shulamit Aloni argues that Apartheid is already happening in the West Bank under Israeli rule...*

So, you see, there is dissension about Darfur amongst even staunch supporters of the Palestinian cause. Responding to the charge that his support of the "Save Darfur!" campaign equates to supporting a regime change agenda, Rabbi Michael Lerner replied with one sentence: "I do not seek to overthrow the government of Sudan, but to stop them from murdering black African civilians."

"Rabbi Lerner is a person of integrity and courage who has spoken repeatedly against the injustices committed against the Palestinian people," one defender elaborated. "As a Rabbi, his voice carries weight and commands authority. People hear him. Jews hear him. Israelis hear him. People who are neither Israeli nor Jewish (like me) hear him [the man is south Asian]. They hear and honor his voice, as do I. I don't doubt the reality of geopolitics and the involvement of powerful countries in the machinations of politics in Asia and Africa, but, with Rabbi Lerner, I call out for us to do what we can in the way we can to stop the genocides for purely humanitarian reasons, putting politics aside."

Like war crimes and crimes against humanity, genocide advocates—predominantly from the West—perceive genocide as an issue that transcends politics.

Libyan president Muammar Khadafy has claimed that Darfur is not about genocide but about Western imperialism. Khadafy has repeatedly defended the GOS, accusing the Western powers of using the genocide charge as a strategic and tactical weapon to leverage

their own interests. What the West really wants, an angry Khadafy has claimed, is access and control of Darfur's oil, for this they demonize the Government of Sudan. To the "Save Darfur!" advocates, this, of course, is a laughable charge. Always the premier terrorist in the world, on par with Fidel Castro, Khadafy's claims of Western petroleum rapaciousness are dismissed out of hand, and anyone who holds a similar view is no better than Khadafy. Indeed, we are talking about *genocide*.

Christian groups working in Sudan, like Freedom Quest International, Voice of the Martyrs and Servant's Heart—all of whom describe themselves as "non-government humanitarian relief organizations"—have accused the GOS of committing massacres which other international bodies or organizations have claimed did not happen. (An example is given below.) The GOS of Sudan has accused Western human rights agencies of exaggerating both the scale and nature of atrocities committed in the Darfur region.

The legitimacy of either side is always in question, from the others' point of view. The Arab world claims it is a Judeo-Christian conspiracy against Islam, in pursuit of oil, and the rest of the English-speaking world accuses the Islamist GOS, and its Chinese, Malaysian, and other business partners, of genocide.

So where does that leave the general public? Either you buy the genocide argument, and jump on the bandwagon, and you quickly write-off anyone who challenges your belief system as uncaring about human life, or you sit on the sidelines and brood about what you believe to be true but simply cannot prove. From the point of view of the general public, at the end of the day, it is impossible to sort out who is honest and who is not. The only moral choice we have is to jump on the bandwagon right? We are talking about *genocide*: it's no time to quibble amongst ourselves.

To juxtapose and sift through the information warfare being produced on Darfur we can compare and contrast the writings of Dr. Eric Reeves to those of Dr. David Hoile. These two individuals couldn't be further apart in their positions and analyses about Darfur. The former, Dr. Eric Reeves, is perhaps the premier advocate for the "Save Darfur!" movement in the Anglo-American camp. We might even call him the self-declared, self-made Voice of Sudan. The latter, Dr. David Hoile, is one of the premier advocates for the GOS, or perhaps might better be called a *challenger* to the "Save Darfur!" campaign spearheaded by the Anglo-American camp. Both men write in English, and both have written volumes about the Darfur conflict.

Dr. Eric Reeves is a professor of English and Literature at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, and he has traveled to Africa once or (maybe) twice in his life, for a grand total of about two or three weeks in South Sudan. Dr. Eric Reeves began writing about Sudan in 1998, after a meeting, he says, with Joelle Tanguay, the then U.S. director of Doctors Without Borders.

According to Mel Middleton, the Director of Freedom Quest International:

"Eric Reeves has spent about the same amount of time in Sudan as you have. But, unlike you, he has spent at least 8 years doing almost exclusive research on Sudan. He took a two-year sabbatical from teaching so that he could do that. He reads everything that is put out on Sudan; has an extensive base of first hand information—everywhere from State Department contacts to NGOs and locals on the ground."

In a court of law, such “first hand information” accumulated in Sudan and communicated to a man sitting in an office in a college in America would be called here-say. Nonetheless, it is a technique that is widely used in the modern information age, and one that this author also uses to come to some understanding about what is happening in a place the writer/researcher cannot always get to.

Dr. Eric Reeves writes prolifically about Sudan, and while he claims to be concerned about the human toll in lives and suffering, he has also been a staunch advocate for the overthrow of the Khartoum government. This is the mixing of “humanitarian concern” with militant hegemony. Apparently, there are a lot of people who see no contradiction in terms in calling for the freedom and liberty of a people under siege, if we are to believe the reams and reams of media coverage and human rights reports, all from the Western media and human rights establishment, which focus on the human toll in Darfur, and the agenda of overthrowing of a sovereign government. Indeed, the idea that the Government of Sudan has any legitimacy as a “sovereign” government in today’s world is dismissed outright. There is nothing legitimate about massacring unarmed men, women and children in the deserts of Darfur, Kordufan, or Upper Nile, Sudan. It is the responsibility of moral people and civilized society to take whatever action is necessary to stop such atrocities.

In one Washington Post article titled “Regime Change in Sudan,” Dr. Eric Reeves described the imperatives of overthrowing the government of Sudan, by any means necessary, and noted that some governing body needed to be created to take its place. “A proportionately representative interim governing council must be created externally but be ready to move quickly to take control when the NIF [National Islamic Front] is removed by whatever means are necessary.”

Dr. Eric Reeves has not only called for the overthrow of the GOS, but he has called for this to be done by any means necessary, and for an *externally created* [emphasis added] “governing council” to be readied to fill the vacuum of state power. Under any other terms this would certainly be called a *coup d’etat* but the moral imperatives of genocide dictate that it be defined as a humanitarian gesture. Under any other terms the call for establishing an “externally created governing council” would be seen as inappropriate foreign intervention in violation of the Geneva Convention and other international covenants. No matter: we are talking about *genocide*.

Like the other leading advocates of the “Save Darfur!” movement, Dr. Eric Reeves frequently cites the new international humanitarian legal instrument titled “Responsibility to Protect” or “R2P,” a doctrine created by the “international community” in the new millennium to protect innocent people in cases where their own government is not taking appropriate action to protect them from harm: Sudan offers the first live test case where the “R2P” doctrine is being applied. The “R2P” was designed to override state sovereignty, and it dictates the “need” for international military action.

Whether he is presenting his statistics tallying the numbers of dead killed by the Government of Sudan or admonishing Western officials, Dr. Eric Reeves is published everywhere, and all the time: seems every word out of his mouth is news that is fit to print. Dr. Reeves’ writings on genocide in Sudan began as early as 1998. Of course, back then it was not genocide in Darfur, it was genocide in south Sudan, according to Dr. Eric Reeves and Mel Middleton, around a place called Juba, in regions other than Darfur, which no one on the world had heard of, where the GOS was, then as now, accused of committing massive atrocities, crimes against humanity, and genocide of southerners. The south of Sudan is said

to be mostly Christian, with some yet-to-be-converted animists, pagan animal worshippers of traditional African religions.

Dr. David Hoile has lived in Sudan on and off, and he works for the European Sudanese Public Affairs council, and he is widely seen as a mercenary (writer) producing flak (propaganda) for the Government of Sudan. Dr. Reeves accuses Dr. David Hoile of the Sudan Public Affairs Council of being an unscrupulous mercenary and apologist for the crimes of the GOS, while Dr. Hoile accuses Dr. Reeves of being “the ugly American” and a propagandist for the West who embodies the age-old white, Western imperialism.

To compare and contrast the positions of Dr. Eric Reeves and Dr. David Hoile we can consider the case of the Servant’s Heart report of 22 May 2003, issued in alliance with their partners Freedom Quest and The Voice of the Martyr’s, which claimed that “thousands of unarmed civilians” were massacred in the South Sudanese villages of Liang, Dengaji, Kawaji and Yawagi in April 2002.

According to the Center for Religious Freedom, “Servant’s Heart, Freedom Quest International and The Voice of the Martyrs (Canada) reported the incident, and called for an investigation by the international Civilian Protection and Monitoring Team assigned to monitor and report on human rights and other violations of the March, 2002 agreement between the Government of Sudan and the Sudanese People’s Liberation Movement.”

“The Civilian Protection Monitoring Team (CPMT) began operations in late 2002,” writes Michael Kevane, a scholar from Santa Clara University who analyzed early CPMT data. “The organization is an odd entity in the annals of international organizations. It is funded largely by the United States, and consists of retired military officers, many from the U.S. Yet it claims to be independent of the U.S., Government of Sudan, and SPLA.” The Sudan people’s Liberation Army is the military wing of the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement.

Regarding the independence of the CPMT, on the one hand we find Dr. Eric Reeves complaining that the GOS has impeded the impartial work of the CPMT by denying the CPMT access to air transport within Sudan. In this case Dr. Eric Reeves places an unwavering, and even unquestionable, faith in the U.S.-led CPMT, expecting or assuming that the CPMT’s reporting will be unbiased, by default, given the U.S. military leadership. On the other hand we find Dr. Eric Reeves complaining that “the U.S.-led Civilian Protection Monitoring Team has already been deeply compromised” and therefore its investigations and reporting on atrocities cannot be trusted. Presumably, in the latter case, and according to Dr. Reeves, the CPMT is covering up for the Government of Sudan because the U.S. is unwilling to challenge the GOS and risk alienating its supporters or allies, including China, Egypt and Malaysia.

Indeed, Reeves wrote: “[A] careful analysis of the history of the US-led CPMT reveals on the part of the US State Department and the US charge d’affaires in Khartoum a shameful willingness to delay deployment, to compromise investigations, and to abandon the most successful methods and leaders in order to appease the sensibilities of the Khartoum regime. This conveys the ominous message that the US is willing to act expediently in dealing with Khartoum, mistakenly believing that this will entice the regime to make peace.”

But what if it is not “appeasement” that drives the Bush administrations’ policies in Sudan, but rather direct collaboration? Second, is it beyond the realm of possibility that there are other business factions connected to or driving the “Save Darfur!” movement that are in conflict with those working with the Khartoum government?

Dr. David Hoile, working for the Sudan Public Affairs Council, has written at length about the conflict in Sudan, and Darfur, and Dr. Hoile has alleged that Servant's Heart and Freedom Quest International's charges that the GOS was responsible for mass killings and other atrocities have repeatedly been exaggerated or fabricated outright.

Regarding the incident of April 2002, reported by Servant's Heart in February 2003, Dr. Hoile reported that it was a fabrication that was later proven false by the Civilian Protection Monitoring Team. For proof he cites the CPMT report, "The Report Of Investigation: Liang, Dengaji, Kawaji and Yawagi Villages," Civilian Protection Monitoring Team, Khartoum, 19 June 2003.

The CPMT, then led by retired U.S. Army Brigadier General Charles Baumann, apparently released the results of its investigation in a report on 19 June 2003, concluding that, "the claim that up to 2,500 people were killed has not been substantiated" proving that the wrongful allegations made by the organization against the Government of Sudan were unfounded and merely fabricated. The report apparently recommended that: "all sources carefully screen future allegations for credibility, source of information and accuracy."

According to Michael Kevane, the CPMT investigated 50 cases over the years 2003-2004. Of those, five were deemed by the CPMT to have been cases of legitimate military activities, nine were found to be not substantiable, and 36 involved deliberate targeting of civilians, through intent or neglect. Of the 36 cases of targeting civilians, there were at least 254 casualties, according to the CPMT: of the 36 cases, 22 were cases where the Government of Sudan forces were at fault, 9 were cases where SPLA forces were at fault, and 5 were either cases where both parties were at fault or where militia forces (SSDF) [South Sudan Defense Forces] were at fault.

Who do we believe, some folks from U.S. Christian missionary organizations? An Englishman accused of being the mouthpiece for the Government of Sudan? A retired Pentagon General? In the case of the villages of Liang, Dengaji, Kawaji, Yawagi, Dr. David Hoile's claim that the CPMT proved the allegations to be unfounded was true, and according to the CPMT and Dr. Hoile the accusations of the Christian AID groups were unfounded to the point of drawing a mild reprimand from the CPMT.

While focusing on Darfur, Dr. Eric Reeves has noted that the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency is linked to the GOS intelligence apparatus; there are other U.S. interests and corporate links to the GOS as well. The role of the Civilian Protection Monitoring Team is likely as compromised as Dr. Eric Reeves indicates. On this point it seems clear. Any investigatory body with such close ties to the U.S. State Department or branches of the U.S. military or intelligence apparatus as exist with the CPMT is, as Dr. Eric Reeves claims, "deeply compromised." This is a given, not something that needs to be proven.

But just how deeply remains to be established.

A private U.S. military company with a less than stellar record won the contract for staffing the CPMT under a U.S. State Department contract: Pacific Architects and Engineers (PAE). In 2004 the CPMT office was being run by Brigadier General Frank Toney (retired), who was previously the commander of Special Forces for the United States Army; General Toney organized covert operations into Iraq and Kuwait in the first Gulf War.

Role of the CIA

It is fairly widely reported that the CIA has maintained ties to some intelligence networks in Sudan. By revealing this point for the clandestine link that it is, “Save Darfur!” advocates like Mel Middleton and Dr. Eric Reeves gain credibility. For those on the political left who see the Central Intelligence Agency as a nasty, secretive organization aligned with the “shadow government” of the United States, the CIA is always the very problem, never the solution. As Middleton puts it:

“The CIA, as well as the State Department, are bending over backwards to ensure that the NIF fascists in Khartoum remain in place, and have done everything possible to thwart attempts to remove it by the people of Sudan and the international human rights community. The State department has consistently downplayed the extent of the genocide; Khartoum’s direct links to international terrorism (including Al Qaeda) and, since George W. Bush took office, has consistently taken the appeasement route, which, with criminal dictatorships, never works.

For those who see the CIA as an essential element in the maintenance of U.S. national security interests and the “War on Terror” the people like Dr. Eric Reeves and Mel Middleton are as likely as not seen as dangers to free and democratic [sic] societies like the U.S. and Canada. Because the anti-Khartoum lobby has challenged certain Chinese, Malaysian and Canadian oil companies, Talisman Oil in particular, and other powerful interests—something this author respects very much—they have at times put their lives at risk.

“I have received numerous death threats, false accusations and slander,” Mel Middleton said. “Talisman has threatened to ‘put me in jail’, and others have done all they can to destroy my reputation and credibility.”

Mel Middleton has a long and deep history of working on behalf of the disenfranchised people of South Sudan, where the operations of Talisman Oil have been connected to atrocities. Talisman is one of the powerful Adolph Lundin companies (Lundin Oil is another) with nefarious mining and petroleum operations connected to war and mass murder in Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo. A Swedish national, Adolph Lundin has a deep history of connections to the G.H.W. Bush family. In 1996, for example, just weeks before the U.S.-backed invasion of Zaire commenced, G.H.W. Bush personally telephoned Zaire/DRC strongman, Mobutu Sese Seko, on Lundin’s behalf. Adolph Lundin’s Tenke Mining Corporation today holds major concessions in Katanga, DRC.

While Dr. Eric Reeves has written about the Central Intelligence Agency with his recent focus on Darfur, at least, he has in the past taken the position that there is no CIA connection to Sudan or its internal affairs. In a personal communication in 2001 Dr. Eric Reeves said: “I don’t know that there’s any significant CIA role in Sudan...No, the CIA is not involved there.”

However, ties to U.S. intelligence predate the current Islamic regime. From 1964 to 1984 Sudan was run by the corrupt U.S. client dictatorship of Col. Jaafar Nimeiri. Within three days of the March 4, 1984 visit by former CIA Director and then Vice-President George H.W. Bush—which came under the U.S. propaganda banner of food AID for starving millions—Nimeiri instituted a purge against Islamic society, including mass arrests, executions and torture. Draconian IMF and World Bank “reforms” led to starvation, unemployment, mass riots and state repression. As Nimeiri stood arm-in-arm with Ronald Reagan for a New York Times piece in April, the U.S. quickly sent \$64 million of a \$181 million aid package to Khartoum in an unsuccessful attempt to crush the insurrection which

soon toppled “old friend” Nimeiri.

In September of 1983, to gain support from the increasingly important Muslim Brotherhood in Sudan, President Nimeiri introduced the so-called Islamic law system of Sharia for all of the country, even the southern Christian and animist regions. Thus we can say that Christians in Sudan—and their brothers and sisters abroad—who are complaining about Sharia law and religious intolerance coming out of Khartoum today should trace their complaints about Sharia (Islamic Fundamentalist Law) back to the Central Intelligence Agency and their man Nimeiri.

In an interview with Howard French, former Africa bureau chief of the New York Times now based in Shanghai, French responded incredulously to the suggestion that the CIA was not involved in Sudan.

“Sudan has been an area of deep CIA involvement for many, many years. [To say that the CIA is not involved there] is just nonsense. Anyone who says that the CIA is not involved in Sudan, you know, is either willfully ignoring the truth...or just...stupid. It’s just not plausible. First of all [Colonel Jaafar Mohammed Al-Nimeiri], the former Sudanese President, was a CIA operative.”

At the time, writing about South Sudan, Dr. Eric Reeves’ denial of CIA involvement supported his position; either due to ignorance, willful neglect or unconsciousness, the CIA link was dismissed. This is not the only case of Dr. Eric Reeves dismissing information of relevance to the “humanitarian” conflict he is concerned about.

On 26 December 2006, a letter to the editor by Smith College professor Dr. Eric Reeves was published in the Daily Hampshire Gazette, a small local newspaper in Northampton, Massachusetts. Dr. Eric Reeves and Smith College both reside in Northampton, and it is also very close to home for this writer. The letter irrefutably establishes that Dr. Eric Reeves does not in any way equate the conflict in Darfur to oil.

Letter to the Editor

Daily Hampshire Gazette

www.gazettenet.com

Tuesday, December 26, 2006

Darfur tragedy isn’t linked to an oil-exploration effort

To the editor: The Gazette’s important reporting December 9 [2006] on local Darfur advocacy notes the views of Keith Harmon Snow, including his mistaken assertion about the role of oil development in the Khartoum regime’s genocidal counter-insurgency strategy in western Sudan.

Having worked and published on oil development issues in Sudan for the past eight years, including traveling to the working oil regions, I believe Gazette readers should know that there is not a shred of evidence—seismic or geological—of significant oil reserves in Darfur. All oil development and production activities occur in southern Sudan (primarily Upper Nile

Province) and the very south of Kordofan Province.

There exists not a single credible report indicating oil in Darfur, except for one very old and small site in the most southeastern corner of this immense province (closest to Upper Nile). There is not a single photograph of oil exploration or development infrastructure anywhere else in Darfur; no credible human rights or humanitarian organization has presented evidence of significant oil development in Darfur, even as many have frequently reported on the massively destructive consequences of Asian, Canadian and European oil development in southern Sudan.

It is convenient to explain away the passionate American outcry over genocide in Darfur as somehow orchestrated by big oil interests. It is also perversely wrong.

Eric Reeves

Northampton

Dr. Eric Reeves is adamant.

Since the very first reports about atrocities in Darfur began to appear, the contention of this writer has been this: get the facts out on the table, all the facts, and then we can talk about what needs to be done to stop the massive loss of human life which the Western mass media is hitting us over the head with, day in, day out. Until all the facts and all the interests have been made transparent, the work is not to “Stop Genocide!” but to make transparent the facts and interests behind the “genocide” and the movement to “stop genocide.” Unless we understand who is manipulating this issue, and how, we are open to be too easily manipulated—in service to yet another military debacle by the U.S. its allies.

Now, let’s evaluate the above claims by Dr. Eric Reeves.

The 9 December 2006 Gazette article which Dr. Eric Reeves references in his letter above was a very long front page article which continued inside the newspaper. It was also one of many articles whose slant and focus was overwhelmingly supportive of the satellite “Save Darfur!” coalition in the Northampton area, and its international agenda. A local Jewish activist group connected with the B’Nai Israel Synagogue spearheads this movement, which has a mutually supportive relationship with Dr. Eric Reeves.

As everywhere, however, the local Western Massachusetts base of support for the “Save Darfur!” campaign includes people of both Christian and Jewish faiths, and others both right and left of the political spectrum. It includes Quakers from the American Friends Service Committee and human rights campaigners from Amnesty International’s local Amherst (MA) chapter; it also included Mayor of Northampton (MA) Claire Higgins. In the middle of this extensive article further cheering on the “Save Darfur!” movement there were found several comments by this writer suggesting that the entire “Save Darfur!” movement revolved around powerful interests seeking to overthrow the Government of Sudan and/or gain access to the petroleum and other natural resources in Darfur specifically, and in Sudan more generally. The comments, out of their original context, did not reflect the complexity of the issues or the deeper questions that will be raised in this writing. There have never been any articles in this local newspaper that examine the other questions and therefore balance out the reportage and the issue. Given the preponderance of coverage in favor of his cause, Dr. Eric Reeves still felt it necessary to pen a separate letter to attack the singular

point made in one or two brief remarks.

“The Gazette’s important reporting December 9 [2006] on local Darfur advocacy notes the views of Keith Harmon Snow, including his mistaken assertion about the role of oil development in the Khartoum regime’s genocidal counter-insurgency strategy in western Sudan.”

From paragraph one of his letter we can also consider the “counter-insurgency” language used by Dr. Reeves. In order for there to be a “counter-” insurgency one would reasonably assume that there is an insurgency. In fact, that is a rather specious assumption in today’s world: the United States has a long history over the past five decades designing and implementing “counter-insurgency” operations to root out insurgents that didn’t actually exist. Similarly, today, we see a U.S. strategy of “counter-terrorism” which is in fact a complete inversion of the facts: the U.S. government is itself engaged in acts of terrorism all over the world—terrorism and terrorist acts that provide the *fait accompli* justification for foreign military or economic intervention. Counter-insurgency programs created by the Pentagon include programs to massacre, rape, torture and assassinate, and these are routine, not accidental or one-time jobs committed by “a few rogue soldiers” or “a few mentally unbalanced individuals,” as is always claimed.

Nonetheless, in the case of Darfur, Sudan, we find that there is indeed an insurgency led by several “rebel” factions, including the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A). But Dr. Eric Reeves says very little about these insurgents, and what he does say does not add up to much, if it adds up at all. Ditto his analyses and writings about greater South Sudan from 1998 to the present: the true role of the “rebel” Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) is never revealed. The fact remains that Dr. Eric Reeves has in this simple letter shared something he hardly pays any attention to in most all of his extensive writings: this is a war involving more than one party.

Paragraph two opens with a statement meant to establish the credibility of the writer, Dr. Eric Reeves:

“Having worked and published on oil development issues in Sudan for the past eight years, including traveling to the working oil regions, I believe Gazette readers should know that there is not a shred of evidence—seismic or geological—of significant oil reserves in Darfur. All oil development and production activities occur in southern Sudan (primarily Upper Nile Province) and the very south of Kordofan Province.”

The fact is that Dr. Eric Reeves has spent roughly two weeks in his entire life in Africa, and these were in South Sudan: the remainder of the “past eight years” of his life dedicated to Sudan have been based out of Smith College. Why is Dr. Eric Reeves taking such a hard “no oil in Darfur” line? It’s certainly not because the oil isn’t there.

There are many sources of high standing that have publicized the Darfur oil link. A typical middle-of-the-road example is the article “Oil found in South Darfur—Oil issues threaten to derail Sudan hopes for peace.”

“The report also reveals that the president of Sudanese oil exploration company Advanced Petroleum Company (APCO), Salah Wahbi, told The Sunday Business Post that oil had been found in South Darfur. He said that oil had been found in south Darfur and he urged the [Darfur] rebels to return to the negotiating table.”

The Advanced Petroleum Company (APCO) concession is located in South Darfur and the name "APCO" is denoted on the petroleum map of Sudan that is produced by the European Coalition on Oil in Sudan, a "watchdog" organization which appears to involve some of the perpetrator companies that are charged with gross human rights violations and named herein.

Oil in Darfur

Other credible sources that clearly see the evidence of oil in Darfur include AlertNet, a syndicated on-line journal which positions itself as a leader in "alerting humanitarians to emergencies." Published in London by the highly respected Reuters Foundation, the award-winning AlertNet was launched in 1997 "to provide support services for aid agencies," and it reports current membership of over 300 leading agencies in some 80 countries.

"London (AlertNet): The existence of big oilfields in Sudan's war-ravaged Darfur region has added a new twist to a bloody, two-year-old conflict, potentially turning the quest for peace into a tussle over resources."

"Sudan announced in April [2005] that its ABCO [sic: APCO] corporation, which is 37 percent owned by Swiss company Cliveden, had begun drilling for oil in Darfur, where preliminary studies showed there were "abundant" quantities of oil."

"The issue of oil in Darfur isn't very different from the issue of oil anywhere else," said Mike Aaronson, director general of British NGO Save the Children. "It's potentially a tremendous blessing, and potentially a tremendous handicap."

According to Ken Bacon, President of the non-profit U.S. advocacy organization Refugees International, petroleum is a central issue behind the war in Darfur. In an interview with AlertNet media, Bacon was repeatedly quoted for his comments about oil in Darfur in the context of its importance to external governments and corporations. Bacon went on to describe the conflict as a "land grab" by powerful economic interests. The displacement of populations, he said, was a means to access and control the land they live on.

"There's some speculation that one of the reasons that these land grabs are going on is to get the African tribes off the ground so they can be controlled by the government in Khartoum," Ken Bacon, president of U.S. advocacy organization Refugees International, told AlertNet."

"The United States has maintained a trade embargo against Sudan since 1997, so there is no legal U.S. investment in the country."

"Cliveden, the biggest stakeholder in ABCO [sic: APCO] corporation, is a Swiss company, but an investigation for British television Channel 4 revealed that Cliveden's chief executive, Friedholm Eronat, swapped his U.S. passport for a British one shortly before signing an oil deal with the Khartoum government in October 2003."

Above we find executives from two major non-profit organizations stating, in articles published by mainstream news corporations, that the Darfur conflict revolves around Darfur's oil. Professionals from both Save the Children and Refugees International directly contradict Dr. Eric Reeves' absolutist statements about oil in Darfur, and both are organizations that Dr. Eric Reeves cites as respectable and credible. Dr. Eric Reeves has also declared that Save the Children is one of the beneficiaries of his fundraising efforts for the

people of Sudan.

Not a shred of evidence?

Another 2005 news account that directly establishes that Darfur is about oil is one that was reported by the syndicated Reuters agency and published in the left-leaning CorpWatch:

“Sudan on Tuesday said its ABCO [sic: APCO] corporation—in which Swiss company Cliveden owns 37 percent—had begun drilling for oil in Darfur, where preliminary studies showed there were ‘abundant’ quantities of oil. ‘The Sudanese people have never benefited from these (oil) discoveries,’ said Ahmed Hussein, the London-based spokesman for the Justice and Equality Movement [rebels of Darfur]. ‘The oil must wait until a final peace deal is signed.’”

Is there oil in Darfur?

“In fact, a huge strategic game is taking place in central Africa for control of black gold,” wrote Africa Research Bulletin. Indeed, Darfur proves a pivotal geographic prize: who ever controls Darfur not only controls Darfur’s oil but also has potential to control the oil in Chad:

“While financing the [Darfur] rebels, Beijing apparently has its attention focused on Chadian oil (200,000 barrels a day) extracted in the south of the country through a US-Malaysian consortium and conveyed to the United States via Cameroon ports and the Gulf of Guinea. A more favorably disposed government in N’Djamena [the capital of Chad] could grant oil permits and authorize an oil pipeline joining southern Chad and Sudan in order to reverse the flow of black gold. China apparently also has an interest in the sub soil of Darfur, which might harbor fossil fuels. So it seems that the war between Washington and Beijing has already begun, amid the sands of Africa.”

When the conflict in Darfur spread to Chad and Central Africa Republic the Western media echoed the constant “genocide” refrain. With the above we find that the reality is a little more deeply submerged beneath the headlines. It appears that Chad is a pivotal element in the disastrous “Save Darfur!” equation. However in an international debate published by the BBC on 27 October 2007, Dr. Eric Reeves stated: ““Chad tells us nothing about Darfur.”

On the contrary, the evidence suggests that Dr. Eric Reeves tells us nothing about Darfur. In fact, it appears that Dr. Reeves wields information with expedience: if it serves his purposes he uses it; any inconvenient facts are ignored if they don’t fit the explanation or admonition of the moment, and then utilized when it serves the new or adjusted argument. On 27 October Dr. Eric Reeves stated: “Chad tells us nothing about Darfur.” As the conflagration unfolded in neighboring Chad and Central Africa Republic, Dr. Eric Reeves was singing a different tune: “The situation in eastern Chad cries out desperately for urgent deployment of a robust international security force,” he wrote on 13 December 2006.

Indeed, in the same article in early December 2006 we find Dr. Eric Reeves advocating military actions that clearly indicate that he is party to the aggressive propaganda campaign which serves the military campaign being waged by Western interests:

“Such a [robust international security] force would also send a clear signal of international resolve, and put in place military resources that would be hours, not weeks or months from being able to respond to events on the ground in Darfur.”

Dr. Eric Reeves, as seen above, is an advocate for military operations; he goes on to underscore his failure to either comprehend or illuminate the deeper geopolitical forces at work in the region.

“But without French leadership, including in passing an authorizing UN Security Council resolution, there is no chance of forward movement. The Financial Times reports that France appears to be waiting for US leadership on the issue; but if this is French strategy, it is finally disingenuous:

“[A Bush administration official said] that the US wanted to work with France in Chad, where Paris has a small contingent of troops, to help President Idris Deby fend off Sudanese-backed rebels. French diplomats said there had been no approach yet from Washington about military action and Paris would only envisage military initiatives within a multilateral framework.” (Financial Times [London] [dateline: Washington, DC], December 12, 2006).”

What is “French strategy” in the region? According to Dr. Eric Reeves France is “waiting for the US leadership” and this “is finally disingenuous.” On the contrary, France and the United States have been at war over Africa. Rwanda from 1990 to 1994 was predominantly a war between France and its allies and the United States and its allies. Ivory Coast is one of the latest areas of French-U.S. conflict; Gabon will be a future area. But France has had a deep hand in supporting the Khartoum regime, and it has been primarily in defense of French interests from the slow, steady challenge by U.S. interests seeking to displace them (French interests).

The northern people of Sudan have historically been very hostile to the people of the south, denying them any kind of equitable development. And then Chevron—with the help of USAID and a company called HTSPE (Hunting) Ltd.—discovered oil. And so, while John Garang’s Sudan People’s Liberation started out as a true African liberation force, liberation is something the Western world will not accept for African populations, especially when there is American oil under their soil. Every single liberation struggle has been co-opted or curtailed by Western powers. John Garang’s Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), through clandestine deals with powerful Western institutions, was transformed, fairly early on, from a people’s movement to just another mercenary army serving the imperatives of power and private profit. The SPLA leader John Garang was a Christian of the southern minority Dinka tribe with a degree from Grinnell College (Iowa) and advanced degrees from Iowa State, and with military training from the U.S. Army’s Fort Benning Georgia, the U.S. military academy which includes the infamous School of the Americas, notable for training Latin American militaries in torture, massacres and assassinations.

Other examples of sell-out “African” liberation movements include Robert Mugabe and ZANU-PF in Zimbabwe; Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress in South Africa; and the unified Ethiopian liberation struggle against the Dergue regime of Mengitsu in Ethiopia, which ultimately brought the current brutal regime of Meles Zenawi to power. Where bribery and coercion did not succeed in punctuating liberation movements, assassination was used: Kwame Nkrumah, Patrice Lumumba, Thomas Sankara, Claude Ake, and Ken Saro-Wiwa all provide notable examples. In the end, it was likely some U.S. or allied intelligence that eliminated John Garang in the helicopter “crash” in South Sudan that occurred soon after the peace deal with Khartoum was signed; Garang had simply become too powerful.

Iran, Iraq, Libya and France have all provided military and intelligence support to Khartoum.

Garang received military support and protected border sanctuaries from Museveni in Uganda, with backing from the U.S. It wasn't long before France's worst nightmare became a reality: through low-intensity conflict, a pro-U.S. regime was installed in South Sudan. Responding to U.S. infiltration of on the continent the French *Direction Generale de la Securite Exterieur* (DGSE) began collaborating with Sudanese intelligence in the mid-1990's; Sudanese intelligence was provided with state-of-the-art satellite imagery pinpointing SPLA bases in South Sudan. The French also provided secure communications equipment and listening devices. According to one French human rights group, *Survie*: "Satellite photographs were handed out so that the Sudan population in the south could be bombarded. Genocide is taking place in the South of Sudan and France is quietly taking part."

According to intelligence insider Wayne Madsen, Khartoum agreed to keep its Darfur province, which bordered on Chad, free of rebels fighting against the pro-French Chadian government. In return, France agreed to pressure its ally, the government of Central Africa Republic, to permit Sudanese troops to cross its territory to attack SPLA guerrillas in South Sudan.

Understand the conflagration in Darfur means understanding Darfur's relationship to Chad and Uganda. Like Uganda, the U.S. penetration into Chad is today very significant. The French military has provided air transport for some rebels of the Darfur conflict. The U.S. is working with others through its proxy forces and regional allies on the frontline states of Ethiopia, Eritrea, Chad and Uganda. The geopolitical alignments and ongoing regional struggle reflect both deep divisions amongst the elites in the United States and Europe, and a hydra of multinational corporate and mercenary interests difficult to comprehend or confront.

According to the independent Norwegian news service Norwatch:

"So far, oil has not played a central role in the Darfur-conflict. But that just might be a question of time. The rich oil fields are lined up like pearls on a string from South Sudan to Chad. The only place where the oil has been left relatively untouched is Darfur."

If we were to distill it all down into the most simple analyses we might say this: What Exxon-Mobil and other more U.S.-based companies control in Chad, China wants; and what the Chinese National Petroleum Company and TotalFinaElf have in South Sudan, the US companies want. Darfur is right in the middle.

Trade embargo

Some take the United States' trade embargo against Sudan, set up in 1997 under the Clinton Administration, as evidence that the United States has no interest in Sudan's petroleum, and no way to get at it. Mel Middleton, executive director of Freedom Quest International, appears to see it this way.

"You conveniently forget that the US is the only nation that has sanctions on Sudan. Thus its oil companies are not allowed to do any business there—and if they do so, take them to court and suit them for violation of US sanctions. The fact is that however badly US corporations might want the oil in Sudan, right now they can't have it, because of these sanctions."

“Yes, Bush is trying to change that—not by doing anything to stop the genocide, but by attempting to whitewash the Khartoum regime to the point where it is brought back to international respectability. That is why the CIA and US State Dept continue to embrace some of the worst human rights violators in the world among the Sudanese government.”

However, any rational examination of the West’s hunger for oil would lead one to conclude that it is *precisely* the existence of sanctions “forbidding” U.S. oil companies from getting at the oil that is behind the conflagration. This is not something “conveniently forgotten” but the very *raison d’etre* for the deep distrust of the “Save Darfur!” movement and the advocates, like Mel Middleton and Dr. Eric Reeves and John Prendergast, who are spearheading it.

David Morse thinks there is oil in Darfur, and though he cannot understand why Dr. Eric Reeves is claiming there is none, he apparently respects Dr. Eric Reeves’ so much that he doesn’t question Dr. Reeves’ position.

In 2005, Morse traveled to the Nuba Mountains in South Sudan to research the conflict. (His contacts with the SPLA and Christian relief organizations that assisted him in his passage from Kenya to Sudan were organized with the help of this writer, in Nairobi.) He is a member of the same regional “Save Darfur!” chapter as Dr. Eric Reeves. He has published several lengthy articles that support the “Save Darfur!” movement while also challenging the oil angle. Like some within the “Save Darfur!” movement David Morse sees the oil in Darfur, and Sudan more generally, as the driving force behind the Bush Administration’s supposed intransigence or reluctance to get tough to force the Government of Sudan to stop the genocide. However, like most “Save Darfur!” advocates or supporters, David Morse is blind to the role that the “Save Darfur!” movement is playing to help get at that oil.

“Until April 2005, it was said that whatever oil deposits existed in Darfur were confined to its southeastern corner. However, new seismographic studies brought a surprise. On April 19, 2005, Mohamed Siddig, a spokesman for the Sudan Energy Ministry, announced that a new high-yield well had been drilled in North Darfur—several hundred kilometers northwest of the existing fields. Seismographic studies indicated that a huge basin of oil, expected to yield up to 500,000 barrels of crude per day, lay in the area. This Darfur discovery effectively doubled Sudan’s oil reserves... Perhaps as astonishing as the oil discovery, reported in brief [by Reuters](#), was that it was not picked up by the world press.”

“June 2005 saw oil companies from India, France, Malaysia, China, Great Britain, Japan, and Sweden [flocking](#) to sign contracts in Sudan, while U.S. companies were officially sidelined by the 1997 sanctions. The rush was occasioned partly by the new oil finds in Darfur, but also by a long-awaited North-South peace agreement, scheduled to be implemented in July, that ended the civil war.”

“Although U.S. oil companies could not openly join the scramble for Sudan’s oil, many were finding ways to circumvent the sanctions. One method was by minority ownership. For instance, [Marathon Oil](#), based in Houston and a major contributor to the Bush re-election campaign, is a partner in the French company Total... [At one point] Marathon had resumed payments to the Khartoum government in the expectation that it would take part of Total’s operations in the oilfields.”

“In addition, certain foreign companies—including some that exist only on paper—were probably serving as place-holders for large U.S. firms until the sanctions could be lifted. One

such 'foreign' company is registered in the Virgin Islands, uses a Swiss business address, and is owned by an American oil tycoon, Friedhelm Eronat, who has fronted for Exxon Mobil in the past. BBC 4 discovered Eronat was at the heart of a deal to get at Darfur's oil. Eronat avoided prison and a fine only by swapping his U.S. citizenship for British citizenship just before signing a lucrative contract with the government of Sudan for drilling rights to a huge tract that spreads west from South Sudan across the middle of Darfur. As a result of the new Darfur discoveries, that contract is now worth billions of dollars. The deal provoked outrage from human rights groups in Britain. U.S. media showed little curiosity."

David Morse has raised some interesting questions that do not so neatly fit within the "Save Darfur!" framework of good guys ["Save Darfur!"] versus bad guys [Khartoum]. This Eronat fellow is rather remarkable: he trades his U.S. passport for a U.K. citizenship so that he can circumvent U.S. trade restrictions on Sudan! And imagine the suggestion that someone might be creating a placeholder company for Exxon-Mobil until such time as the Government of Sudan has been whipped into shape and the petroleum becomes available through the lifting of the U.S. sanctions! Place holding like this happens all the time through front companies and offshore subsidiaries. The most important point made by David Morse might well be the repeated notice given that [1] the petroleum discoveries in Darfur were not picked up by the world press; and [2] the Eronat deal provoked outrage from human rights groups in Britain, yet U.S. media showed little curiosity.

Given the massive blanket "Save Darfur!" media coverage, and the moral imperative of "stopping genocide" and "never again," messages which the U.S. media has peddled over and over, even whipping the public up into a frenzy, why isn't the Western media interested in the new oil finds in Darfur? And what about an oil tycoon who is speculating on oil concessions in the midst of genocide? Why does Dr. Eric Reeves deny the oil factor?

The Marathon Oil board of directors includes some very interesting characters connected to U.S. oil and defense companies, including JackandPanther LLC, a privately-held military and aerospace consulting small business firm whose clients include top Pentagon agencies; Texaco; the US-Saudi Arabian Business Council; the American Petroleum Institute; United Technologies Corp.; Conoco Oil (a DuPont subsidiary involved in Somalia today). Two Marathon directors are also directors of H.J. Heinz Company, of the Heinz family that democratic presidential candidate John Kerry married into. And no directory of interlocking interests would be complete without the world's premier aerospace and defense behemoth, Lockheed Martin. The circle is complete: Lockheed Martin is a major financial backer of the global "humanitarian" organization, CARE. Unsurprisingly, CARE is also working in Darfur.

In a follow-on article to his first expose on oil in Darfur, David Morse articulated what should be obvious to any thinking American: this is yet another conflict driven by rapacious corporate hunger for oil. Of course, that is what Dr. Eric Reeves always said about South Sudan...but only so much as to say that it is those damned Chinese and Malaysians, and the odd Canadian company: rapaciousness for oil, in the case of Sudan, appears to be something U.S. oil companies are able to remarkably transcend!

"The ink is scarcely dry on oil deals signed between the Islamist dictatorship that rules Sudan from the northern capital, Khartoum, and an eager bevy of oil companies from China, India, Japan, and Britain—even as the genocide continues full tilt in the western region known as Darfur. Every new contract signed in Khartoum makes it clearer that this genocide is fueled by the world's unquenchable thirst for petroleum.

Oil rigs are now drilling on land seized from black African farmers—who have been killed, raped, and driven off their land by their own government through its proxy militias, known as Janjaweed, in a campaign of ethnic cleansing now in its third year.

Is there oil in Darfur? Seems a lot of credible sources think so. There are the concessions, as the two maps produced by this author have shown. There are companies chasing the oil. There are even companies drilling for oil in Darfur.

The problem with the analyses by Dr. Eric Reeves is that it is [1] full of holes, and [2] capricious. Dr. Eric Reeves has fought the oil industry in South Sudan for years. As some have noted, including Dr. Eric Reeves, these were mostly French, Chinese, Malaysian and Arab companies, with one rogue Canadian company.

Why the discrepancy with Darfur? Are we concerned about people's lives, or not? If Dr. Eric Reeves is concerned about people dying—and I believe he sincerely is—then why does he deny the oil link? By denying the oil link, Dr. Eric Reeves sets himself up for some serious challenges, because one then begins to wonder what is true and what is not true. How can we trust the other information that Dr. Eric Reeves provides, such as the numbers of dead that he is ever claiming, if he can't even get the most basic facts correct? Or, is there something else going on?

In fact, the oil connection gets deeper still, and anyone with any research skills at all can find this out... *if they want to.*

In September 2006, two Norwegian watchdog groups called Norwatch and the Norwegian Council for Africa discovered that a U.K. firm called Rolls Royce Marine (a subsidiary of Rolls Royce U.K., whose directors are British and American) had sold millions in diesel motors and pumps to the Chinese National Petroleum Company (CNPC). The CNPC owns concession "Block 6," which protrudes deep into Darfur. Some excerpts from the Norwegian groups' reports:

"While the Norwegian government has agreed to send 170 Norwegian soldiers to Sudan, the Bergen-based company Rolls-Royce Marine is sending engines in order to pump up oil in the area. "We are not engaged in politics", the company claims."

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"After having rejected for several days to comment on detailed information from Norwatch and the Norwegian Council for Africa, Rolls-Royce Marine at last confirmed their involvement on the doorstep of Darfur. According to the company, deliveries are now to be made to the border area between Darfur and Kordofan. According to Human Rights Watch, even the border is considered as part of the larger conflict zone. The deliveries will take place "in the course of a few months" and are worth "just above ten million dollars".

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"Egbert Wesselink at European Coalition on Oil in Sudan in the Netherlands says that they are aware that Rolls-Royce has supplied equipment to Sudan. Wesselink is not pleased about the silence of the international oil companies with regard to their activities in Sudan. "The lack of frankness in Sudan's oil industry is a great problem. This is very politically sensitive in Sudan", he says. "We know that Block 6 extends into Darfur and that oil is being extracted in Darfur. In the situation now developing in Sudan nobody can work and at the

same time keep silent.”

Another article elaborates, noting that Darfur’s oil is being stolen through oil infrastructure physically located outside of Darfur’s boundaries. The article is titled “New, Secret Oil Installations in Darfur.”

Darfuri rebels earlier have attacked oil installations on both sides of the regional border with Kordofan. The reason is that Block 6 also taps into oil resources on Darfuri soil, although most installations are within Kordofan.

Some sources claim thousands of Chinese troops are stationed in the country to protect Beijing’s growing interests in Sudan. The conflicts in Sudan have by some analysts been described as a mini-war between the US and China over the country’s immense oil resources. Booming China is the world’s fastest growing oil importing nation and is seeking independence from Washington’s control over the world’s oil resources.”

No oil in Darfur? A mini-war between the US and China over Sudan’s immense oil resources?

“I don’t understand Eric Reeves’ adamance on this point,” said David Morse, responding to the question of why Dr. Eric Reeves denies the oil factor:

“...but I don’t attribute anything diabolical to it. He thinks our interest in oil skews our perception of the problem. To some extent he may be right, in that it is all too easy for our readers to latch onto that commonality with other parts of the world—from Nigeria to Costa Rica—and fail to understand the local complexities of history, ethnicity, land-use, water, etc...”

Maybe that’s because most global conflicts revolve around Big Oil and most global conflicts revolving around Big Oil involve the U.S. military? War in Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, Indonesia, Nigeria, Iran, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Sudan... Who, exactly, fails to understand what?

“The oil in southeastern Darfur seems to me pretty well documented, and that is where it can probably be safely said that people have been driven from their homes to make way for the pipeline and drilling, as they have been in [Sudan’s] Kordofan, Unity and the Upper Nile regions.”

What David Morse suggests above is that Eric Reeves may be intentionally deflecting attention from the Darfur oil story so as to maximize his capacity to mobilize public support for his agenda. This is expedience, and it is a practice of the mainstream American news organizations, who often change their tune to suit public opinion, or—more important to recognize—to leverage their own corporate interests or the interests of the powerful companies and individuals that their corporate enterprises rely upon.

We have no way of knowing why Dr. Eric Reeves says what he says, or why he does what he does. All we know is that Dr. Eric Reeves is adamant that oil is not involved in Darfur, and that he has stated this publicly, and that he is clearly manipulating the truth to serve some political means; he is also adamant about overthrowing and replacing the Government of Sudan *by any means necessary*. And he has pressed his “no oil in Darfur” and “regime change in Sudan” line in international debates, not only in small town newspapers in hometown Northampton, Massachusetts.

On 27 October 2006 the BBC posted an exchange of views, on the issue of Darfur, by Dr. Eric Reeves, Massachusetts, USA and Gamal Nkrumah, Cairo, Egypt, the foreign editor of Al-Ahram, the leading Egyptian newspaper. The two men debated what action the international community should take over the worsening conflict and humanitarian crisis in Sudan's Darfur region.

In the exchange segments below, note how Dr. Eric Reeves hammers away at a few singular points, while Gamal Nkrumah challenges these while, definitively, underscoring the supreme western hubris he is confronted with in Dr. Eric Reeves. Indeed, in denying that the U.S. has any interest in Darfur's oil, and underscoring the power that China has over oil in Sudan, Dr. Eric Reeves perforates his own argument.

Reeves: In the face of rapidly accelerating genocidal destruction in Darfur, and given the ongoing collapse of humanitarian operations in vast areas of this devastated region, the international community should issue an ultimatum to the National Islamic Front (National Congress Party) regime in Khartoum: Immediately accept the robust force stipulated in UN Security Council Resolution 1706 (31 August, 2006) or face non-consensual deployment of the forces required to protect civilians and humanitarians.

Nkrumah: The phrase "international community" is often used as a euphemism for the United States and other Western powers' political agendas. Non-consensual deployment of foreign, non-African troops is a non-starter. It is an act of aggression that infringes on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sudan.

As Gamal Nkrumah notes, Dr. Eric Reeves' position is extremely offensive, a "non-starter" based in aggression: it comes from an American whose government is at war with people all over the world, either overtly or covertly. Yet Dr. Eric Reeves cannot see this, because aggressors do not see their aggression as aggression; instead they couch it in terms of necessity, human rights, humanitarian emergencies, or rogue governments committing genocide. But the Dr. Eric Reeves position, which mirrors that of leading "Save Darfur!" advocates, is unequivocally the position of bully on the block.

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Nkrumah: I suspect, though, that oil and not human rights are the main motivation behind the heightened interest of US President George W Bush in Sudan. It is Sudan's oil, like Iraq's oil, which fuels American interest in Sudan. Moreover, it is oil which is strengthening Sudan's international position. UN Security Council permanent member China, for example, which imports 6% of its oil from Sudan, will veto any anti-Sudan sanctions. The Sudanese authorities capitalise upon Chinese support.

Reeves: Critical to understanding the issues of oil development and revenues in Sudan is the country's geography: all current oil development, exploration, and production occurs in southern Sudan or along the traditional North/South border.

Moreover, the concession rights for oil development are virtually all sewn up by Asian companies and TotalFinaElf of France. The effort to suggest that oil interests in

Darfur—where there is no present oil production or exploration—are what lie behind Western diplomacy is deeply misleading.

In fact, there is no credible evidence that Darfur has significant oil reserves.

As has been suggested, what is of real significance is that China, Khartoum's primary diplomatic ally at the UN, dominates the two major producing consortia in southern Sudan and southern Kordofan province.

If we want to understand why the National Islamic Front (National Congress Party) feels so emboldened in defying the international community, and in pursuing its genocidal counter-insurgency warfare in Darfur, we should look not to Western but to Chinese oil interests.

Those damned Chinese! First Tibet, now this Darfur nightmare! In fact, the sentence above shows that Dr. Eric Reeves is unable to comprehend the pivotal role that he plays in furthering a very aggressive U.S. foreign policy which see the U.S. and its allies as universally good, with a few bad apples, and a Abu Ghraib torture scandal now and then, and maybe an Iraq quagmire here and there; on the flipside are the U.S.'s supposed ideological enemies—Chinese, Arabs, Islamists, Malaysians, Libyans, towel-heads, and even those damned French—who are generally cast as universally evil. These are the themes of the “war on terror,” which is an economic war propagated by mass hysteria, and they are used by the media over and over to manipulate and control the Western news-consuming populations. In the worldview of Dr. Eric Reeves, it is as if the absence of U.S. control over oil in Sudan were evidence of disinterest in that oil by the United States, rather than being—as is always the case—the underpinning reason for the conflict at hand.

Nkrumah: Chad, Darfur's neighbour to the immediate West has huge oil reserves, there is no doubt that there are oil reserves in Darfur itself. The Chinese and TotalFinaElf of France know all too well that the potential for exploiting Darfur's oil in commercial quantities is tremendous.

The US is most concerned about the Chinese, other Asian and French monopoly of Sudanese oil. Darfur is of great strategic importance it straddles Libya, Egypt, Chad, and the Central African Republic.

Sudan has accepted African Union peacekeeping troops in Darfur. So it is best for all concerned if AU troops are deployed to keep the peace in Darfur.

The AU troops, however, must have financial and logistical support from the UN and Western powers as well as oil-rich Gulf Arab countries. Only then will peace prevail in Darfur.

Reeves: There is no evidence of oil in Darfur. Reserves in more westerly parts of Chad tell us nothing about Darfur; there is no geologic evidence, no seismic data—nothing that indicates there is oil in Darfur.

But there is a terrifyingly great deal of evidence about the scale of human destruction that will ensue if we do not respond urgently to the acute lack of human security.

With or without Khartoum's consent, the international community must uphold its “responsibility to protect civilians” in Darfur—civilians not simply unprotected by the

National Islamic Front/National Congress regime—but targets of an ongoing genocidal campaign orchestrated in Khartoum.

Such “responsibility to protect” supersedes claims of national sovereignty. This principle was the explicit conclusion of the UN World Summit Outcome Document, paragraph 139, unanimously adopted in September 2005.

The AU is simply incapable of being transformed into a force that can take up this responsibility with sufficient urgency; it cannot possibly become the force contemplated in UN Security Council Resolution 1706.

To pretend otherwise is to treat with a scandalous moral carelessness the lives of more than four million conflict-affected Darfuris.

Dr. Eric Reeves is obtuse: “There is no evidence of oil in Darfur.” The “Responsibility to Protect” doctrine is merely the latest instrument of hegemony crafted by and for predacious western interests. If the “Responsibility to Protect” doctrine had any reasonable basis in application it would first and foremost be applied *against* the United States for [1] its military campaigns and [2] its neoliberal economics and [3] its global “environmental” policy rather than *by* the United States and its allies. Gamal Nkrumah responds accordingly, and appropriately.

Nkrumah: The interests of the US should not be confused with the interests of the international community. It is clear that the aggression against Iraq was a pretext to control the vast oil reserves of that country.

Human rights and democratisation had nothing to do with the Bush administration’s aims.

Abu Ghraib and numerous other atrocities committed against the people of Iraq clearly demonstrated that the US is not interested in the welfare of the people of Iraq. Neither is the Bush administration interested in the welfare of the people of Darfur.

The main goal of the Bush administration, with its extensive oil interests, is to challenge Chinese oil interests and economic clout in Sudan.

The so-called “international peacekeeping force” is a euphemism for foreign military intervention which is destined to have disastrous repercussions for the people of Darfur and Sudan as a whole.

The US must stay out of Darfur.

Reeves: To invoke Iraq and Abu Ghraib when the issue clearly is saving lives in Darfur is disingenuous.

That Iraq was a terribly misconceived debacle that will haunt U.S. foreign policy for years could not be clearer; but this doesn’t diminish in the slightest the extraordinarily urgent need for international protection of the more than four million human beings the UN estimates are affected by genocidal conflict in Darfur and eastern Chad.

Just as urgent is the protection of those aid operations upon which this vast population

grows increasingly dependent: humanitarian access shrinks almost daily, with many hundreds of thousands of Darfuris completely beyond the reach of food and medical assistance, living without adequate clean water or shelter.

Khartoum continues its large military offensives in North and West Darfur, and in such a context the African Union force currently deployed, even if augmented, is simply incapable of providing protection to the civilian and humanitarian populations.

Gamal Nkrumah misses the point when he suggests that the Bush administration is after the oil of Sudan, just as Dr. Eric Reeves misses the point when he suggests, as he has, that the Bush Government is complicit in the “genocidal atrocities.” It is not about the Bush government: the underpinning strategy of the “Save Darfur!” movement runs deeper than just the “Bush Government”—into the territory of deeply conflicted elite interests in the U.S. and its European and Israeli partnerships. However, Gamal Nkrumah sees a clear strategy, either way, by powerful Western interests designed to undermine the sovereignty of Sudan and get at the country’s oil. And, if we are to believe he is sincere, Dr. Eric Reeves sees only humanitarian good will and moral virtue in the Western “humanitarian” aid apparatus and the Western military apparatus it is both dependent on and complicit with.

There is no mistaking this: the conclusion that can easily be drawn, if we reduce the Darfur situation to the simplest terms, is that it is about oil, the Chinese and Arabs have it, and we want it. Who is “we”? While some powerful corporate factions connected to the Anglo-American-Israeli power structure are cooperating with the Government of Sudan, others are excluded from the profits to be made on oil and, as we will see, other things.

So how do powerful corporations excluded from a piece of the Sudan pie get at that pie? Divide and conquer. Covert operations. Psychological operations. Unwittingly obtuse English professors jumping up and down and screaming, “atrocities, atrocities, atrocities.”

Here’s the scenario.

First: create instability and chaos that gives the appearance of Arabs fighting Africans (it’s always those other people over there killing each other). Second: wage a media campaign that focuses a laser beam of public attention on the rising instability. Third: whip up public opinion and fury among a highly manipulated Western population who will, quite literally, believe anything. Fourth: make sure the devil—this time it’s the Janjaweed—comes on horseback. This latter point underscores the tight, unwavering narrative of good versus evil. Fifth: demonize the “enemy” [read: dirty A-Rabs] and their partners [Chinese oil companies]. Sixth: onward Christian soldiers and their “humanitarian” armies; enter “Save Darfur!” and, voila!, a movement is born. Seventh: continue to chip away the power of the enemy by chipping away at their credibility. Eighth: under the banners of high moral approbation, and with full support of a deeply caring Western public, overthrow the malevolent forces [of Islam and the Orient] and instill a benevolent, peace-loving, pro-democracy government. Last: wipe away the sanctions, no longer needed, and bring much-needed “development” to another backward country. And there you have it: yet another *civilizing* mission to conquer those barbaric Arab hordes, and those starving, helpless, uneducated, diseased, tribal, Africans.

And it is out of the very goodness of our hearts that we do it. *America, Oh beautiful, for spacious skies, for amber waves of grain...*

Let's explore the realities.

What David Morse, Mel Middleton, and Dr. Eric Reeves hold in common with so many others is the belief that oil in South Sudan is the driving force behind the conflict in South Sudan (and both Morse and Middleton hold the same ideas about Darfur). This writer shares that belief. The difference comes in understanding and evaluating the powerful forces that seek to gain control of the oil in Darfur, and in Sudan, and to gain control of the other resources. The various voices so far have articulated the point that the U.S. State Department, White House and/or Central Intelligence Agency have mostly invalidated, rather than validated, the genocide claims, and stalled, rather than acted, in halting genocide. They have indicated that the reasons they believe this to be true are due to the voracious, immoral appetites of big petroleum corporations, and due to the Bush Administration's fears about ruffling the feathers of China, Malaysia or the Arab states. They have indicated that these corporations are Chinese, French, Malaysian... even British, but never U.S. corporations. And they further indicate that U.S. companies, barred from doing business in Sudan, are merely disinterested observers unable to get at Sudan's oil, and therefore are not in any way culpable in the cataclysm we now know as Darfur.

Let's look at some of the replies from Mel Middleton of Freedom Quest International. Mel Middleton originally wrote to me complaining that I was helping to whitewash the genocide being committed by the Government of Sudan. He had read the opinion piece I wrote, "Wake-Up and Smell the Oil," and he was furious. "Wake-Up And Smell the Oil" was admittedly composed out of fury, when I found out that Nicholas Kristof—a New York Times columnist and leading "Save Darfur!" advocate—was speaking locally at Amherst College. When my article appeared on Al Jazeera Mel Middleton and others of the "Save Darfur!" movement were "disgusted and furious."

I responded and we attempted to maintain a dialog, but it was impossible: in the eyes of the other we are both intransigent and stubborn about our beliefs. In answering some of my questions, Mel Middleton wrote to me:

"Who says it's not about oil! It is just not the USA! They are not the ones at fault this time. Try China, Canada, Germany, U.K., *and every fascist Arab state going.* [Emphasis added.] This is one instance—perhaps the only one—where the USA doesn't have blood on its hands. To blame the Bush administration of calling Darfur 'genocide' merely to get at the oil makes for good sounding propaganda, but its entirely and demonstrably untrue."

I think it's important here to ask exactly what Mel Middleton means by "every fascist Arab state going." Would this be the same laundry list of terrorist Islamic states targeted by the "War on Terror"? Is Israel a fascist state? What about Canada? Is Indonesia? Texas? Is there a deeply ingrained xenophobic or racist bias at work here? Is every Arab state going a fascist state? Presumably he is taking about: Libya, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Algeria, Lebanon...almost all of which are targeted by the U.S. for sanctions, covert interventions or overt warfare.

"I agree that oil is a factor in both [South Sudan and Darfur] wars. But it is a factor because the Khartoum government wants to ensure that it is able to control the reserves and use those resources for its own genocidal political aspirations. Those oil companies that comply are definitely complicit since they are well aware of this."

So, the Khartoum government wants to ensure that it is able to control the [oil] reserves and

use those resources for its own geopolitical aspirations. Substitute “USA” for “Khartoum” and we have US foreign policy all over the world. Given the not-so-slick U.S. oil policies and pursuits all over the world is it unreasonable to assume that U.S. oil interests have targeted Darfur’s oil *by any means necessary*?

“My gut feeling is that there is far more oil in Sudan than any of the oil companies are admitting publicly. ‘Official’ information—i.e. oil consulting firms’—states that there are an estimated 2.62 billion barrels of oil reserves in Sudan. But I’ve also seen other unofficial estimates that put the figure into the 180 billion barrels figure. At today’s oil prices, 180 billion barrels is enough money for most CEOs to sell their soul to the devil for. And some are definitely doing it.”

So, oil company executives would sell their souls to the devil to get at Sudan’s oil? Hmmm. I wonder what that means? Does it mean that those quick-draw petroleum companies that beat out competitors to stick their derricks in the oil in Sudan would sell their souls to the devil—Arabs on horseback—to get at the oil? Does it mean that those slow-draw petroleum companies that were left dangling their derricks in the wind will sell their soul to the devil—lying, cheating, stirring up insurgency, arming madmen, screaming “genocide” like so many wolves disguised as sheep?

In fact, the most powerful entities in America may be supporting those who are screaming genocide (“Save Darfur!”), on the one hand, while actively engaging the culprits (the Government of Sudan) in business, on the other. It doesn’t seem to cross anyone’s mind that there might be competing business interests at work, from within the United States, Europe and Israel, and that these even involve Arab and Asian interests, including Taiwan, Japan, India and South Korea, and that these competing business interests are jockeying for control of Sudan.

In this business-conflict model, which has been shown previously to have some precedence in the world, one faction or group of companies and interests may be supporting Khartoum, while the other faction or group of companies and interests may be opposing it. But the duplicity of the most powerful business interests in the Western world may be such that they are actually working together, in some ways, while appearing to be in conflict, in others, to gain the ultimate advantage: the domination of the Sudan and the access to its markets. Of course, Sudan is but one of the stumbling blocks to Western multinational domination on all spheres.

We have already seen the reference indicating that Dr. Eric Reeves is advocating regime change by any means necessary. What if the “Save Darfur!” movement were being driven by these hidden but competing business factions? In this scenario, the “Save Darfur!” movement is used as a wedge—an international campaign to stop genocide—to be driven into Sudan to cripple the Government of Sudan, and its allies, by forcing divestment from a small number of companies that, in the pursuit of raw profits, are propping up the regime through economic, political or military alliances. U.S. oil companies like Exxon-Mobil, BP-Amoco, Chevron-Texaco, that have been sidelined by the U.S. economic sanctions instituted in 1997, would be the winners, while those companies that were forced out of Sudan by hostile divestment campaigns, backed by moral approbation and the oh-so-sacred mantra—“never again”—would be the losers.

Is there precedence for this kind of politico-economic-military warfare driven by the call for “humanitarian” action to stop atrocities? Yes.

Let's look more closely at the various maps of petroleum concessions in Sudan.

First there is the USAID map on the home page of Dr. Eric Reeves' web site. What is remarkable is that this map shows that petroleum concession demarcated "Block 6" extends quite far into South Darfur: how can Dr. Reeves conclude that the Darfur conflict has nothing to do with oil? The map's key indicates that the China National Petroleum Company (CNPC) holds rights to "Block 6."

The USAID map greatly oversimplifies the oil picture. Two other maps that have been publicly revealed show quite a different picture of the petroleum resources of the Sudan. Both of these alternate maps suggest that the petroleum reserves of Darfur are potentially much more significant, and that those of northern Sudan are greatly understated in the public realm, and certainly understated by the USAID map on the web site of Dr. Eric Reeves.

One of these is a full-size map of Africa showing petroleum concessions throughout the continent. It was produced by Petroconsultants s.a., International Energy Services, Geneva, Switzerland, copyright May 1997. The map shows all of the standard oil blocks typically represented in maps that show oil operations in Sudan (such as the map on Dr. Eric Reeves' web site) which are denoted as Total, or CNPC, etc., but it shows additional concessions or "Blocks" labeled blocks 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15. Block 12 is northern Darfur, the entire region, and like the other blocks (7-15) it is denoted "Block Offered", meaning it was not yet a contracted concession secured by any corporation back in 1997. This map is basically in agreement with another map that establishes that there are vast concessions in the Darfur region, and that is the map cited above by the European Council for Oil in Sudan.

Mel Middleton of Freedom Quest has suggested that these other maps might be forgeries produced by the Government of Sudan, or by the oil companies, or by the U.S. Government, to serve the hidden petroleum interests working behind the scene to derail the "genocide" claim. This makes no sense. The Petroconsultants map is authentic. We know that because it was not produced by or for Sudan, and it is not about Sudan: it shows all of the petroleum concessions held, and offered, as of 1997, in all of Africa. The map was produced using state-of-the-art remote sensing technologies which operate from satellite platforms and, today, are at the forefront of technologies used everywhere for minerals and petroleum prospecting. The Western intelligence and military apparatus controls the technologies that produce these maps, and the raw data they produce; unclassified maps (like this oil map) are generated from the classified mapping data that otherwise remains in the hands of the Pentagon. Specialty industries purchase or requisition specialty maps for specialty purposes: these might be oil, gold, natural gas, gorilla habitat, or refugee flows.

All these maps unequivocally show that Darfur is an oil rich area; two of the maps show that oil in Darfur is more than "substantial."

But Dr. Eric Reeves' misperceptions and errors on Sudan do not end with his denials about oil, and if the work of Dr. Eric Reeves is to be taken as the omnipotent bench mark of authority or truth on the subject of Darfur, which of course is exactly how it is presented, represented, and presented again, then this does not bode well for the massive body of facts we are offered about Darfur, or for the people who offer them.

The more you look at what Dr. Eric Reeves has wrote, and compare it to facts that he apparently is unaware of, at least, or intentionally obfuscating, at worst, the more you can

poke holes through his stories and see that the “Save Darfur!” mythology is easily unraveled.

For example, in 1998, Dr. Eric Reeves reportedly got his start as the American voice of Sudan after a conversation with the then executive director of Doctors Without Borders, Joelle Tanguy. In Reeves’ own words, as reported widely:

“We were lamenting the fact that Doctors Without Borders felt compelled to name southern Sudan the most under-reported humanitarian crisis of 1998,” said Mr. Reeves. “Out of that conversation grew a very active and passionate, productive advocacy career [for Sudan]-that’s really what I do.”

However, the reality is that the most underreported humanitarian crises in the world was going down in Central Africa, with the U.S. backed invasions of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Dr. Eric Reeves’ own writings of the time were citing a death toll in Sudan of about 1.7 million from the beginning of the war in Sudan, in 1983.

In the U.S. State Department’s 1999 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices the number of dead from Sudan’s ongoing “civil war” was 2 million. “The civil war, which is estimated to have resulted in the death of 2 million persons,” it said, “continued into its seventeenth year.”

FRONTLINE, a production of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a U.S. Corporation, not a radical or conspiratorial publishing venue or independent news source in any sense of the word, wrote in January 2005 that the death toll in Sudan was not more than 2 million people since the war in Sudan commenced in 1983.

One of the agencies that Dr. Eric Reeves often cites in his “research” on Sudan is the International Rescue Center, and it was actually the IRC who has put forth certain accountings of the dead due to war and war-related deaths from the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, formerly Zaire, Sudan’s southern neighbor. The IRC figure is quoted and cited widely, notwithstanding the fact that the choice or determination of the IRC’s figures appears to be politically motivated and—for Congo at least—greatly understates the mortality and suffering.

“The three previous IRC studies, conducted between 2000 and 2002, demonstrated that an estimated 3.3 million people had died as a result of the [DRC] war. Latest estimates from the 2004 study highlight how 3.9 million people have died since the conflict began in 1998.

First, the IRC’s study, if we take it as fact, or reasonable accounting, shows that the war in DRC led to some 3.3 million deaths between 1998 and 2000, the dates that the IRC offers as the beginning and ending of the war. A tenuous “peace” was negotiated through accords from 2000 and 2001, which led to the official end of the conflict, though it continues even to this day. However, taking at face value the IRC numbers, and recalling that this is an organization that Dr. Eric Reeves highly respects and widely cites, we have 3.3 million deaths in DRC a period of two to three years.

Clearly, at the height of the Congo war in 1998 and 1999 the mortality rates in DRC far exceeded those in Sudan that Dr. Reeves was concerned about, in 1999, as “the most under-reported humanitarian crises in 1998,” because the numbers for Sudan at the time were between 1.7 and 2 million for the entire seventeen-year period and the numbers for

DRC were all within a brief span of several years.

To top it off, the war in DRC did not begin in August of 1998, as the IRC likes to put forth, and the humanitarian crisis in DRC was far more underreported than that of Sudan for several reasons. The IRC, in their report, acknowledges the actual start of the war in DRC (Zaire), even though they routinely cites mortality statistics in the context of a war whose beginnings they place in 1998:

“In 1996, Uganda and the new administration in Rwanda [RPA/F], in consort with armed Zairean groups, invaded eastern Zaire, purportedly to improve security along Rwanda and Uganda’s borders. Within a few months the invading forces, with their Zairean allies, gained control and overthrew the Zairean government, installed a new administration and renamed Zaire the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).”

The fighting in DRC did not stop, and the humanitarian crises, in 1997-1998, was a nightmare unfolding. Congo—by August of 1998—was embroiled in an international conflict that involved Western governments, or factions of Western power elites, and their errand boys with extortion rackets, and the many multinational corporations, all of which were backing militias and armies in the Congo war. The Clinton administration, allied with the government of the U.K. and Belgium, and with some Israeli backing, was involved through their proxy armies. The Pentagon was backing both the Uganda People’s Defense Forces (UPDF) and the Rwanda Patriotic Army/Front (RPA/F), and U.S. covert operations were underway in DRC, and this was all forbidden territory for the Western media to report on. Doctors Without Borders was apparently no exception.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reports assessing the devastation caused by the war in DRC correctly situated both the beginnings of the war and the scale and magnitude of the humanitarian cataclysm.

“Since 1996, the conflict has claimed more than 3.5 million civilians. More than 1,200 Congolese die every day from conflict-related causes—preventable diseases, poverty, gender-based violence.”

The International rescue Committee reported in April 2000: “the death toll from this war has consistently been woefully underestimated (see New York Times, Feb. 6, 2000)...”

The humanitarian crises in Sudan may or may not have received more attention than the humanitarian crises in DRC, but the scale of crises in the DRC, and the international involvement, were either completely in whiteout or greatly underreported by the Western press. Covert operations and illegal arms shipments were also being channeled through Uganda to the Sudan People’s Liberation Army in South Sudan, and that was certainly in whiteout, and it is crucial to examine the writings of Dr. Eric Reeves in search of any clue of the nefarious involvement of external military agents, private military companies, or the existence and manifestation of covert government programs.

Recall that President Clinton ordered or sanctioned the Pentagon’s Operation Infinite Reach, an illegal cruise-missile strike on Afghanistan (50 cruise missiles) and Sudan (25 cruise missiles), destroying a purported chemical weapons facility at the Al Shifa pharmaceutical factory in August of 1998. Sudan at the time had been designated a terrorist state by the Clinton Administration. Britain supported the attack, and the lies that were used to justify it. The plant, which had its official opening in June 1997, was privately owned and partly

financed by the Eastern and Southern African Preferential Trade Association. Al-Shifa was extremely important to the Sudan: it had raised the country's self-sufficiency in medicine from about 3% to over 50%. It produced 60-90% of the drugs used to treat the Sudan's seven leading causes of death; malaria and tuberculosis are at the top of the list. Al-Shifa also produced virtually all of the country's veterinary medicine. The Sudan has very large herds of camels, cattle, sheep and goats, all vital to the economy and food supply, and all susceptible to treatable infestations and diseases.

The plant was bombed in August of 1998, after one year in operation, and the message was clear: there will be no independent economic players impinging on Western pharmaceutical profits and their global empires. Has Dr. Eric Reeves ever condemned the U.S. for the Al-Shifa bombing and the massive loss of human life attributed to the crippling of Sudan's only pharmaceutical factory? (If so, his condemnation has not been found by this author.)

At the same time, with the logistics and support coming in through U.S. military and state department conduits in Kenya and Uganda, the Sudan in 1998 was also benefiting from Operation Lifeline Sudan—if we believe the advertising rhetoric about humanitarian relief *benefiting* starving children and war orphans. OLS was a vast “humanitarian” operation ostensibly designed to serve the humanitarian needs of Sudan's disaffected victims of war.

The failure of the international community to respond to the 1988 famine in Sudan led to the creation of the United Nations Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS), a cross-border emergency relief program. By the mid 1990's Operation Lifeline Sudan had achieved a major foothold throughout south Sudan, with a consortium of United Nations agencies and some 60 international “relief” agencies all vying for a piece of the billion dollars a year pie, and thousands of humanitarian foot soldiers receiving lucrative salaries. While OLS may be a “humanitarian” operation, it is also a United Nations-backed military operation with massive infrastructure projected from Nairobi, Kenya, into South Sudan.

It's hard to imagine that the profit-making media would have denied the coverage that Operation Lifeline Sudan needed in order to sustain donations from Western media consumers whose hearts are ever being tugged by the ubiquitous images of the starving African children ever plastered across the pages of magazines and newspapers or beamed into every living room in America by satellite TV. It is the donors funding, after all—and the public cry to “do something”—that greases the gears of the misery machinery. Was the 1998 famine in South Sudan ignored?

According to Human Rights Watch, at the height of the 1998 famine—presumably one of the many humanitarian concerns behind the pivotal lunch conversation between Doctors Without Borders's director Joelle Tangay and Dr. Eric Reeves—Operation Lifeline Sudan was drawing one million dollars a day.

Most interesting however, and a point not to be missed in consideration of the current efforts to secure and expand Western relief operations in Darfur (and now Chad), the donors for Operation Lifeline Sudan are almost all Anglo-American and European entities or their leading economic partners: Australia, Canada, Denmark, European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Japan, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, UK Department for International Development (DfID) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Does anyone reading this article doubt that war is not today waged by all kinds of economic

means?

Indeed, there are reports that suggest that the 1998 “famine” was an example of how the Government of Sudan retaliated against the use of food as a weapon and itself used food—or the denial of food—as a weapon. In July of 1998 the famine hit hard, not because there wasn’t any food, but because the SPLA rebels were relentlessly attacking the Government of Sudan and the GOS was responding in kind, making it impossible for the massive Operation Lifeline Sudan to function. Suddenly, in an effort by the GOS to deny food aid (read: food) to the SPLA rebel forces, in an attempt to starve the rebels out, the Western world declares a “famine” alert with some “2.6 million people at risk.”

It is important to recognize that OLS had been in Sudan for a decade, that the bureaucracy and infrastructure were there, that billions of dollars had been spent to institutionalize feeding centers and food as charity. In response, the OLS system had built up a major following: 2.6 million people dependent on food deliveries from the OLS network. OLS was a massive *defacto* public administration operating in parallel with the GOS. When the GOS strategically applied pressure to prevent food from reaching the region—and from reaching the SPLA rebels, clearly the beneficiaries of food and infrastructure—the SPLA buckled: In July 1998, the SPLA rebels declared a three-month cease-fire to allow food shipments to reach hundreds of thousands of hungry people in the southwest—including the SPLA themselves. On the third of August 1998 the Government of Sudan declared a unilateral cease-fire in response. War was not the driving factor behind the famine, or the suffering: it was food. More specifically, it was Western “humanitarian intervention” that drove the war and insured the proliferation of massive despair, suffering and death.

Across the oceans the Western AID industry, the newspapers, the journalists—all shared in the profit, while shaking their heads, side to side, as if to say: “those savage Africans. What is to be done? We must save them from themselves.”

Little has changed. Today the argument is: “we must help them help themselves.”

On 27 December 1999, Doctors Without Borders’ U.S. side executive director Joelle Tanguy appeared on the PBS radio program and on-line journal titled On-Line News Hour, a News Hour with Jim Lehrer affiliated program. Recall that Joelle Tanguy, who was then the executive director of the US arm of Doctors Without Borders/Medicins Sans Frontieres, was the person who Dr. Eric Reeves claims inspired him to become the independent voice and advocate for the people of Sudan.

As we earlier noted, Reeves’ described the auspicious Tanguy meeting this way: “We were lamenting the fact that Doctors Without Borders felt compelled to name southern Sudan the most under-reported humanitarian crisis of 1998.”

“Well in fact it started last year,” Tanguy said, in the opening statement of her PBS interview,. Tanguy was referring to 1998, the first year of the Doctors Without Borders annual assessment. “We were so frustrated during the Monica Lewinsky scandal that we were facing a massive famine in southern Sudan, and were not able to break the news. And we started to realize this was not the first occasion.”

Famine in Sudan was the number two in 1998 in the Doctors Without Borders first annual list of the Top Ten Most Underreported Humanitarian Emergencies. Note that Doctors Without Borders’ 1999 list of the world’s top ten most unreported crises did not include Sudan at all.

Note also that Doctors Without Borders cited “famine in Sudan” as one the top humanitarian emergencies in 1998. Doctors without Borders was not declaring the entire Sudan civil war as a top humanitarian crises, but merely the famine which, according to Human Rights Watch, was highly localized:

Southern Sudan occupies almost one third of the territory of Sudan, which at 2.5 million square kilometers is the largest country in Africa. The largest concentration of the population most vulnerable to the famine is in Bahr El Ghazal, in southwestern Sudan, where the famine of 1988 killed an estimated 250,000 people.

Due to conflict between the GOS and the SPLA, and their militias and factions, and due to pilfering and diversion of relief supplies from Operation Lifeline Sudan, the populations that had descended on the region of Bahr El Ghazal were facing famine. But famine does not occur in a vacuum. Indeed, it appears to occur in the midst of humanitarian “operations” and world food programs.

Did the famine in Bhar El Ghazal in 1998 materialize in spite of Operation Lifeline Sudan and the massive infrastructure that sustained it? Or did famine occur because of it?

In their summary description of what was then the number two most underreported humanitarian crisis of 1998, “2.6 Million Face Starvation in Sudan,” Doctors Without Borders wrote:

“The famine in southern Sudan produced mortality rates that in some areas equaled or exceeded those reported in Ethiopia during the crisis of 1985. During one week in mid-July, 120 people were dying each day in the area of Ajiep (pop. 17,000) in the province of Bahr el Ghazal, and many other villages recorded catastrophic death rates. Not only were there no blockbuster concerts in support of the victims, few people seemed to know about the famine at all.”

Comparing the UN OCHA assessment of some 1200 people dying in DRC every day, over a sustained period of four to six years, with the Doctors Without Borders assessment of mortality of 120 people per day, during one week in mid-July only, one wonders why Doctors Without Borders did not place DRC at the top of the list of the most underreported list of humanitarian disasters of 1998. In fact, it was not on the list at all.

The Democratic Republic of Congo was number five in the 1999 Doctors Without Borders Top Ten list of humanitarian disasters, and Sudan did not appear at all. Remember that we are talking not about what constitutes a disaster, or how large a disaster it is, but how Doctors Without Borders ranked the emergency with respect to media coverage.

In their 2000 assessment the DRC was number six (no Sudan); number five in the 2001 assessment (no Sudan); number three in the 2002 assessment (Sudan was number seven); DRC was number five in the 2003 assessment (Chad was number one, due to fighting in Central Africa Republic and Sudan); number two in the 2004 assessment (no Sudan); number one in the 2005 assessment (South Sudan was number six). In the Doctors Without Borders Top Ten Most Underreported Humanitarian Stories of 2006, DRC was number seven, under the heading “Congolese Endure Extreme Deprivation and Violence.”

There was another country that repeatedly made the Doctors Without Borders most underreported humanitarian disasters list. From 1999 to 2006, Somalia made a regular

appearance. The importance of examining Somalia as a top ten humanitarian crises and comparing it to either Congo or Sudan comes in remembering that Somalia was one of the top recipient countries for “humanitarian” relief, from 1982 to 1994, and it was under the banners of protecting and providing “humanitarian relief” that 20,000 plus U.S. military forces invaded Somalia in 1992, we were told, to save some 2 million Somalis from starving. The parallels with Darfur, Sudan are striking.

The early 1990’s crises in Somalia had its roots in the invasion of Western humanitarian aid organizations that occurred steadily as big money and big relief flooded into Somalia from circa 1981 onward. By the mid 1980’s the aid machine had been cranked into full gear, and food, supplies and concomitant relief funds had saturated and crippled the local economy. Somalia’s capacity for feeding its own people was undermined by the massive surplus food dumped on the fragile Somali market. All hope of Somali self-sufficiency was gobbled up by predacious capitalists as sure as the unsuspecting swimmers who were taken by the great white sharks which hunted along Mogadishu’s beaches. The profits accrued on both sides of the vast sea that separated the United States from Somalia. The resources—relief supplies, food, money—were converted into weapons that served to fuel the fires of ethnic rivalry.

By the mid-1980’s the prospect of a career in “development” working for a humanitarian non-government organization (NGO) began to draw Westerners who recognized the massive growth opportunity that lay ahead. People seized the moment and hoardes of western infidels flocked to Africa with lucrative contracts in hand and the prospect of unlimited career potential and permanent adventure. People were no longer jumping on the relief bandwagon out of a love and concern for helping fellow human beings, but because they saw the blooming aid market for what it was: a ground floor opportunity to combine travel, adventure and private profit, and to gain moral currency in the bargain.

The Western imperatives of geopolitical control meant that western corporations, intelligence networks and arms providers swooped in like vultures to prey on, manipulate or secure the allegiance of anyone and everyone, and on all sides of the borders with Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia. With some 70% of Somalia mapped out into petroleum concessions by 1986, the competition for contracts, control and access was in full swing.

From the point of view of the United States, the long-running government of President Siad Barre was a benevolent dictatorship: the US supported it for years, ever provoking internal rivalries and cross-border geopolitical meddling in Ethiopia. One of the last major “policy” actions of any significance achieved by the Barre dictatorship was the granting of all major petroleum rights to four Western companies. After a furious political scramble to seize control, involving Royal/Dutch Shell, Agip and other companies, the Barre government in 1989 granted all petroleum concessions to just four firms: Conoco, Chevron, Amoco (now BP) and Philips Petroleum.

Note that Chevron director J. Bennet Johnston is also a director of Nexant, the Bechtel Corporation subsidiary and contractor involved in the oil pipeline being constructed from the oil-rich Semliki Basin under Lake Albert, on the Congo-Uganda border, to the U.S. military port at Mombasa, Kenya. The Nexant contract supports the petroleum operations of Heritage Oil and Gas, a nefarious petroleum minor whose owners include Tony Buckingham, a shady businessman whose mercenary firms—like Sandline International—operate in all the wrong places across the continent. The Heritage deal was sealed amidst the war in DRC, where negotiations to secure the oil were completed with the warring governments—Uganda and DRC—on both sides of Lake Albert. Unsurprisingly, Tony

Buckingham's business partners include Ugandan President Museveni's half-brother Salim Saleh, and Saleh's arms company brokered weapons to the SPLA—armored personnel carriers for the “rag-tag” rebels—as Dr. Eric Reeves ever portrayed them.

The vast petroleum reserves in Somalia are connected underground via the petroleum rift system of the Ogaden Basin, Ethiopia, and under the Straits of Hormuz to Yemen. Houston-based Hunt Oil maintains operations in the Ogaden Basin, in Ethiopia, a short helicopter ride from Camp United, in Hurso, Ethiopia where the some 2000 plus covert forces of the 10th Mountain Division and 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment have been training Ethiopian soldiers in preparation for the U.S. invasion of Somalia in December 2006. It was George Herbert Walker Bush himself who christened the Hunt Oil Petroleum refinery in Yemen in 1986. Interestingly, one of the directors of Rolls Royce Marine, involved in the petroleum operations targeting Darfur (see below) and supporting Chinese interests, is Todd Hunt out of Dallas, Texas.

The Conoco compound in Mogadishu was turned into the *de facto* U.S. Embassy with the arrival of US troops in 1992, and it served as a base of US military and intelligence operations. USMC General Frank Libutti and G.H.W. Bush Envoy Robert Oakley established their headquarters there.

When on 6 January 2007 the New York Times ran flak to cover up the US invasion of Somalia, the article correctly described the US military mission of the early 1990's—previously billed as a humanitarian mission—as a “failed attempt to capture a dictator.” The article is an example of shameless propaganda, as simplistic and misleading in its attention to the geopolitical realities in Somalia as we see everywhere in the mainstream media coverage of “genocide” in Darfur. The article peddles the idea of an African “peacekeeping” force to quell violence in Somalia. Indeed, the New York Times presses the line that Western diplomats, including the visiting U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Jendayi Frazer, are “urging African nations to quickly put together a peacekeeping force before Somalia reverts to anarchy.”

Nigeria, Uganda and South Africa have all “volunteered” troops for Somalia, the Times, noted. What the New York Times did not say, and has never flushed out, is that Uganda is a major base of US military operations in Central Africa, from which programs pursuing economic, political and military dominance are projected into DRC, Kenya, Somalia, and, especially, Sudan. Uganda and Kenya have provided the preponderance of support for the SPLA in South Sudan; Kenya and Ethiopia have both served as U.S. bases from which Special Operations Command (SOCOM) forces have been striking out and penetrating Somalia. Ethiopia seeks a major seaport currently denied by Eritrea: Somalia offers the perfect storm through which to pump out Ethiopian oil secured, for example, by the genocide of the Anuak and other minority people. Yet this genocide is off the radar of the “Stop Genocide!” coalitions and their extensive Genocide Intervention forces precisely because the government of Ethiopia—unlike the uncooperative and audacious Government of Sudan—is a U.S./U.K./Israeli client state.

In its reportage on Somalia the NYT has mentioned nothing about the private military companies and SOCOM operations that occurred throughout 2006, or of SOCOM covert operations training for Ethiopian troops at Camp United in Hurso, Ethiopia, both of which laid the groundwork for the escalated invasion of December 2006. It was a U.S. military invasion backed by Ethiopia, and not an Ethiopian invasion “giv[en] a yellow-slash-green light” by the U.S. as stated by John Prendergast of the International Crises Group (high on list of notable

“spokesmen” everywhere pressing the “genocide” line on Darfur).

The United States has major military alliances with Nigeria and South Africa as well, each serving to further the corporate military agenda. Nigeria is the most notable story in media whiteout, where the petroleum companies are waging a sustained and low-intensity genocide against the indigenous peoples of the Niger River Delta.

Military Professional Resources Incorporated (MPRI)—a mercenary firm founded by 32 retired U.S. generals—has been training the Nigerian military. Halliburton subsidiary Brown & Root, and with the involvement of French and Japanese companies, has been caught red-handed bribing Nigerian officials for petroleum-related contracts, establishing slush funds and offshore front companies to shield rapacious operations and evade taxes.

Royal/Dutch Shell has been directly connected to weapons shipments and atrocities in the Delta, including the August 2006 massacre of 15 members of the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta and one Shell employee who were on route to meet with Shell officials; President Olusegun Obasandjo was involved.

In 2006, Israeli defense conglomerate Aeronautic Defense Systems Ltd. secured a controversial \$US 276 million contract to supply Unmanned Aerospace Vehicles (UAVs)—aerial robotic drones for surveillance and attack—to be used by the Nigerian military against people fighting for their survival against genocide in the oil-producing Niger Delta region. Shell Oil began operations in the Niger River Delta in 1958 and they have given nothing back except suffering and violence: who are the real terrorists?

The suggestion, therefore, that Uganda, Nigeria and South African troops will be “peacekeepers” in Somalia is absurd and the possibility of this being raised only underscores the extent to which the general public is so easily sold on the language of euphemisms and deception.

The people of Darfur should take note.

But back in the 1990’s, the U.S. military’s Operation Restore Hope was never a “humanitarian” mission: that was the cover story provided by the Pentagon and peddled by the media. Again, the parallels with Darfur today should be noted.

As the US soldiers pulled out of Mogadishu in 1993, the “humanitarian crisis” packed up its bags and shipped out as well. The spotlight shifted elsewhere. The massive public concern for human life stirred up by the Western press disintegrated like the bones of the tens of thousands of innocent victims shot by the guns bought from the sale of US food dumped on Somalia by USAID, the World Food Program, and other billion dollar agencies like Save the Children.

“The United States abandoned Operation Restore Hope in Somalia immediately after the fiasco of 3 October 1993,” wrote Michael Maren in *The Road to Hell*. “From that point on nothing the Americans did was meant directly to affect the situation on the ground; everything was aimed at minimizing negative political fallout back home until they packed up and left five months later. With the Americans happily out of the picture and hostility raging in Mogadishu, the rest of the UN mission was doomed. It was only a matter of time before international will and, most important, international funding, would dry up.”

“Any doubt about that was sealed two weeks after the American departure when a plane

was shot down in Kigali, Rwanda, killing the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi and setting off what may be the worst concentrated massacre in human history. Journalists followed the events. Money followed the news. And NGOs followed the money. Somalia was forgotten, except by the UN, which continued operating in Mogadishu as if they were going to be there forever.”

The disaster called Somalia is a product of Western “humanitarianism” and “intervention.” It began with “humanitarian relief” in the 1980’s, but with the misery industry came the corruption and the weapons, and big salaries for white people who averted their eyes to contradictions, took the money and ran. When the U.S. military came to the rescue it was first described as for “purely humanitarian objectives.” Once on the ground it became an exercise in “nation-building.” In the end it morphed into the hunt for a terrorist dictator. By 1994 Somalia was a bigger disaster than it had ever been, and the U.S. pulled out on a platform of...well...nothingness. It was a business calculation: cut your losses and move out.

And now the U.S. is back in Somalia trumpeting the ubiquitous threat of Islamic Jihad. But it doesn’t even matter: most people are completely unaware that the U.S. is involved and naively accept the propaganda peddling Somalia’s latest misfortune as a war between African (Ethiopia and Somalia) nations (sic).

On 6 January 2007, following the invasion like clockwork, Doctors Without Borders released their annual list of the Top Ten Underreported Humanitarian Stories of 2006. Somalia was number one. In the Doctors Without Borders summary of the disaster there is no mention of the Boeing Chinook helicopters (troop carriers) plying the Somali skies or the amphibious assault vehicles that landed on Somalia’s beaches. There is no mention of the U.S. covert war that had been going for the past three years, at least, involving the U.S. Special Operations Command, or private military companies like ATS Worldwide.

While the Pentagon and the Bush White House have for some years now been running a covert intervention in Somalia, the absence of any coverage at all by the Anglo-American or European press is not surprising. There has been nothing to inform the American public of the illegal shipments of cash or weapons funneled to factions on the ground in Somalia.

While it is clearly a second go at Somalia, it feels more like a Rwanda redux. The American public has been completely misinformed about the role that the Clinton White House played in shooting down the plane in Rwanda, in 1994, and the double presidential assassinations that sparked the “genocide” there, and wiped clean the public memory of the massive media deceptions on Somalia.

The worse it looks the better it sells. Famine and horror become commodities. From Darfur we get photographs of the dead bodies, but anyone can ride out the relief apparatus and take a picture of sick and dying Africans. Victims and refugees flock to relief centers, “presenting to visiting reporters a concentration of misery that [is] indeed shocking.”

Reporters, editors and politicians—and now Hollywood celebrities—are transported to the relief centers, housed and fed by the relief agencies working there; they are also primed with facts. Visitors rely on an infrastructure designed and controlled by the relief operation and their security apparatus, but such things are never challenged.

On September 17, 1997, the United States Institute for Peace held a conference titled Religion, Nationalism, and Peace in Sudan. Speakers on the panel “Implications for U.S.

Foreign Policy” included John Prendergast, former National Security Council member and current staff of the International Crises Group (ICG), and Roger Winter, formerly of the U.S. Committee for Refugees.

In his talk, NSC expert John Prendergast outlined three distinct U.S. Government initiatives being implemented or maintained in pursuit of the isolation and/or marginalization of the Government of Sudan. The “Front Line States Initiative” supported Uganda, Eritrea and Ethiopia with “defensive non-lethal military equipment.” According to Prendergast, the U.S. was supporting the three “front line” states—all neighbors of Sudan—in their effort to defend themselves from Sudan’s campaign of regional destabilization by providing defensive non-lethal military equipment” to those three countries.

The overt provision of “non-lethal military equipment”—military equipment is military equipment—as openly noted by Prendergast as early as 1997 occurred in parallel with an unreported but sustained campaign of covert military operations supporting neighboring political and military factions in Chad, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Uganda. According to Smith College African Studies Chair Elliot Fratkin, in 1993 the U.S. “declared Sudan a country sponsoring terrorism and it began supporting the SPLA.” We should here note that there have been very few, if any, overt statements verifying the covert military relationship between the U.S. Government and/or the Pentagon and military factions involved the long civil war in Sudan: Dr. Fratkin’s comments therefore appear as an aberration which directly contradict the ideological framework, constructed by Winter, Prendergast and Reeves, which defines Sudan as a purveyor of “state terrorism” and Islamist “genocide” committed by the Bashir government. African Affairs departments at elite Western colleges and universities almost never address the western security and intelligence apparatus, or covert operations, in Africa.

Prendergast went on to outline the “robustness” and “increasing capacity” of U.S. Government’s programs in “sustainable development” efforts targeting poverty stricken areas in Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda and Eritrea, areas seen as “the breeding grounds for terrorism” and “the Sudan Government’s recruiting grounds for terrorists.” Prendergast outlined the important role of development assistance provided to Sudanese organizations in “rebel held” territory. This included established U.S. Government relationships providing “assistance” to the Sudanese opposition umbrella, the National Democratic Alliance, and other organizations, to “promote democracy.”

These initiatives, Prendergast said, “give[s] us an opening to support the development of democratic civil institutions in areas controlled by the SPLM.... It will allow us the possibility to support those [organizations and civil society] in southern and eastern Sudan to promote the rule of law through the support of local court systems and civil administrations, something that has already been going on for some time now.”

A subsequent comment by Prendergast attests to the true agenda of the National Security Council and the U.S. Government: economic and financial control. Prendergast unequivocally stated: “We have engaged in a process which aims to expel Sudan from the IMF, as I mentioned before, if they don’t comply with basic economic reform criteria.”

From this we arrive at the true definition of a “rogue state,” a state that does not follow the rules of “free market liberalization” as dictated by the international financial institutions, the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Export-Import Bank, and the many other Bretton Woods institutions and money houses that back them. Indeed, Sudan is one of the five

countries in the world that reportedly maintain their independence from the central banking system that the United States and its partners control: Iran, North Korea, Cuba and Libya are the other four. These countries are all part of the “Nexus of Evil” targeted by the right-wing missile-defense think-tank, the Center for Security Policy.

At the 1997 meeting, Roger Winter spoke at length about the U.S. Government policy in Sudan. On 26 July 2005, the U.S. Government named Roger Winter, the then USAID assistant administrator for democracy, conflict and humanitarian assistance, as Special Representative for the Deputy Secretary of State, on Darfur. Roger Winter is one of Dr. Eric Reeves’ primary sources; ICG staffer John Prendergast is another. The International Crises Group directors, fellows and trustees include numerous economic hit men and architects of neoliberal policies, foreign interventions and the U.S. warfare and intelligence apparatus.

But it was back in the late 1980’s that Roger Winter and the U.S. Committee for Refugees organized a conference in Washington DC to assist the Rwandan Patriotic Front with its program to overthrow the government of Rwanda. The RPF, backed by Washington, Britain, Belgium and Uganda, invaded Rwanda in 1990. By 1994 they had achieved their goal: the *coup d’etat* that unseated President Juvenal Habyarimana. Millions of people died in the process.

According to Paul Rusesabagina, the real-life hero of the movie Hotel Rwanda, the invasion of Rwanda led to the deaths of millions, as the invading forces—the RPF/A led by Rwanda’s President today Paul Kagame—raped, pillaged and massacred from 1990 to the present. They called it “100 days of genocide” and blamed it solely on the Hutu government that was overthrown: the genocide label was expediently, and judiciously, applied. The intentional mischaracterizations of events in Rwanda in 1994 have led to widespread misunderstandings and deceptions about Rwanda today. Roger Winter was a supporter behind the RPF/A invasion and *coup d’etat*. The parallels with Sudan are striking.

The Darfur “mission” of U.S. Marine Brian Steidle offers another perfect example of how information and involvement about the Darfur conflict is turned completely on its head, such that truth becomes lie and lie becomes truth. Like Dr. Eric Reeves, and National Security Council and former White House staffer John Prendergast, now we have “ex-” Marine Brian Steidle—a 28 year-old former Marine Captain and Admiral’s son—as a ubiquitous fixture in the U.S. propaganda campaign for Darfur. Like Bob Dole, Steidle’s propaganda is peddled by the Holocaust Memorial Museum and, well, everyone else.

“A former Marine, I had arrived in Sudan’s Darfur region in September 2004 as one of three U.S. military observers for the African Union, armed only with a pen, pad and camera. The mandate for the A.U. force allowed merely for the reporting of violations of a cease-fire that had been declared last April and the protection of observers. The observers sometimes joked morbidly that our mission was to search endlessly for the cease-fire we constantly failed to find. I soon realized that this was no joke.”

The suggestion that Steidle is an objective and impartial observer is ridiculous. The African Union is a NATO-backed force which supports and furthers the military interests of the Anglo-American-Israeli “Save Darfur!” axis. NATO has airlifted troops and provided other logistical support. Recall that NATO—under the imperatives of U.S. foreign policy—devastated the former Yugoslavia with a bombing campaign that was sold to the Western world as a “humanitarian” rescue. Satellite reconnaissance of Darfur (and all Sudan) is achieved through top-secret remote sensing platforms that were originally used

by USAID, in partnership with Bechtel Corporation, for “development” programs of the 1980’s. Remote sensing platforms have provided “unclassified” USAID maps showing burning villages in Darfur: the classified versions of these maps are used by military intelligence.

The African Union is comprised partly of several thousand Rwandan Defense Forces (formerly Rwandan Patriotic Army). The RDF shipped to Darfur were funded, armed and trained by the Pentagon, and some have committed egregious atrocities, and participated in genocide against innocent non-combatant Hutu refugees, in the Congo. The RPF/A campaign of terror has continued in Rwanda since it first began: with the RPA invasion of 1990.

RDF military officials, including President Kagame, and his top General, James Kabarebe, were in command in the field when hundreds of thousands of Hutu were massacred in the RPA/UPDF march across Congo; these same officials are perpetuating the ongoing war in eastern DRC. According to Paul Rusesabagina, the current government of Paul Kagame in Rwanda is today perpetuating terrorism *within Rwanda* that could well lead to another explosion of genocidal killings: the perpetrators, according to Rusesabagina, will be the Kagame government forces.

The U.S. military currently has at least six major ongoing military programs, shrouded in secrecy, ongoing across the heart of Africa. There are the standard programs like the International Military and Education Training Programs (IMET), and the Extended-IMET program, and other less well known programs like the Africa Crises Response Initiative (ACRI), and its offspring under different names; the Joint Command Exchange Training Program (JCET); the Pan-Sahel Initiative, which stretches across Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Chad and Sudan; and the “Golden Spear” program, which involves Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Djibouti.

The ACRI program trained Ugandan troops that soon invaded the Congo (DRC); ACRI was apparently the work of Susan Rice, Undersecretary of State for African Affairs, in the Clinton Administration. As a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, Susan Rice is today bone of the most vocal advocates for decisive military action to “Stop Genocide!” and “Save Darfur!”—again, by any means necessary. ACRI’s Uganda trainees also worked with the SPLA in South Sudan. Susan Rice reportedly has close ties with ex-National Security Council staffer Shawn McCormick who went to work for BP, one of the oil companies (Amoco) with concessions interests in Somalia today; Rice is also very close with Roger Winter of USAID.

In June 2003, President Bush announced the commitment of \$100 million for an East Africa Counterterrorism Initiative (EACTI) to provide counterterrorism equipment, training, and assistance to six countries in the region: Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda, and Kenya. As part of this effort, EACTI provided \$10 million for an intensive in-country antiterrorism training program for Kenya.

The Pentagon is also launching another program called the Trans Sahara Counterterrorism Initiative (TSCTI).

While the U.S. European Command—EUCOM—has historically been responsible for all Africa operations, the Pentagon is in the process of setting up a designated Africa Command. The plans call for rapid-reaction force bases to be set up all over Africa to be “activated periodically to train African forces.”

In March 2004, Chadian soldiers trained under the Pan Sahel Initiative were involved in a firefight, ostensibly with Algerian “terrorist” groups, who suffered significant mortalities; the Pentagon initially declined any US involvement but later admitted that U.S. support included a Navy P-3 Orion aircraft operating from Algeria and roughly 100 American servicemen; other operational support included communications, intelligence and reconnaissance.

In March 2004 the U-S military delivered food, medical supplies and other assistance to Chad, claiming to be supporting “government troops there who had battled suspected terrorists linked to al-Qaida.” Two C-130 Hercules cargo planes delivered more than 19 (metric) tons of “aid” to Chad, including food, blankets and medical supplies. The rush mission was ordered by the U-S military’s EUCOM, following a request from the government of Chad. The aircraft were from the 37th Airlift Squadron based at Ramstein Air Base, Germany.

U.S. forces have also taken up positions on an 88-acre base in Djibouti, formerly used by the French Foreign Legion. It is part of US Central Command’s purported effort “to intercept al Qaeda operatives fleeing Afghanistan for East Africa.” The Combined Joint Task Force Horn of Africa—operating out of Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya—also has engaged in “civil affairs operations” and “police training” designed to strengthen the ability of local governments in Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Sudan. EUCOM directed the Antiterrorism Assistance program to work with the civilian law enforcement agencies of Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and Niger. ATA delivered at least \$6.6 million in training and assistance to some of these countries in Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005. A special anti-terrorism squad, composed of the German Naval Air Wing, is currently based in Mombasa to monitor ships plying the Gulf of Aden and the Somali coast.

These are not isolated examples of U.S. military support or operations in the Sahel or Horn of Africa regions. On the contrary, they reveal the tip of the iceberg, or as it may better be understood, the tip of the “Golden Spear.” These programs and the agendas they serve are always, and euphemistically, described as beneficial to Africa and African people, as “pro-democracy” and “sustainable development.” Such euphemistic language is all doublespeak for the true agenda: total economic and military domination of Africa, primarily to secure and plunder natural resources essential to the permanent warfare economy of the U.S. and its partners; in this equation there is no intention of supporting or aiding African people unless it serves to maximize profits.

The U.S. special operations (SOCOM) trainings of soldiers in Chad, Ethiopia, Uganda and Kenya, raise questions about the involvement of these soldiers in the “complex emergencies” in Chad, Somalia and Central African Republic. It would be absurd and irresponsible—given the petroleum and other resources at stake—NOT to assume that these forces are involved in clandestine Project Pheonix or School of the Americas signature type programs in Sudan (Darfur).

“The conflict in Darfur is not a battle between uniformed combatants, and it knows no rules of war,” Marine Brian Steidle wrote. This is nonsense like the kind Dr. Eric Reeves would invent. The same tactic is employed by the Western media and the U.S. military that controls and embeds them: the photographs of uniformed soldiers of the various rebels groups fighting the Government of Sudan exist, as do the soldiers themselves, and they are sometimes wearing spick-and-span military fatigues.

The statement is both true and it is not true. The crimes are being committed, and they are

being committed by agents involved in a war, and the last person who should have any credibility under the circumstances is a U.S. military agent masquerading as a caring, God-fearing, humanitarian witness to genocide. The magnitude of the hypocrisy is stunning, and it is only exceeded by the intuitive awareness that the very same agents decrying “genocide” are stirring it up.

On the other side of the elusive truth, the statement by Marine Steidle that “[t]he conflict in Darfur is not a battle between uniformed combatants, and it knows no rules of war,” is something that Steidle should know very well, being that he is an American Marine, because the U.S. military is responsible for the most egregious atrocities ever committed by human beings against human beings, in violation of every single international treaty and standard set by the Geneva Convention. This behavior is not *passé*.

In fact, the U.S. openly taunts its supposed moral immunity from these international laws and covenants, and it taunts its violations of them, and with characteristic arrogance of the highest degree it holds American military power and its agents above the oversight of the International Criminal Court or any other international legal or humanitarian body. Dr. Eric Reeves and Mel Middleton fall into this category as well. The very tactics of a “no holds barred” war—mass murders, assassinations, tortures, disappearances, the proliferation of terror—are taught at U.S. military colleges and in field training programs, and they have been practiced, in the field, under secret U.S. programs since at least 1941, and they are happening now, all over the world.

The same is true of the U.S. military’s illegal and immoral use of chemical weapons, radioactive weapons, lasers and other top secret weaponry, and its experimentation on populations through the use of these weapons. Add to the list the now indisputable evidence that the U.S. military is using weather warfare technologies to the detriment of human populations and the global climate.

Everything said about the U.S. military applies equally, if not more so, to the Israeli military and the MOSSAD intelligence networks, and to its U.K. and other European partners.

According to one private military company, ATS Worldwide, a Florida-based operation, as revealed by Africa Confidential in the spring of 2006: “We’ve ramped up and prepared to support follow-on missions in support of the U.S. military and governmental agencies...We’ve executed our operation in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Sudan, Central and South America. We work primarily for the U.S. government in conjunction with the private sector or companies.”

Consisting of ex-military personnel, the company principals explain on their web site that the purpose of ATS Worldwide is to make it easier on the military to contract out and train these forces in order to deploy them in hot spots throughout the world, including, perhaps, ‘denied areas’ like Somalia, or even Darfur, where it is not politically acceptable for U.S. regular forces to operate, until that is, a crisis of suitable proportions can be engineered to allow some form of military intervention. This is exactly what we are seeing in Darfur, but it is cloaked in a psychological operation against the American public for which the mass media plays and stellar role in peddling “humanitarian” concern.

Save Darfur, indeed.

How many people have died? And how many lives will be saved? With Darfur we are treated

to hysterical accountings of events and numbers by Dr. Eric Reeves that seem to perpetually rise and rise, and get worse and worse, while also seeming to stay exactly the same.

FRONTLINE's numbers on the dead in Darfur, reported in January 2005, contradict the accounting of both Dr. Eric Reeves and of the Government of Sudan:

Since the 1983 start of the civil war, more than 4 million people have been displaced, and an estimated 2 million have died. Opposition groups as well as the government have been accused of atrocities in the conflict.

Since 2003, violence in Darfur—called ethnic cleansing by some and genocide by others—has left an estimated 50,000 to 80,000 dead and an estimated 1.2 million to 2 million people displaced. Survivors face severe shortages of food and clean water.

An estimated 2.3 million civilians in Darfur are in need of emergency aid, but bottlenecks created by both the government and the rebel forces cut them off from food and medical supplies.

By January of 2005, Dr. Eric Reeves was claiming some 400,000 people killed in Darfur since 2003. As far as these numbers of dead go there is no reason to believe or trust the accountings by Dr. Eric Reeves: the numbers of dead could as well be more than Dr. Eric Reeves has tallied, or they could be far less, but we have already established that Dr. Eric Reeves is not a trustworthy source. The manipulation of statistical dead, etc., also has precedence in the significant African examples of Somalia (1982-1994), Rwanda (1990-2007), Congo (1996-2007). (There is no shortage of examples of statecraft based on manipulation of statistics, or the refugees themselves.)

Additionally, the latter point above is not to be missed: both government *and rebel forces* cut civilians in Darfur off from food and medical supplies. According to Eric Reeves, almost universally, the Government of Sudan is the single party behind the killing and starvation in Sudan. First it was so in Christian South Sudan, and now it is so in Darfur. It is not the killing and starvation that one should question, but the parties involved in the creation and perpetuation of the crises, and the way that the crises is presented in the Western media.

Commenting on the 1998 famine in South Sudan mentioned above, Human Rights Watch noted that it was not only the Government of Sudan who was responsible for the crises.

The famine thus was not caused by incomprehensible forces... The SPLA [Sudan People's Liberation Army] strategy and tactics also disproportionately affect civilians. In particular, [SPLA's] sieges to force the surrender of government garrison towns and the taxation of or diversion of relief food from the starving population are abusive of civilians on both sides of the elusive front line.

So there it is again: the incongruity between the writings and accusations of Dr. Eric Reeves—always pointing to the Government of Sudan—and the murderous hand of the SPLA, which Dr. Reeves' quite neatly exonerates by omission. We see the same omissions in Dr. Reeves' coverage of Darfur: the rebels are inexplicably de-linked from the instability, if mentioned at all, and there is no mention of the external military support: the networks of weapons shipments or logistics providers, or the roles of private military companies—mercenaries—like Dyncorp, ATS Worldwide or Pacific Architects and Engineers,

all of whom work in Sudan, as was briefly introduced above.

A perfect and poignant example of Dr. Eric Reeves' sympathetic alliance or allegiance to the Sudan People's Liberation Army—whether by commission or omission—is his 4026 word "Crash-Course On Darfur" published in two parts by the New Republic Online on 18 July 2005. As implied in the title, the "Crash Course on Darfur" was presumably presented for the general public to come quickly up to speed on events in Darfur so that they could, as demanded by the mounting campaign to "Save Darfur," *do something*.

In the section of this authoritative treatise where he writes about the Government of Sudan's history of atrocities and bombings against South Sudan prior to the Darfur conflict Dr. Reeves' fails to offer even the simplest reference to the covert SPLA insurgency that was provoking both offensive and defensive actions from the Government of Sudan *and* contributing to misery and suffering of the very population the SPLA was hiding amongst and conscripting from:

The result of these [GOS] policies was that between 1989 and 2002 many hundreds of thousands of Sudanese were either killed or displaced. In the Nuba Mountains and the oil regions of southern Sudan, as in Darfur, the NIF regime settled upon a deliberate policy of human destruction, targeting ethnically African populations that had rebelled against, or were victims of, decades of political and economic marginalization."

Indeed, Dr. Reeves' only mention of the SPLA is in reference to erstwhile *liberation* leader: "John Garang, leader of the southern Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army..."

What most people reading the Reeves backgrounders and crash-courses on Darfur, or Sudan more generally, do not connect, is that John Garang, while a member of the Sudanese armed forces, received military training in the U.S. at Fort Benning Georgia—home to the School of the Americas, which trains soldiers in counterinsurgency techniques, sniper training, commando and psychological warfare, military intelligence and interrogation tactics, including torture. (Such realities obviously need to be repeated again and again and again.)

John Garang was very close with Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, and the SPLA received massive military and operational support from Uganda. EUCOM has been supporting UPDF forces in their fight against the dissident Lord's Resistance Army, which itself is reportedly backed by the Government of Sudan: EUCOM General Wald cemented this relationship in 2004 with a public announcement, though clandestine support for Uganda had been ongoing.

Given that the "Crash-Course on Darfur" has nothing of substance regarding the deepest underlying facts of the Sudan situation, and given that most readers searching for facts will take a bite out of the first apple they find and then, likely, throw their twenty or fifty bucks into the cause, the writing serves only to misinform and mis-educate. Why should anyone dig any deeper? This Reeves guy sounds reasonable enough. It's all very cut-and-dry, no pun intended, in Darfur, Sudan. It's genocide, we need to stop it: *shoot first, ask questions later*.

The last point made by Dr. Eric Reeves above is the absolute truth and it does not begin or end with Darfur: the people of South Sudan, as with ALL African populations, are victims of decades or political and economic marginalization. The problem with Dr. Eric Reeves'

analyses is that he fails to connect this marginalization to his own interests and position vis-à-vis the very power structure that is responsible for the devastation he decries, and the propaganda that overwhelmingly deflects attention from the role of this power structure in perpetuating misery.

But let's go back to the report *Famine in Sudan, 1998*: what Human Rights Watch seemed to go out of their way to avoid was any investigation, or even discussion, of how a humanitarian mission of the scale and magnitude of Operation Lifeline Sudan could have failed so magnificently, after a decade of operations in country, to avert the 1998 famine in Sudan.

Founded in 1988, OLS continues into the present. A rough approximation would determine that some 6.57 billion dollars were spent on Operation Lifeline Sudan over 17 years. What remains in Sudan to show for all this money spent? Is it a good-intentioned and merciful, though pointless, exercise in triage? Or is it the merciless dismemberment of yet another foreign land, culture and people? Is it possible that the money spent on massive relief operations does more harm than good—to the recipient country and the people ostensibly being helped—while forever filling the bank accounts of the providers from the donor countries and their foot soldiers in the field?

Further qualifying the nature of the cataclysm in Sudan is the United States Committee for Refugees assessment study entitled *A Working Document: Quantifying Genocide in the Southern Sudan, 1983-1993*, produced by Millard Burr, Ph.D. If we believe this assessment to be accurate—while the USCR is apparently one of the primary sources from which Dr. Eric Reeves receives his information there are certainly clear reasons to question the veracity of both the report and the organization which produced it—then we can begin with the USCR estimates that 1.3 million people had died in southern Sudan due to war and war-related causes in the ten years from 1983-1993. The figure of 1.3 million dead over ten years was at the time denoted as “a staggering estimate.”

Most interesting perhaps is this statement from the Burr report: “the government response to SPLA alliances with the ethnic Nuba of southern Kordofan, and the Beja and other ethnicities of the Red Sea region, has led the Khartoum government to carry out policies that spread death and destruction into northern Sudan itself.”

The U.S. Committee for Refugees is not a relief organization, but rather a U.S. state department entity and USAID partner that does not in any way assist refugees, and the rather specious and ill-defined USCR interests therefore compromise its reporting and position. Thus we might turn the above sentence around, taking into account the clandestine US military support for the SPLA “rebels,” and properly situating the SPLA role in the war and killing in South Sudan as a covert low-intensity conflict waged against its adversary, the GOS, where the towns and villages occupied by the civilian populations of the SPLA's ethnic allies are used to provide cover for the SPLA to disappear into.

The Burr report noted:

“Villages allied with the SPLA or located in the path of government attacks [to other SPLA villages] became special targets.” p. 12.

“Essentially, air attacks [by the GOS] were used as an instrument of terror and intended to drive villagers from their homes. Once villagers were displaced, tens of thousands of aged,

sick, and malnourished perished as they moved from site to site to escape the conflict.” p. 14.

The first excerpt clarifies that the SPLA occupation of civilian areas served to provoke massive destruction of civilian villages: the SPLA effectively turned a civilian landscape into a war zone, attempted to use the human populations—with which it also formed military ethnic alliances—into human shields, and then complained when the GOS responded to the insurgent SPLA war with violence in kind. Did the SPLA care about its own people?

The second excerpt clarifies that civilians died in the bush because they “moved from site to site to escape the conflict.” The word “conflict” underscores the multiple combatants involved, and the “moved site to site to escape” indicates that the combatants lived and/or fought from positions and locations where infrastructure existed that was essential to the sustenance and survival of human populations.

The Burr Report stated:

“The widespread use of aircraft to attack civilian targets indicated that Khartoum had declared war not just on John Garang and his SPLA, but on its own people. It seemed the [Khartoum Government] was ready to commit any war crime in order to crush the southern rebellion. In certain cases it appeared that villages that harbored INGO aid agencies were a special bombing target, as were crucial infrastructure such as clinics and hospitals. Conversely, on numerous occasions the Khartoum government used the catch all excuse of “security” (i.e., bombing campaigns) to reject NGO requests to provide assistance to communities in dire need of food or medical assistance.” p. 14.

Any rational and unbiased reading of the Burr Report reveals that its author, and the USCR, which commissioned and accepted the report, treated the SPLA and its leader, Dr John Garang, as a friend and trusted ally. The first sentence in the above excerpt can just as easily be rewritten to place the SPLA presence in its proper context: The widespread insurgency and low-intensity warfare pursued throughout the region by the occupying forces of the SPLA, backed by the United States and Uganda, in alliance with forces drawn from local populations of various ethnicities, provoked a massive campaign which brought massive despair and death onto the innocent civilians in areas where the SPLA operated.

Further, from the above excerpt we see rather clearly that the so-called “humanitarian” presence by Operation Lifeline Sudan and its Western backers was seen by the Government of Sudan, at the very least, as a massive program of support which benefited not only the civilian populations impacted by the SPLA insurgency but also served to feed, clothe, supply and re-supply, and provide medical care for the insurgent SPLA army and its partner combatants. If the Khartoum Government was “ready to commit any war crime in order to crush the southern rebellion,” so too the SPLA and its “humanitarian” partners were responsible for provoking these war crimes. Using civilian populations and civilian population centers as human shields is itself a war crime for which the SPLA is responsible. Ditto the situation in Darfur with the “rebel” forces aligned against Khartoum, and each other, which leave innocent civilians at the mercy of a conflagration between world superpowers.

In the Burr Report excerpt above the Government of Sudan is accused of using “the catch all excuse of ‘security’ (i.e. bombing campaigns) to reject NGO requests to provide assistance to communities in dire need of food or medical assistance.” This accusation by the West is

commonly repeated, assigning absolutely no responsibility to the invading and insurgent forces for their use of the civilian populations as human shields. If the GOS uses some catch all excuse of 'security', then the Christian soldiers of the SPLA army, and the Operation Lifeline Sudan network that supported them, either directly or indirectly used their own catch all excuse of "providing urgent humanitarian aid to innocent civilians" (i.e. provision of basic supplies, lethal and non-lethal equipment, logistic support for troop movements, weapons shipments, cover for operations by SPLA or Private military companies) to defend and validate their humanitarian war in alliance with the SPLA. This same tactic is used in Darfur and Chad today, and the massive media, public relations and foundational support from the pro-Western propaganda system insure its efficacy.

The SPLA was using South Sudan and its people as human shields to attempt to cloak its operations and reduce the possibility of attacks by its foe, the GOS. Of course, the GOS responded to the "rebel" attack against it very much as the government of Juvenal Habyarimana responded to the "rebel" invasion of Rwanda and the subsequent low-intensity war, from 1990-1994. Like the Government of Rwanda in 1994, the GOS fought back. Like the government of Rwanda, faced with an international insurgency that was never equitably castigated or denounced by the "international community" for the violation of international law that it was, the Governments of both Rwanda from 1990-1994 and Sudan were instead accused of genocide.

Like Alex deWaal (Africa Rights, 1992-1994), Roger Winter, Susan Rice and John Prendergast, the U.S. Committee for Refugees and USAID were behind both of these genocide accusations and the assessments that set out to establish them as indisputable and documented truth. Further, Operation Lifeline Sudan, as with the massive operations ostensibly seeking to provide "humanitarian" relief to displaced and suffering people in Darfur today, was clearly bringing food and medical supplies to the benefit of one faction involved in a brutal war where civilians were being targeted, and the civilians were being targeted, manipulated or used by all combatants.

If food is a resource and the resource is funneled to purchase weapons or manipulate starving populations of internally displaced people, then food—and the "humanitarian" aid and infrastructure which delivers it—is being used as a weapon of war. It happened in Somalia, it is happening in Ethiopia, it is happening in Darfur. What we have not seen is any significant and comparable denunciation of the rebel incursions into the territory of a sovereign state: Sudan. The rebel involvement in Darfur, as with the SPLA in South Sudan, is in violation of international law; the atrocities committed by these factions are not duly advertised in proportion to their scale and magnitude. Such is the nature of empire.

"The SPLA *absolutely* was using the villages on South Sudan as human shields," says journalist Michael Maren, author of the Road To Hell. "And all those AID groups of Operation Lifeline Sudan—it was the largest relief operation in history—were basically catering a war. I was convinced that if you pulled out all that AID the war would collapse. One group always benefits from the creation of all these refugee camps... These massive AID operations like Darfur make it easier for weapons to get in—they keep the trucking lanes open, they bring in resources that are used to purchase arms. If you believe that the SPLA are the answers to Sudan's problems and the people don't have the power to stand up for themselves then shipping in guns is not surprising. And if you are feeding people you are arming them."

Indeed, at least one "humanitarian" agency working in South Sudan over the past fifteen years is openly known for shipping in weapons. While working in Ethiopia in the fall of 2006,

my colleagues who worked for UNICEF openly scoffed at the Sudan operations of Norwegian People's Aid, a so-called "independent non-profit organization" from Norway; relief professionals who had worked in regions where NPA was active referred to them as Norwegian People's Army. There are numerous reports verifying that Norwegian People's Aid is a political, economic and military supporter of the SPLA. Experts also cited diversion of "humanitarian aid," including food, to SPLA forces.

The European-Sudanese Public Affairs Council offers an extensive critique of the military role of Norwegian People's Aid. It appears to fit reality rather well.

Mel Middleton of Freedom Quest International verifies that NPA was tightly aligned with the Sudanese resistance, and that other Christian groups nonetheless maintain networks with NPA. Mel Middleton describes the collaboration as a "position of solidarity":

"We have networked [with NPA] in the past. And prior to the founding of Freedom Quest, NPA provided some funding to the Nuba Mountain relief programs (where I worked) when that whole area had been sealed off by Khartoum and the people were being targeted for genocide and displacement (1993 -1997). NPA has taken a position of 'solidarity' with the SPLA. Others, like the oil companies mentioned above, are in 'solidarity' with the fascist dictatorship in Khartoum. We network with all organizations that are interested in true corporate social responsibility and with all who want to put an end to genocide and suffering—especially if it's related to oil exploitation and corporate irresponsibility."

On the basis of the admission that Freedom Quest and other groups knowingly partner with organizations involved in arming a faction in the Sudanese war, the "humanitarian" agenda of the entire Operation Lifeline Sudan is called into question. Similarly, the entire "humanitarian" mission to "Save Darfur!" is equally compromised. And while Mel Middleton suggests that his and other organizations operate without bias in support of ending genocide and suffering, the claim remains specious, at best, under scrutiny of the same organizations' positions in other conflicts where the "good guys" are in "solidarity" with these organizations and their affiliated corporate partners, financial backers and governments. Examples of East Timor, Columbia, Nigeria, Gabon, and Afghanistan come immediately to mind.

Africa Research Bulletin offers another poignant example of the divergence between reporting by "Save Darfur!" advocates and realities on the ground in South Sudan. This 15 March 2002 article is not unique or exceptional, and it underscores a clear link between the military operations of U.S.-supported SPLA/SPDF insurgents and the Government of Sudan's attacking civilians and civilian villages.

"Facing strong new military opposition from the rebels, Sweden's Lundin Oil suspended its activities in Western Upper Nile on January 22. A few days later, the rebels destroyed a government convoy trying to secure the all-weather road to the oilfields. Relying heavily on air power, government troops and militias attacked and burned villages close to the oilfields and the oil road, driving ordinary people from all areas previously controlled by the [SPLA-allied] rebels of the Sudan People's Democratic Front (SPDF)."

"The oil war is waged largely unseen... the offensive in Western Upper Nile passed unremarkably until [Government] helicopter gunships killed 24 people—all of them civilians

and most of them women and children—during a World Food Programme (WFP) relief drop in the village of Bieh on February 20th. The WFP had requested and received permission for the drop—a process through which Khartoum obtains the coordinates of southern airstrips and then bombs them.”

Here is a very influential economic journal pointing out that [1] the SPLA/SPDF rebels are responsible for “strong new military opposition;” [2] the war in South Sudan is an *oil war*; [3] the SPLA/SPDF undertook a major *offensive*; [4] the “oil war is waged largely unseen” and the rebel offensive “passed unremarkably,” until the Government of Sudan retaliated.

Most significant about this Africa Research Bulletin article however are the last sentences above. When the World Food Program seeks to deliver food it must clear “relief drops” with the Government of Sudan. By providing the geographical coordinates of WFP “relief drops” the Government of Sudan is able to get a fix on the location of populations in South Sudan and bomb “relief” sorties. This is one of very few examples where the relationship between the Operation Lifeline Sudan “relief” mission and the war it provokes is actually spelled out by a Western source.

The idea that anyone would bomb “relief” agencies or bomb children in food lines is reprehensible, but so is the role that these very relief agencies and their powerful backers play in manipulating public opinion in the US or UK, and manipulating and—worse—profiting from, the suffering in “complex emergencies.” If you use food as a weapon, you cannot be surprised when your “weapon” is seen for what it is and targeted by your enemy.

Meanwhile, from the hysterical writings of Dr. Eric Reeves’—again and again—we get only that civilian villages have been attacked, and usually for no reason at all, or else because the Government of Sudan has a rapacious propensity to wipe out people in the way of oil development. If this is true, then it is exactly what the predacious oil companies want, and by “oil companies” I speak specifically of those U.S. oil companies “sidelined” by U.S. sanctions against Sudan: the more that the people of Darfur are eliminated, the more the land is razed, the more psychological and physical pain is inflicted on innocent populations in Africa, the easier it is, and will be, for the oil companies and other industries—that are definitely involved in Darfur’s war one way or another—to swoop in when the opportunity arises. This is exactly what has happened in Congo. If the Sudanese rebels are mentioned they are heroic Christian rebels that cannot be equated with the Government and its helicopter airships. This is the propaganda line, and it is used, disingenuously, to peddle yet *another* brutal war onto the American people as if it were a “humanitarian” rescue operation out of the goodness of our servant’s hearts. How many examples are necessary? Does the American public never learn?

“The SPLA were true freedom fighters,” says Mel Middleton of Freedom Question International. “Like the French resistance, or those who fought the ‘red coats’ in 1776, they fought against an unjust and oppressive government. Only in this case it was a terrorist supporting, genocidal regime.”

Onward Christian soldiers,
marching as to war,
with the cross of Jesus,

bearing on before.

The Government of Sudan's bombing campaigns against SPLA targets, or innocent civilians, to the extent that we accept that they have occurred as indicated—it is both the extent and nature of attacks that we cannot be sure we are accurately informed about—are no more or less violations of international law than the indiscriminate air strikes and targeted bombings committed, contemporaneously, by the U.S. military in Iraq, Afghanistan or Somalia, or by the targeted bombings committed by the state of Israel in Palestine or Lebanon, or by NATO's so-called "humanitarian" intervention in Yugoslavia, all of which involved massive civilian casualties, or by the Uganda People's Defense Forces and Rwanda Defense Forces (formerly RPF/A) in their brutal war in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where some 4-10 million people have died. To this list of governments responsible for egregious brutality and indiscriminate bombing campaigns we can add the government of Ethiopia, today, for their air strikes and bombings committed in Somalia, its seems obvious enough, but more egregious still are their indiscriminate air attacks and bombings against their own people in the Afar region of Ethiopia.

Add to the atrocities and mass murders list the military adventurism in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos—the most bombed country on earth—and the chemical warfare conducted there, and note that these would never be defined as genocide, and that the bombs and unexploded ordinance are still being unearthed today.

Where is the moral high ground?

In the exchange with between Smith College Professor Dr. Eric Reeves noted above, newspaper editor Gamal Nkrumah complained that the motivations of the U.S could not be trusted given the many examples like "Abu Ghraib and numerous other atrocities committed against the people of Iraq" which "clearly demonstrated that the US is not interested in the welfare of the people of Iraq" and "neither is the Bush administration interested in the welfare of the people of Darfur."

Gamal Nkrumah's point is well-taken: to be claiming high moral humanitarian ground on Darfur and committing massive atrocities in Afghanistan, Iraq, Ethiopia, Columbia, Somalia, Haiti...and other places today, is complete hypocrisy; those who have protested "U.S. Out of Iraq and Into Sudan" are deeply confused.

In response to Gamal Nkrumah's statement, Dr. Eric Reeves answers: "To invoke Iraq and Abu Ghraib when the issue clearly is saving lives in Darfur is disingenuous. That Iraq was a terribly misconceived debacle that will haunt U.S. foreign policy for years could not be clearer; but this doesn't diminish in the slightest the extraordinarily urgent need for international protection of the more than four million human beings the UN estimates are affected by genocidal conflict in Darfur and eastern Chad."

Yet this argument by Dr. Eric Reeves is completely insane and irrational, and it is premised in imperial arrogance and only those who are willing to entertain the true role of the U.S. in the world today are able to understand it. This comes down to one's financial and economic interests, and it is the basis for class as well as race warfare.

Hence it is important to recognize what we are talking about when we adopt the language used by and for certain interests whose real motivations are thereby obscured. Terminology

like “humanitarian” and “non-government” and even the simple term “aid” can and have all been euphemistically adopted by groups whose interests are a far cry from those suggested by their names.

For example, some “humanitarian” aid groups have been caught red-handed shipping weapons into South Sudan: we have already explored the role of the international NGO Norwegian People’s Aid (Army). The United States Agency for International Development (USAID)—which by itself offers an example of a euphemistically named organization whose operations are known to serve powerful corporate and military interests—has frequently contracted private military (mercenary) companies with deep intelligence ties for their clandestine missions. Because of the systemic insincerity and graft—at all levels, from Sudan to Connecticut to Somalia—Western relief professionals working for the United Nations in Ethiopia sardonically referred to Save the Children as “Save the Chickens”—apparently referencing their incapacity to have any serious or substantive impact, nothing more than some form of triage which treats the symptoms and never the causes.

Mel Middleton of Freedom Quest International will not reveal who the private financial backers or board of directors of Freedom Quest are; the Freedom Quest website offers little information of value. Servant’s Heart lists U.S. Congressional Representative Donald Payne on its “Board of Reference.” Donald Payne is Honorary C-Chair of the Africa Society, a pro-U.S. business “non-government” organization with ties to some of the most nefarious multinational corporations with deep and rapacious involvement in Africa. The Africa Society’s corporate sponsors include Archer Daniels Midland, Chevron-Texaco, Exxon-Mobil and Coca Cola; Coke is after Sudan’s gum Arabic, an emulsifying agent produced in Sudan and coveted by the beverage and pharmaceutical industries. Payne is also on the board of directors of a Christian faith-based organization rather euphemistically named Bread for the World; other directors include Bob Dole and Clinton White House insiders Leon Panetta and Mike McCurry; it appears to be the very close to the heart of the Christian Coalition. Former Ambassador and Mayor of Atlanta Andrew Young is also part of the Africa Society, and his private Goodworks International consulting firm represents a “who’s who” of plunder and devastation in Africa: firms like Barrick Gold, operating in eight of the poorest countries in the world, six in Africa, whose directors or advisers include George H.W. Bush, Brian Mulroney, Howard Baker and Edward Ney. The Africa Society also involves U.S. Congressman Ed Royce (R-Ca) another leader of the “Save Darfur!” movement.

On the Servant’s Heart “Board of Reference” is British Baroness Caroline Cox, who is also closely affiliated with Christian Solidarity International. Christian Solidarity International is one of the main Christian allies of the SPLM/A war in southern Sudan. Providing an example of the double standard that prevails through the propaganda system advocating in favor of the SPLA, partly by never mentioning them, Christian Solidarity International (CSI) has issued press releases claiming that the Lebanese organization Hezbollah “is using Christian villages to shield its military operations in violation of international law.” It appears that Hezbollah is violating international law, but the SPLM/A—and the “rebel” groups in Darfur—while doing exactly the same thing—are not. Indeed, they are hardly even mentioned, as if they were never even there.

Like Christian Solidarity International, the American Anti-Slavery Group has been instrumental in raising the specter of slavery in Sudan committed by Arab-backed factions against innocent Africans. Their high-visibility missions to Sudan, with full court media coverage, have involved U.S. Senators or Representatives in purchasing the freedom of

captive slaves from Arab traders. Notably, *Servant's Heart's* Baroness Caroline Cox is single-handedly credited with “freeing” over 2000 black slaves in Sudan. But the anti-slavery coalitions and members have also come under fire for establishing and entrenching an economy of slavery: as long as starving people can realize a massive profit from well-healed American crusaders, why should they lay down their arms and close up shop? Why would the simple economics of supply and demand operate differently in a hostile (sic) desert where people are starving to death, when white men in Armani suits—and British Baronesses in posh safari gear—will pay fifty dollars to buy the release of every child taken into bondage? Are the slaves themselves being paid to participate?

Charles Jacobs is the President of Anti-Slavery International and the director of The Sudan Campaign, some kind of international campaign against the Government of Sudan and part of the “Save Darfur!” movement. Dr. Charles Jacobs is credited with an April 2001 “slave redemption mission in Sudan that helped liberate over 2,900 enslaved women and children.”

But the interests of President Charles Jacobs of the American Anti-Slavery Group extend far beyond the “humanitarian” horrors of tribal bondage. Jacobs is also on the Board of Advisers for U.S. “non-government organization” euphemistically named the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies (FDD). The FDD is deeply nationalistic, a *bonafide* flag-waving, right-wing American institution whose Distinguished Advisers include “Contract on America” demagogue Newt Gingrich, former CIA director R. James Woolsey, and former FBI Director Louis Freeh. Charles Jacobs’ fellow advisory board members include Frank Gaffney Jr., President Ronald Reagan’s leading cheerleader for the Strategic Defense Initiative or “Star Wars” ballistic missile program, and director of the Center for Security Policy, an institution which Helen Caldicott called the “nerve center of the Star Wars lobby.” Notably, Frank Gaffney Jr. is also on the board of the Center for Security Policy. The CSP and FDD are both strategic think tanks and pressure groups at the core of the U.S. military and intelligence strategy against Sudan and the other countries on the “Nexus of Evil;” their influence cannot be overstated. The FDD web site includes the August 2004 article by Dr. Eric Reeves, “Regime Change in Sudan,” with the question: “Could regime change in Sudan have prevented genocide?”

According to the Freedom for the Defense of Democracies web site:

“FDD uniquely combines policy research, democracy and counterterrorism training, strategic communications, and investigative journalism. We focus our efforts where opinions are formed and, ultimately, where the war of ideas will be won or lost: in the media, on college campuses, and in the policy community, at home and abroad.”

“At a time when college campuses are under the sway of apologists for terrorism, FDD has trained hundreds of professors and students as pro-democracy, anti-terrorism advocates and activists.”

“FDD students have gone on to jobs in the National Security Agency, the Central Intelligence Agency, the State Department, the military, the Peace Corps, and the White House and have won Fulbright and Truman scholarships to continue their studies. ”

“FDD spokespeople appear in national, international, and Arabic-language media outlets on average *seven times a day, seven days a week* [emphasis original] to deliver powerful, effective messages about the need to fight terrorism and promote democratic values.

Democracy and counter-terrorism training? Spokespeople appearing in the mass media seven times a day, seen days a week?

Quod erat demonstrandum.

Beyond the oil war, the defense of freedom and democracy, and the general imperatives of empire at work on Sudan, the Judeo-Christian support and cheerleading against the Government of Sudan can also be seen as a Holy War. Indeed, Western missionaries have “worked very hard, even traveling overseas to present the best image of the SPLA as fighters for religious freedom in Sudan,” complained the Frontline Fellowship when “rogue” SPLA soldiers desecrated a church after officials refused to allow an SPLA soldier to be buried in the church cemetery. The writing (below) underscores the cultural alienation, intolerance and xenophobia that seethe beneath the surface in Western society, and that drive the Judeo-Christian clash of civilizations, and the missions of civilizing and soul saving of barbaric people.

“It was the Christians who came with many tonnes of medicines, training the medics, the nurses, chaplains and teachers, helping to rebuild the hospitals, clinics and schools which the Government of Sudan had destroyed. At great risk to our lives, we have proven ourselves true friends of the people of Southern Sudan. However, these looters and vandals are traitors. As one person has observed: ‘They may as well bow to Mecca, *put towels around their heads* [emphasis added] and go and fight for the National Islamic Front. They will do less damage to the South that way.’ ”

Like many of the Christian missionary groups, the stories by the Frontline Fellowship—“Serving God in Angola, Congo, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Sudan, Zambia and Zimbabwe” —provide some entertaining reading. Stories about breaching UN blockades and delivering precious cargoes of Bibles and Christian books in clandestine flights at risk of being shot down by the Government of Sudan. There are church sermons under camouflaged buildings, and escorts by SPLA soldiers and sermons arranged special for them.

“We swung into action and by dawn the next morning we were flying into Sudan with the Christian contraband—1,200 Bibles in five languages and several boxes of Christian books and teaching manuals...”

“The next morning an enthusiastic choir and soldiers escorted us through the bush to the conference centre. It was beautifully constructed in a shady clearing covered by tall trees. It was clear that a lot of hard work had gone into this venue. Hundreds of cheerful Christians were converging on the site from all directions. Many were singing, some wore or carried crosses. The Commissioner of the district (who is also a church elder) officially welcomed us to the conference. He said: “*This is a war for religious freedom. The Khartoum government has made it clear that only Islam will be allowed in Sudan.*” [Emphasis original.] The SPLA in New Sudan (the South) was fighting for the freedom to hold church conferences like this. He said that they could not guarantee our safety from air attacks but they would do all they could to ensure our safety whilst their guests. Throughout the conference military patrols circled the area and vigilant soldiers scanned the surrounding jungle.

But the relationship of Christian missionaries and non-government organizations does not begin or end with dumping bibles on heathens and praying with God’s children.

In an article titled "SPLA Offensive Overwhelms Muslim Forces," published in a Christian magazine titled Frontline Fellowship News (1997), we taste the true flavor of the SPLA mission in south Sudan and the role which the SPLA was seen to play in the nasty but unreported little U.S.-backed war in Sudan. This uncharacteristically candid article cheers on the aggressive SPLA mission with a very obvious zeal that belies the kind of support that some Christian organizations have provided. The article also offers a perspective that stands in sharp juxtaposition to the writings of Dr. Eric Reeves, where the SPLA is cast as almost an innocent bystander, but certainly the underdog with the moral currency of truth and freedom behind it.

Some excerpts from the article:

"A series of coordinated military assaults launched by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in March 1997 has succeeded in capturing 24 garrison towns previously held by the National Islamic Front (NIF) government forces. The spectacularly swift offensive swept all opposition aside and killed, wounded or captured a total of 16,000 enemy [NIF] soldiers. By the end of March the strategic towns of Kaya, Yei, Lainya and Kajokeji had been captured by the victorious SPLA forces."

"The entire border with Uganda is now effectively under SPLA control (as is [sic] the Zaire [D.R. Congo], Kenyan and Ethiopian borders with Sudan). The SPLA's dramatic new offensive has, therefore, broken the stranglehold of the NIF blockade on Western Equatoria and opened the road for relief supplies to be driven through Uganda into Western Equatoria. The SPLA is now also able to link its liberated territories in Eastern Equatoria to Western Equatoria and onto Bahr El Ghazal."

"The SPLA captured a vast quantity of equipment from the GOS forces. Seventeen tanks were captured intact at Yei along with and [sic] anti-aircraft battery. An Antonov bomber which was sent to bomb Yei was later shot down by this AA battery."

The SPLA role in committing and provoking atrocities in South Sudan from 1983 to 2003 has been greatly misrepresented and mischaracterized by virtually every popular source cited in the western press. While the involvement of the SPLA and other "rebels" that are backed, funded, armed or supplied by the West has been mildly cited by such organizations as Human Rights Watch or Amnesty International, the scale and magnitude of the involvement of these insurgent forces, and their complicity in or commission of war crimes, crimes against humanity and acts of genocide have been almost entirely dismissed, ignored or covered up.

The control of the borders of Kenya, Ethiopia and Uganda were achieved only tenuously due to insurgents and combatants backed by other external forces, agents, governments or multinational corporations. Uganda itself has been the site of one of the worst international humanitarian emergencies, and both the scale of the cataclysm and the reasons behind it remain shrouded in mythology: the one-party dictatorship of Yoweri Museveni is the leading culprit. However, it is important to note that the Anglo-American-Israeli alliance maintains client-state military and economic partnerships with Uganda, Ethiopia, Kenya and—to a lesser degree—Chad; these are what the Pentagon and the International Crises Group calls the "frontline" states operating against Sudan.

If he mentions them at all, Dr. Eric Reeves has consistently portrayed the SPLA insurgents as an ill-equipped and ill-trained Army of rag-tag African rebels who are out-gunned, out-

maneuvered and outwitted by the GOS and its Antonov bombers and helicopter gunships.

In partnership with the US and the Museveni government in Uganda, the SPLA/M of South Sudan has also repeatedly inflamed tensions and provoked hostilities with the Lord's Resistance Army "rebels" fighting an insurgent war against the Museveni government in Uganda. This is another example where reality is turned on its head and the news consuming public is given only pieces of a story. Here the devil does not come on horseback, he comes in the form of a Holy Christian cult of devil-worship and child sacrifice. The deeper realities—like the Museveni government's support for the LRA or the LRA's connections to Washington—are never, ever reported. Meanwhile, the LRA gets massive negative press, because as long as President Museveni can maintain a war with so-called "rebels" he can justify more and more weaponry, World Bank projects, and IMF loans; yet these have all been diverted into militarization, natural resource capture and control, and war.

The extent of clandestine military support for the SPLA is unknown. Ditto the rebel group[s] in Darfur. It is widely reported that in 1996, the US government sent nearly \$20 million in military equipment through the 'front-line' states of Ethiopia, Eritrea and Uganda to help the Sudanese opposition overthrow the Khartoum regime. Africa Confidential, for example, reported in 1996 that in Uganda the SPLA "has already received U.S. help via Uganda", while U.S. Special Forces are on "open-ended deployment" with the rebels. It was also reported more recently that several US army Operational detachments (A-Teams) were operating in support of the SPLA. What most of the U.S. public does not appreciate is that the U.S. support for South Sudan and the constant insurgency against Khartoum has led to the creation of an independent South Sudan, with its own government, independent of Khartoum. The U.S. envisions South Sudan as a base of operations for its military objectives in North Africa. In 2005 it was reported that the US Special Forces were training 1500 SPLA Special Forces and 300 bodyguards for the Government of South Sudan leadership.

Africa Research Bulletin has noted that the conflict in South Sudan "has long been a bugbear of the Religious Right, more than a third of the Republican Party's membership. It saw the conflict as one between black Christian southerners and Muslim Arab northerners. In truth, most southerners have no Christian beliefs."

After ridiculing the GOS for its foolish propaganda, and lauding the SPLA and its heroic leader John Garang for their massive military successes—16,000 enemy soldiers captured, wounded or killed—the brief report by the Frontline Fellowship News closed, as they all do, with scripture.

In that time a present will be brought to the Lord of hosts

From a people tall and smooth of skin, And from a people

Terrible from their beginning onward, A nation powerful and

Treading down, whose land the rivers divide...

-Isaiah 18:7

Much that is true about the portrayal of the conflict in South Sudan is mirrored today by the

West's portrayal of the Darfur conflict. The Darfur conflict involves very real combatants that can be held to account for their commission of atrocities; these combatants are being armed, trained, supplied and funded by external forces, allied government and military agencies.

Hence, if we accept the categorizations of genocide cast by the massive Western military and humanitarian relief apparatus in South Sudan, which found that the ethnic Nuba of southern Kordofan, and the Beja and other ethnicities of the Red Sea region, were being systematically eliminated, then we have to accept as well that the SPLA and its backers are directly complicit in genocide. This raises very serious questions with respect to the involvement of Dr. Eric Reeves, or Nicholas Kristof, respecting their capacity to influence public opinion through massive Western media coverage that they are afforded. And this coverage is exclusive, supporting a narrative of "genocide committed by Arabs against black Africans," and this narrative disallows any thinking, facts or evidence that diverge from the reductionist campaign of "genocide by Arabs against blacks."

Dr. Eric Reeves has consistently insisted that the conflict in Darfur cannot in any way be connected to the 20-year conflict that raged in South Sudan, until 2003, when a peace agreement was negotiated and signed between the SPLA and the GOS. However, this assertion is rather specious and unlikely. Over the course of the 1980's and 1990's: [1] war in South Sudan regularly spilled into the Darfur region; [2] war in Chad regularly spilled into Darfur; [3] animosities and tensions were inflamed by both the long history of civil strife in the region and the contemporary disaffection of local populations recognizing that other groups are benefiting from petroleum wealth or development initiatives, no matter how sparse, while they are not. The Darfur conflict cannot in any rational accounting be separated from the conflict in South Sudan: it is merely a convoluted extension of it.

To back up these arguments, we have the U.S. Committee for Refugees report cited. This report reveals that the SPLA and GOS were indeed both involved in fighting, which took place in the Darfur region. The document suggests that the fighting was widespread with mortality in Darfur in the "multiples of tens of thousands of people" killed per year, at least, particularly in the years 1987 and 1988, with at least "multiples of thousands of people" killed from 1987 to 1993 ("insufficient data" was listed for 1986 and 1990-1991, and the report stops at 1993).

Thus we have somewhere on the order of let's say somewhere around 40,000 people, minimum, if we believe these statistics, killed between 1987 and 1993. Since these statistics were produced by the same organization that Dr. Eric Reeves uses as one of his major providers of information, data and facts and descriptions which he receives—by phone or fax or email or perhaps parcel post from Sudan—at his Smith College office in Northampton, Massachusetts, we are faced with a direct contradiction of evidence.

It is impossible to both accept Dr. Reeves' assertions that "there is no connection between the conflict in Darfur and the war in South Sudan," given the evidence from his own sources that some 40,000 people, minimum, were killed in the Darfur region from 1987 to 1993. If the numbers are true, or even if they are off by an order of magnitude, up or down, these statistics represent significant upheaval that would have deep and long-lasting effects on local power politics and the dynamics and imperatives of survival in the Darfur region. At the very least, the local populations in the Darfur—the victims and survivors—would be suffering the deeply seated and poorly understood after-effects of both psychological and physical trauma. Anyone who has worked in the field of psychology of war and conflict recognizes

that the after-effects of violence are deeply relevant to contemporary livelihoods and vulnerabilities.

Since the war in South Sudan continued into the new millennium, the scars of torture, mass shootings, assassinations, rapes and other atrocities committed in Darfur would certainly be as fresh as the blood dripping from the weapons of the perpetrators. These scars and unhealed wounds, with the concomitant desire for truth and justice internalized by victims and survivors, and the certain internalized longing for vengeance, would have a major bearing on the dynamics of any subsequent “peace” or “conflict” in the Darfur region, as anywhere.

The contracts let by the U.S. Government for “peacekeeping” and “relief” and related “security” contracts in Darfur are run by the U.S. State Department, not by the military, and State is a civilian agency comparable to a foreign ministry in most governments.

Lieutenant-Colonel Michael Bittrick, the deputy director of regional and security affairs for Africa at the State Department, flew to Addis two months ago to hammer out an agreement to support African Union troops by committing to provide housing, office equipment, transport, and communications gear. This will be provided via an “indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity” joint contract awarded to Dyncorp Corporation, and Pacific Architects & Engineers (PAE) worth \$20.6 million.

By limiting each individual contract to several million dollars; labeling them peace-keeping missions; employing retired CIA and Special Forces personnel working for private contractors as well as foreign nationals (to whom the 400 person ceiling does not apply), Congress does not have to be notified, making the contracts harder to oversee.

Aside from the risk of unauthorized ventures being run by the executive branch beyond the scrutiny of Congress, there’s a more prosaic reason to wonder whether private contractors are the best way for the US to carry out its foreign policy. As in the well-documented abuses by [Halliburton](#) and the other Iraq contractors, PAE has a history of being accused of overcharging.

PAE, which also offers support for oil drilling projects around the world, has been involved in several African peacekeeping missions such as the air and sealift of personnel and supplies, equipment maintenance, and the provision of food fuel and water for the United Nations in Sierra Leone in 2003 and in the Congo in 2001. The company’s work in the Congo was investigated by the U.N. auditors because it was so expensive.

Now how many connections to unaccountable military agencies, programs, institutions, corporations, mercenaries, rebel factions, Christian soldiers, or other questionable “parties” do we need to identify before we can determine that there is much more to Darfur than meets the eye?

Who are the rebel groups in Darfur? Who are the Justice and Equality Movement and Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) rebels? Are U.S. covert ops dressing up like Janjaweed and committing atrocities? Remember those U.S. covert operatives who dressed up like Mujahadeen—or was it the Taliban?—and galloped around on horses in Afghanistan?

“You can’t conflate the SPLM/A with the SLM/A,” wrote Dr. Eric Reeves in an email exchange

to an inquiring citizen on 14 June 2006, "the war in the south is over, at least major conflict, and there is no longer assistance of a military sort being given to any combatants in the south, or anywhere else in Sudan by the U.S. or Europeans."

According to Arab sources, the U.S. fingerprints are all over Darfur. In "Oil Underlies Darfur Tragedy," Cumali Dunal shares the Arab point of view, from Egypt:

"It is claimed that the American administration has given at least 20 million dollars worth of aid to the SPLA and other armed groups allied with this organization. Arab sources point to the involvement of the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) in the Darfur incidents as the primary piece of evidence that the struggle is based on oil. SLA has close relations with SPLA, led by John Garang, and it is demanding oil from the government.

Of course, Arab news sources and Arab voices are written off and discredited merely because they are Arabs. If we take the position of Dr. Eric Reeves, we are expected to believe that the United States has absolutely no military involvement or engagement in Darfur, or in all of Sudan. This is nonsense.

Again and again Dr. Eric Reeves has denied the most obvious truth regarding oil concessions, oil infrastructure, and oil reserves in Darfur. Dr. Eric Reeves is perpetually exaggerating statistics, omitting facts, sweeping inconvenient details under the moral outrage of genocide. His selective omissions of important details are as noteworthy as his selective inclusion of unsubstantiated facts. And yet Dr. Eric Reeves is published anywhere and everywhere in the mainstream press, and he is even carried on radio programs of both the political right and political left [sic]. He appears before Congress to give "expert testimony" about a place he has hardly ever been, and he says exactly what they seem to want to hear, even though he appears to be a real thorn in the side of spineless degenerates or "finally disingenuous" governments who refuse to heed the moral call of "never again."

Why should we believe anything at all that Dr. Eric Reeves has to say about Sudan? If he is seriously concerned about the loss of human life in Sudan, Dr. Eric Reeves should reconsider exactly whom he is writing for, and what he really should be saying. As it is, his writing is all just a bunch of words, repackaged and represented, over and over and over. Given the military imperatives that he is supporting, one way or another, and the powerful interests that seek to dominate and control Sudan, Dr. Eric Reeves pretty much fits the description suggested by Dr. David Hoile of the European Sudanese Affairs Council.

Day in, day out, Dr. Eric Reeves remains the voice of Sudan, sifting through incoming material, writing about Sudan from his office at Smith College, in Northampton, Massachusetts. Of course, Dr. Reeves is professor of English and Literature, and this is perhaps why we are getting some version of unadulterated fiction. Is it helping the people of Sudan? Or is it all a lot of unhelpful noise?

"It is the intense media attention that makes it seem more dangerous and confusing," wrote Michael Maren, in *The Road To Hell*, his expose on the ravaging effects of foreign aid and international charity. Maren's case study was Somalia from 1982 to 1993. "It is the perceived immediacy of the crises that makes everyone cry out, 'Do something.' "

On 24 January 2007 an international aid worker employed was reportedly raped in Darfur. It was "the first such reported assault in Sudan's west and the latest in a wave of attacks

against the world's largest humanitarian operation."

[Action Contre La Faim](#), which fights malnutrition in the vast region, said that one employee was raped, others were sexually assaulted, and there was a mock execution during an attack on their compound in December in rebel-controlled Gereida town, which houses the largest number of refugees in Darfur, with 130,000 encamped in miserable conditions having fled attacks on their villages in the desert region.

The attackers reportedly looted everything, stole vehicles, communication equipment, and beat employees, both local and international staff. The report claimed that "armed men simultaneously attacked all aid agencies" working in Gereida in December. Some 71 humanitarian workers were reportedly evacuated and tens of thousands of dollars worth of equipment and all vehicles were reportedly stolen. But was this an accident? No matter how you look at it, some ruthless faction involved in a brutal genocidal war has now added new equipment to support warfare and plunder.

It was not clear who attacked the aid agencies there. Sources in the aid community in Khartoum said [that] they suspected a breakaway faction from Darfur rebel leader Minni Arcua Minnawi.

Darfur and now Chad offer us the *world's largest humanitarian operation*. Yet it is a ruse, premised on private profit, violence and deception, offering employment, adventure and growth opportunity in perhaps the fastest growth sector of Western society. It involves private mercenary companies run by retired U.S. generals who have nothing better to do than foment catastrophe all around the world, and which offer annual salaries of \$125,000 [DynCorp in Sudan] to professional killers, with special bonuses for a job well done. *It was not clear who attacked the aid agencies there.*

Innocent people are being hurt, and this is primarily due to the myopic and self-serving foreign policies of the most powerful people in the world.

For those who sincerely wish to help the people of Sudan, the spotlight needs to be turned on the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Europe, Israel and Japan. Dr. Paul Farmer makes this point rather well—though not in reference to Sudan—in his book *Pathologies of Power*, where he wrote about structural violence:

"As international financial institutions and transnational corporations now dwarf the dimensions of most states, the former institutions—and the small number of powerful states that control them—come to hold unfettered sway over the lives of millions. International human rights organizations, accustomed to looking for villains in the upper reaches of bureaucracies of banana republics, also need to turn their gaze back toward the great centers of world power in which they reside."

Coupled with covert military operations and private military companies, the "humanitarian" relief and international charity industries, backed by multinational corporations and private profiteers, are the very foundations of the Darfur problem. Petroleum is one of the many spoils of this war, but it is not the only spoil.

Listen to the words of U.S. Congressional Representative Chris Smith from a U.S. Congress hearing that he chaired; Donald Payne and Ed Royce also preside over this House Committee:

"I am proud to say that we Americans continue our long tradition of compassion and generosity in responding to these needs. The United States is the primary donor of food aid in the world and the leading donor of food aid to Sudan and Chad. The US Government has contributed a total of \$282.2 million worth of food aid thus far in FY2006 to Darfur and the Sudanese refugees in Chad through the World Food Program and the International Committee of the Red Cross. This follows contributions totaling \$324.5 million to the same two organizations in FY2005 for Sudan and Chad, in addition to 200,000 tons of wheat from the Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust for Darfur."

What is the Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust for Darfur?

To understand Darfur, understand where the World Food Program gets its relief foods, who sells these and who buys them, and how the foods are used. Archers Daniels Midland sells grain into the Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust, while companies like ADM and Cargill receive massive government subsidies paid by American tax dollars, and the tax dollars back up the WFP and USAID, and provide the funds from which to purchase the "food".

Meanwhile, the WFP has been delivering substandard grains and cereals, and delivering "food" contaminated with all kinds of genetic modification to developing countries since at least 1996, and without informing the recipients.

The United Nations agencies like the World Food Program, and government "AID" departments like DFID and USAID, all serve to undermine food security and domestic food prices in Sudan, while artificially boosting prices in the USA, putting Sudanese farmers out of business and forcing people to become "refugees" in search of food, thereby creating and not mitigating famine; massive relief centers destroy nomadic ways of life, they don't sustain them.

Critics have been quick to note that while the Bush and Clinton Administration's claimed that their offer of food aid to Africa is motivated by altruism, the USAID website is a little more candid. It states:

"The principal beneficiary of America's foreign assistance programs has always been the United States. Close to 80% of the USAID contracts and grants go directly to American firms. Foreign assistance programs have helped create major markets for agricultural goods, created new markets for American industrial exports and meant hundreds of thousands of jobs for Americans."

Corporations with an interest in genetic modification (GM) programs, and producing GM crops, such as Cargill, Monsanto and Archers Daniels Midland, sponsor the United Nations World Food Program, while USAID is paying for US GM corporations to run research programs in Africa with local research institutes. For these reason's, Sudan's vast plantation lands and agriculture potential are further hidden motivations driving the "Save Darfur!" campaign and its propaganda machinery.

Understand that in return for his services over the years former U.S. Senator Bob Dole received massive campaign financing from giant Agribusiness companies like Archers Daniels Midland, the Supermarket to the World, and National Public Radio sponsor. It's no accident that Bob Dole is a pivotal member of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum's Committee on Conscience, or that the Holocaust Memorial Museum is leading the charge to "Save Darfur!" and "Stop Genocide!" in Sudan. Bob Dole is also on the Africa Society board,

and the board of the Partnership to Cut Hunger and Poverty in Africa. The PCHPA includes as board members President of Uganda and SPLA backer Yoweri Museveni, and this, again, is merely the tip of the Golden Spear.

But this is not the appropriate behavior of humanitarians. It is the behavior of pigs at a trough and it applies to the entire misery industry. Save the Children? Which children? And save them from whom? What about Save the Children's partnerships with Exxon-Mobil? Or CARE's partnerships with Lockheed Martin?

Understand such things and you will understand true moral outrage, and the meaning of "unconscionable". There are numerous precedents, of which perhaps Somalia—given the ongoing US covert military invasion—is the most poignant. It has all happened before, and it's happening again. The Road to Hell does not end in Sudan, but for many of the good people out to "Save Darfur," it has certainly begun there.

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