

**KING KONG:
Scoping in on the Curious Activities of the
International Monkey Business**

KONG-Part Four

**THE MAP,
THE MAD SCIENTIST,
&
THE MAYOR**

**keith harmon snow
&
Georgianne Nienaber**

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“I’m talking about a primitive world,” film producer Carl Denham tells the thugs bankrolling his enterprise in the new 2005 Hollywood film *King Kong*, “never before seen by man.” Denham waves about his faded map, and the cinematography repeatedly zooms in on the sketchy details of the crusty, tattered old thing.

In the tacky 1976 Paramount Pictures production of *King Kong*, the Skull Island that is home to the great Kong is shrouded in a permanent fog bank deep at sea. A young and vivacious Jessica Lang sizzles sexily in her Hollywood film debut as Dwan, the tantalizing *femme fatale* of the era. Held captive in the palm of Kong’s hand, Kong fingers Dwan’s clothes and strips her breasts bare.

Oil is the other secret “treasure” coveted by the white male explorers of this Kong tale, and the protagonists are in a race to beat out Exxon and Shell, which they actually name in the film—a practice rarely seen today—and claim the black gold of Skull Island for a fictitious company called Petrox.

“A NASA satellite went way off course and photographed [the fog bank] by mistake,” says the greedy Petrox executive-cum-explorer as he briefs the crew once they are at sea. “I personally got hold of these SUPER CLASSIFIED pictures,” he brags, inferring that he donated money to the

President himself, “via a donation I made to someone in Washington D.C. I won’t mention any names, but let’s just say someone on Pennsylvania Avenue.”

The reference to SUPER CLASSIFIED information produced by a NASA satellite, made here in a 1976 film, offers a rather apropos segue to the plot and intrigue behind the true story of exploitation in Central Africa. The Petrox executive brags about bribing high-level officials to get the classified NASA photos used to map out the mission to explore and exploit Skull Island, and—in real life—bribery and corruption were de rigeur for the extractive industries then as now. The Petrox team invades the island with seismic equipment and bulldozers, never worrying themselves with the sovereignty or communal rights of the tribal savages. This too is exactly how it happens in Central Africa; only today we have the “conservation” corporations facilitating the process through deceptive community “development” and “collaborative” programs.

BIG, BLACK AFRICA

Our map story begins with the Mercator projection. At the time of its creation in the mid-sixteenth century, the world was being conquered by sea, and sailors needed a map that would accurately show direction and distance. Latitude and longitude were plotted on a straight line, as if the earth were flat, and this incorrectly sized Africa in comparison to the “civilized” world. A good example of the shortcomings of the Mercator projection map is that the island of Greenland appears to be about the same size as Africa, when the land of Kong is actually fourteen times the size of little, mis-named frozen Greenland.

In 1974, Dr. Arno Peters developed a map that puts Africa in its proper perspective with the rest of the world. Africa is visually a giant compared to Europe or North America. When Peters unveiled his map at a European conference, it created angry debate in the world press as the white world suddenly felt small compared to big, black Africa.

Next came the maps offered by the National Geographic, tucked and folded inside the cover of the familiar yellow magazine—maps that point our thoughts away from present exploitation of the underprivileged world and into the romanticized yet primitive past. The archeological maps, the ancient mariner’s maps, even the modern oil map of Africa, according to the version put forth by National Geographic, are indisputably incomplete.¹

Hollywood gave us the mythological maps of *King Kong* and *Indiana Jones*, whose hero—Harrison Ford—serves on the board of directors of one of the BINGOs in this story, Conservation International.

Maps, maps, the Empire and its predilection for maps.

As the myth of a flat world finally died with Columbus and his three conquering ships, the world was proven round once and for all, and attempts to represent a three dimensional sphere on a two-dimensional surface simply would not suffice any longer.

¹ See the petroleum map in National Geographic, September 2006, and compare with the oil maps in the Sudan/Somalia section of the journalism pages at <<http://www.allthingspass.com>>.

The modern world, a world impossible for Kong's Carl Denham to imagine, has developed such sophisticated forms of mapping that they have become de rigueur in the defense and surveillance industries. GIS (Geographical Information Systems) relies upon overlays to literally sandwich together separate coverage analysis, such as rivers, mountains, streets, highways, and village paths.

GPS (Geographic Positioning Systems) use an array of satellites to calculate position, speed and direction by triangulation. These signals travel at nearly the speed of light and are extremely accurate.

Both GPS and GIS are dependent upon the marriage of surveillance with technology. Sophisticated imagery produced by fixed wing aircraft, satellites, and radar bounced off the earth from NASA Space Shuttle missions brought high tech maps to both the civilian and defense sectors of society.

The international "conservation" sector is heavily invested in these complicated, high-resolution mapping technologies. The Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund and its gargantuan partners—USAID, Conservation International, Wildlife Conservation Society, National Geographic Society and the Georgia Institute of Technology—have led the charge in this area.

This is their private, lucrative foray into the underprivileged world, a venture seldom seen by the general public—who pays for it.

Hundreds of millions of dollars are annually funneled into the scientific mapping industry under the banners of "conservation" and the now prominent buzzwords of "sustainable development" and "capacity building." This kind of mapping poses no problem if you are searching for your apartment complex on Google Earth, or if you want to see how much bamboo a group of mountain gorillas has devoured in its daily movements through the Virunga Mountains. If you are a small country, surrounded by hostile neighbors who want to know about population and troop movements on the border, it is another issue altogether.

In the Mwami's Tale of this series, we introduced another specious "conservation" entity named Innovative Resources Management (IRM). Active all over Congo, IRM's particular niche and marketing strategy for winning big "conservation" funds centers around a pivotal leveraging scheme used to exploit foreign lands and people today—pirating indigenous knowledge and intellectual property rights through the euphemistic *nonsequitur* of "participatory mapping."

Waving the cross of conservation, IRM marches into remote villages, and instead of trinkets and beads and bibles, IRM is armed with millions of dollars worth of satellite mapping technologies and the maps they generate. IRM goes into villages and wins the hearts and minds of locals by promising Congolese people—the poorest most isolated people in the world, often illiterate—a chance to map and control the resources around them. They work with the chief, or the Mwami, and they throw a lot of cash around, and at the end of the day—many months or even a year later—they walk away with their satellite generated map which now can be overlain with all the newly gathered communal knowledge about local resources, hunting wisdom, agriculture, fishing spots, mining discoveries, gas bubbles in the swamps, forest secrets—and even popular transport or travel routes.

Even if these sophisticated maps and overlays were given to the villagers in a language they could understand, they would be absolutely useless. Most of these equatorial African villages are lucky if they have a transistor radio donated by the United Nations station Radio Okapi, let alone generators,

computers, expertise, or software needed to view the digitized maps. Consider also that the villagers have gotten along for hundreds of years and more without maps. It is the outside corporate, forestry, mining and military interests that want “ground truthing” of the data beamed by satellite into corporate boardrooms and military compounds. Ground truthing is mapping on location. The visual inspection assessment of ground features through GPS calibrates the information beamed into the computers of nouveau cartographers.

The ground truth for the locals is that the world is very flat: they can hardly see the horizon of today’s suffering or tomorrow’s dinner or the perpetual threat of militia attacks.

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION

But while most remote villages have never seen the maps their communities generously participated in making, the highly technical IRM maps have shown up in the possession of the World Wildlife Fund and other BINGOs and DINGOs. In some cases, the WWF offices in rural Congo are located within the remote, walled-in, security-protected compounds of Western extraction enterprises like the Blattner Group’s SAFBOIS company’s logging operations at Isangi, downriver from Kisangani. The little black and white panda—the WWF logo—can be seen on the SAFBOIS maps, giving them the “conservation” seal of approval.

Participatory mapping, indeed. But for whose benefit?

The Western concessionaires—logging and mining—possess the most futuristic and high-tech satellite generated maps of the areas they are exploiting. By peddling a “participatory” agenda, and presenting a united front in supposed opposition to the exploiting companies, the “conservationists” from WWF and DFGF-I and IRM have used the carrot of “participatory mapping” to swindle their partner communities. The stick comes when the locals have the audacity to complain: government paramilitary forces are immediately called in and locals are abused or arrested or both. And so—day by day—the indigenous communities have less and less because their communal landscapes are being plundered or exploited, while the list of broken promises from the BINGOs and DINGOs grows longer and longer. The local people always end up the poorer, and they are universally blamed for their own suffering.

“These conservation organizations are only throwing sand in the eyes of the poor local people,” says one local Congolese doctor working in rural Congo. “They pretend to care about the environment and they pretend to be helping the villagers stop the logging but they have a hidden agenda that is against the local people.”

A 2004 report by the USDA Forest Service (FS) summarizes the results of an exploratory trip to western Democratic Republic of the Congo. The purposes of the trip were “to observe ongoing activities in community forest planning under the aegis of USAID’s Central African Regional Program for the Environment—the CARPE Landscapes Programs—and Innovative Resources Management’s (IRM) Community Options and Investment Tools (COAIT) planning process, to determine feasibility of community forest management and sustainable timber harvesting, and to identify opportunities for further FS involvement,” the report reads. COAIT is an initiative of Innovative Resources Management.

In words we can all understand, this means, “Let’s figure out how best to sustainably exploit these people and harvest their forests using all kinds of sophisticated smokescreens that make us a lot of money.” (These scientific programs proliferate and are repeatedly funded for doing nothing partly because they entertain highly scientific language meant to exclude common, ordinary readers.)

Like Carl Denham’s primitive trek in Kong, this was a land unseen and definitely uncharted—but only in terms of resources for the White Western invaders.

The FS expedition went from the western Congolese city of Mbandaka south to Bikoro and across Lac Tumba and up the Ubangi, Congo, and other rivers to many remote villages. It covered over 464 km (290 mi) by four-wheel drive, pirogue (dugout canoe), and trekking.²

In a telling comment within the report, the authors wrote, “IRM should include French and Lingala or other appropriate local language on the legend of its participatory community maps. French and appropriate local language should be incorporated in IRM’s printed training materials. In addition, a dictionary, glossary or other listing of definitions and criteria for identifying items in the map legend should be provided in appropriate languages.”³

“We witnessed the IRM team working with communities to review maps... (and) were extremely impressed by how well the participatory mapping exercise resulted in high rapport among IRM project leaders, local IRM facilitators, community leaders, and community members,” the report says.

The report cited the possibility of “non-appropriate uses” of the data, a comment we took as an indication of the potential for abuse to arise. So late in 2006 we asked Mike Chaveas, head of Africa programs for the USDA Forest Service, if IRM took the advice put forth in the report not to formalize the GIS data because of the potential of “non-appropriate uses.”

Mike Chaveas first quoted the report back to us: “Although the participatory maps nicely depict the approximate locations and sequences of roads, trails, rivers, villages, vegetation conditions, wildlife, and resources, we concurred with IRM that the maps should not be used to estimate absolute areas or analyze spatial patterns of forest vegetation conditions and resources. We mention this here not because it was suggested to do so, but the maps, being formalized in a GIS system, could otherwise easily lend to such analyses by others, which is simply not an appropriate use.”

What? Now there are mysterious “others” involved who might abuse the process and inappropriately use the maps? Our question about the potential for abuse was not answered.

So, they can’t use the maps to quantify forest resources, except when they quantify forest resources, later. No wonder they need a map. But who are these technical maps for?

And what is the USDA Forest Service doing in equatorial Africa anyway, when the U.S. Forest Service cannot manage infrastructure at home due to funding shortfalls?

² Trip Report for International Programs Office, USDA Forest Service, Washington, D.C. ,Final version: December 15, 2004

³ Ibid

The official explanation from their website is that the U.S. Forest Service is “is providing assistance in setting-up a local Remote Sensing and GIS lab and training local technicians in to properly collect and analyze data related to the utilization of the forest resources of the [Democratic] Republic of Congo with the goal of supporting forest law enforcement by enabling officials to identify any illegal logging activities outside the legally attributed forest titles or within the protected areas.”⁴

This raises the question of what is a legitimate government, and what is meant by “lawlessness,” and who is involved in “illegal” logging or mining. Having personally visited remote areas all over the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Congo (DRC’s little neighbor), Gabon, Cameroon and Uganda, we can attest to the laws of the jungle that exist there. If anyone can demonstrate that any manner of legitimate “law enforcement” is present in these regions, well, we will eat their map.

The Maps in this story have their own unique genesis, and they help us follow the hidden and secretive trail through the forests of monkey business in Central Africa. It is impossible to overstate the scale or scope of the research projects—and annual financial investments—of the technologies discussed below, both within and outside of the subject under scrutiny here: what the world has been given to understand as “wildlife conservation.”

GORILLAS IN THE BITS

Our genuine conservation heroine and Femme Fatale, Dian Fossey, had been laboring alone for almost ten years at her remote research station at Karisoke in Rwanda, on the steep slopes of the Virunga volcanoes, when her chief study subject and star of many National Geographic specials, the gorilla “Digit,” was killed and mutilated by poachers Fossey suspected of capturing specimens for foreign zoos. Digit died defending his gorilla group or “family unit.”

When Walter Cronkite made the announcement of Digit’s death on the CBS evening news, Fossey’s funding troubles were over. Contributions poured in from all over the world. Thus in 1978 the “Digit Fund” was born. But Dian Fossey, ever above even the whiff of monetary scandal, refused to manage the incoming funds. Fossey hired lawyer Fulton Brylawski to oversee the organization of the Digit Fund—a fund that would not squander resources on high overhead and huge salaries for its staffers. She wrote passionately to Shirley McGreal of the International Primate Protection League (IPPL) explaining how the Digit Fund would work directly to stop poaching within the Virungas. The Digit Fund would not become Digit’s “blood money,” and “every postage stamp” “would be accounted for,” Fossey wrote.⁵

Primatologist Ian Redmond is one of the original students who worked with Dian Fossey at Karisoke in Rwanda for years. “Dian felt very strongly that the little old lady who gives a dollar in some village in the mid-western States (should know) that the money is spent protecting gorillas,” Redmond told Canadian author Farley Mowat, “and not going to a large fund which was supporting

⁴ <http://www.fs.fed.us/global/globe/africa/basin.htm#4c>

⁵ Nienaber, Georgianne; *Gorilla Dreams: The Legacy of Dian Fossey*, iUniverse, 2006
Weinland, Helen; *Life Abroad with Uncle Sam: Foreign Service Days*, 1st Books Library

officers and vehicles and film shows and all the other stuff which is generally considered to be desirable in the conservation establishment.”⁶

Today Ian Redmond works as chief consultant to the UNEP/UNESCO Great Apes Survival Project (GRASP) and as a trustee of the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund-Europe (the Gorilla Organization). He has authored or co-authored several highly influential and highly funded international reports on the plunder of columbium-tantalite (coltan) out of Congo.

Unknown assailants murdered Dian Fossey at her Karisoke research camp in 1985. It appears that Fossey got in the way of elite smuggling networks operating in the Virunga Mountains. The circumstances of her death are still unresolved. A mysterious orange folder, containing maps supplied by a poacher, has vanished since her murder. Was Fossey murdered for these maps?

Many Rwandan contemporaries of Fossey are under current indictment by the ICTR (International Rwandan War Crimes Tribunal), but Fossey’s death is considered a lesser crime than that of genocide, and so remains largely ignored by the courts. Protais Zigiranyirazo, chief suspect and ex-governor of Ruhengeri Province, where Fossey lived and worked, languishes in custody but remains silent on the topic of Dian Fossey.

Shortly before Fossey’s murder on December 26, 1985, the acting *chargé d’affaires* of the U.S. embassy in Kigali, Helen Weinland, returned to the States for some routine medical exams that took longer than necessary. It was this turn of events that left Emerson Melaven as her temporary replacement after the Christmas holiday. Melaven may have been ill-equipped for this sudden elevation to a sensitive diplomatic post, since he had previously been the representative of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in Rwanda. In early interviews with the international media, Melaven stated that he and his colleagues were impressed by the Rwandan government’s response to the murder.

Helen Weinland’s memoirs of those days paint a different picture. She indicates that she followed initial events surrounding the murder with some frustration that she was not back at her post in Kigali. By the time she returned very little progress had been made in the murder investigation. Weinland states unequivocally that “...it is difficult to believe that the trial to find Dian’s killer was a rigorous search for the truth.”⁷

Ten years later, even more suspicious events surrounded the death of gorilla researcher Klaus-Jurgen Sucker—the man believed to have out-fossied Fossey in his work in nearby Mgahinga Gorilla Park. Sucker is the Hanged Man of our series and we will tell his tragic story in Kong: Part Five. Both Fossey and Sucker were at odds with outside conservation BINGOs and DINGOs of their era.

⁶ From the archives of Farley Mowat, author of Woman in the Mists: The Story of Dian Fossey and the Mountain Gorillas of Africa, Time-Warner, 1988.

⁷ Gorilla Dreams: The Legacy of Dian Fossey

Dian Fossey became a wealthy woman only after her death. Her last will and testament, which gave all of her savings to the Digit Fund, was overturned in 1988 by her stepfather, and the money that was destined for the gorillas was redirected to his private trust.⁸

The Morris Animal Foundation, under the guidance of Ruth Keesling, took over the remains of the Digit Fund in 1986. The name was changed from the Digit Fund to Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International, after a court battle erupted, which remains shrouded in secrecy, and which caused the split of the Digit Fund into DFGF-International and DFGF-Europe. Ruth Keesling was ousted in a takeover by the current CEO of the DFGF-I, Clare Richardson, a British national. Richardson was formerly a fundraiser for the Atlanta Zoo, and the DFGF-I currently operates in a tax-free space on the grounds of the Atlanta Zoo. Dennis Kelly, President and CEO of Zoo Atlanta, was elected to Secretary of the board of the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International in November of 2006. Note that Zoo Atlanta “partners” include Chevron-Texaco, [CNN](#), Georgia Tech University, and Lockheed-Martin, the world’s largest and most secretive aerospace and Defense Corporation.

The whereabouts of Dian Fossey’s private research materials are shrouded in secrecy. Some insider’s claim that Fossey’s original possessions were literally stolen by DFGF-I from the Digit Fund offices when the new CEO for DFGF-I, Clare Richardson, showed up at the Digit Fund offices in Colorado with a moving van and, without authorization from Keesling, crated everything off to a warehouse in Atlanta. There are claims that some of Fossey’s original letters and artifacts have been removed to the private residences of DFGF-I officials who may be using them—selling them or repackaging her research—to further their private interests and careers.

Clare Richardson, CEO of DFGF-I, sent a fundraising letter in late 2006 about a “DAUNTING” DFGF-I project to restore and protect Fossey’s original papers and diaries, which are “disintegrating with age.” The estimated cost of the project would be \$150,000.

Curiously, when we first approached the Fossey Fund in 2004 about viewing the documents, we were told that the files were then under the process of digitization and that the warehouse was “dark and dusty.” Offering to bring a flashlight possibly put DFGF-I on their guard that we might shed some light on the disposition of Fossey’s records, and the disappearance of Fossey’s properties. DFGF-I’s Clare Richardson responded with a request for resumes, references and all manner of background on us, which we supplied: and then our credentials and information were promptly “lost.”⁹

However, Fossey’s painstakingly detailed maps of gorilla movements in the Virungas are no tattered, musty old things, like the map coveted by Carl Denham in the recent cinematographic version of King Kong. Combined with cunning marketing, Fossey’s original overlays on Belgian contour maps proved to be just the gimmick the DFGF-I needed. Waving the Fossey maps around, DFGF-I partnered with USAID and the Department of Defense in the project which triggered the as yet unreleased “proprietary” audit of USAID monies spent by DFGF-I in the early 2000’s. Read [Kong Two: The Monkey Smuggler](#). In short, millions of USAID—U.S. taxpayers—monies are unaccounted for, since Richardson’s takeover.

⁸ Ibid. Dian Fossey did not get along with her stepfather. His death has left a probate court wrangling over the legal issues involved, spending more of the money that Dian Fossey intended to have used for gorilla conservation.

⁹ DFGF-I correspondence, Erika Archibald, Ph.D, press officer

As early as 1992, with incoming grants, the DFGF-I began investing money in the new science of GIS and GPS and the many interconnected mapping technologies on the cutting edge of geographic exploration and mapping sciences. One of the new technologies DFGF-I invested in was remote sensing from airborne (fixed-wing) or satellite platforms. According to published information, the DFGF-I established its GIS and remote sensing program in conjunction with researchers at Rutgers University in 1992.

The DFGF-I forays into state-of-the-art GPS, GIS and remote sensing were, at least on the public face of things, to map gorilla habitat and food sources, and evaluate the “human encroachment” on gorilla territory. The claim is that remote sensing of the gorilla habitat provides essential information about food sources, like the availability of species of bamboos, or encroaching threats from slash-and-burn agriculture (human activity), or other changes to gorilla habitat.

It is certain that bamboo is not the map’s hidden treasure.

The remote sensing arena has proliferated due to the efficacy of these technologies in identifying deposits of minerals or hydrocarbons—literally prospecting from aerospace platforms—and the data was therefore far more significant than a few species of bamboo. Besides, Dian Fossey thoroughly mapped the location of gorilla food sources in and around her base camp at Karisoke during her eighteen years in the Virungas.

The record shows that DFGF-I’s initiatives in remote sensing occurred in partnerships with two high-technology research firms, the Idaho-based Earth Search Sciences Inc. (ESSI) and an affiliated firm, Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI).

In their own words, in 1995 the DFGF-I “began working with other researchers and scientists to use the latest geospatial technologies to advance their studies of human encroachment (emphasis added) and gorilla habitat loss. This collaboration resulted in the formation of the Center for Conservation Technology, a program of the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International.”

Suddenly, the focus had shifted from bamboo to population issues. Recall, also, that “overpopulation” was similar terminology used by alleged henchman Pierre Kakule of the Mwami’s Tale—see Kong: Part Three—to justify the establishment of the Tayna Gorilla Reserve in the DRC.

The Center for Conservation Technology was a partnership established with the Government of Rwanda, the Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech), Zoo Atlanta, the DFGF-I, Clark Atlanta University’s Center for Theoretical Study of Physical Systems, the Georgia Research Alliance (GRA), which is a public-private research funding organization for Georgia’s universities, and the National University of Rwanda (NUR).¹⁰

This was no small-scale field conservation project. And it is just one of perhaps thousands like it.

“The project is using satellites and aircraft to carry instruments that analyze the spectrum of light reflected from soil and plants,” reported the New York Times. “Different plants and soil types

¹⁰ ESRI Press Release, Winter 2001: <
<http://www.esri.com/news/arcnews/winter0001/articles/mtngorilla.html> >

reflect distinct spectrums, allowing scientists to construct point-by-point maps of the forest and its resources, including the stinging nettles, wild celery, thistles and bedstraw that mountain gorillas like to eat most.”¹¹

So now, the New York Times tells us, we are looking for wild celery. Hmmm. Not that this food source will benefit the local primates, uhh, we meant local *people*....

“As powerful as the project’s influence on conservation is likely to be,” the New York Times said, “it could carry an even greater importance for a Rwandan government that is struggling to recover from years of war and civil strife. Government ministries, several of which are involved in the project, hope to use it as a way to train people in the use of computers and sophisticated communications technology, said Joseph Mutaboba, Rwanda’s representative to the United Nations.”¹²

As the New York Times then noted, there were deeper objectives to the DFGF-I project—objectives connected to the Rwandan government, certain government ministries and the United Nations. It is also important to note that GPS and GIS and their related technologies are considered “turnkey” technologies essential to both overt and covert defense and intelligence operations. Understanding the “geography” and “mapping” is considered crucial to achieving the objectives of any mission, and these technologies are central to that.

For example, according to the U.S. military: “GPS in military is used for navigation (marine, aircraft and land navigation), bombing from aircraft, artillery spotting and correction. It is also used for intelligence and logistics by Special Forces, for enemy radar location, signal intelligence, submarine tracking, and mine location. GIS technologies also serve important weather related functions during defense and intelligence operations.”¹³

Special Forces were heavily involved in Central Africa between 1990 and 2000, and they have maintained covert operations there, at some significant force levels, since 2000.

At a Congressional hearing in the USA in early December 1996, Republican Congressman Chris Smith asked the U.S. State and Defense Departments whether the U.S. government was providing military training to Rwanda.

Ambassador Richard Bogosian, then the State Department's Special Coordinator for Rwanda and Burundi, denied that any military operations were ongoing, beyond basic humanitarian relief.

According to Amnesty International, “Congressman Smith later found out that a detachment from the U.S. 3rd Special Forces Group (airborne) had trained between 35 and 40 Rwandese troops in a Joint Combined Education and Training (JCET) exercise in Rwanda called “Falcon Gorilla” during July and August 1996. Documents show that this mission was clearly aimed at conducting and planning counter-insurgency operations linked to incursions into then Zaire (Congo). The primary objective of the mission was to train, assist and advise selected Rwandan Patriotic Army officers in

¹¹ Glanz, James, “Tracking Gorillas and Rebuilding a Country,” New York Times, Section: F, p.3.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

skills including basic rifle marksmanship, commando tactics, night land navigation and small unit tactics.”¹⁴

Besides troop deployments and monitoring, there is also another application for GIS, GPS and remote sensing technologies: prospecting for precious minerals and petroleum. Several press releases from the DFGF-I or its remote-sensing partners, Earth Search Sciences Inc. (ESSI) and Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI), actually point to their projects as being beneficial to the Rwanda government for defense and mining applications.

“Beyond gorilla habitat analysis,” reads the ESRI press release titled *Mountain Gorilla Preservation Helps Rebuild Rwanda*, “GIS and remote sensing technology can also help the government update its maps, manage its agricultural lands, relocate refugees, and analyze the impact of their (refugee) camps (areas known to suffer from deforestation due to trees being used for firewood and temporary shelters), as well as explore for minerals.”¹⁵

The above historical description of the beginnings of the DFGF-I programs in GIS does not mention all of the DFGF-I projects in this arena. In April 1994, the Space Shuttle Endeavor was launched into orbit carrying the Space Radar Laboratory (SRL-1). In September 1994, another Shuttle carrying the SRL-2 was launched. These technologies are described in publicly available literature as “imaging radars that are being used to study earth.” The European Space Agency also had satellite remote sensing flights over Rwanda and eastern Congo in August 1994 (the ESA has monitored the region by satellite since at least 1994).¹⁶

On April 6, 1994, the plane carrying the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi, and the Chief of Staff of the Rwandan army, was shot down on approach to the airport in Kigali.

On April 11, 1994, five days after the double presidential assassinations in Kigali, President Clinton signed Executive Order 12906: Coordinating Geographic Data Acquisition and Access: The National Spatial Data Infrastructure. “The NSDI may involve the mapping, charting and geodesy activities of the Department of Defense, relating to foreign areas, as determined by the Secretary of Defense.”¹⁷

Like the NSDI, the nature of DFGF-I’s relationship with NASA is shrouded in secrecy. However, according to what information has been published, the DFGF-I collaborated with NASA ostensibly to secure satellite remote-sensing data collected over certain areas of high interest to the gorilla conservation community.

One of the DFGF-I’s principal scientists at the time was Dr. Dieter Steklis from Rutgers University, and for the DFGF-I mapping project Steklis employed a Rutgers colleague, Scott Mandry.

¹⁴ http://web.amnesty.org/pages/ttt3_training

¹⁵ ESRI Press Release, < <http://www.esri.com/news/arcnews/winter0001/articles/mtngorilla.html> >.

¹⁶ Surveillance of Gorilla Habitat (SOGHA), Space Technologies in support of the World Heritage Convention, Project Plan.

¹⁷ See: Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, 4/18/1994.

“NASA was flying a research radar system on the Space Shuttle in 1994, so Scott Mandry contacted former colleagues there (he worked at NASA previously), and arranged for the Virunga Conservation Area to be imaged during the shuttle flight,” Steklis said.¹⁸

“This produced the first cloud-free remotely sensed view of the entire region, which was used to create an initial vegetation map. The two shuttle flights in April and September of 1994 were during and after the terrible upheaval in Rwanda, so the DFGF-I was able to record the deforestation and other effects of the many refugee camps that were near the Virungas.”

NASA had obviously released geographic terrain data to DFGF-I from the 1994 flights.

Note that NASA would not have released the entire data set, but only the unclassified data set stripped of “sensitive” military and intelligence information. The project was actually managed by NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in affiliation with the California Institute of Technology, both in Pasadena, CA, and this was government-sponsored research under contract NAS7-1260. JPL and Caltech are involved in highly classified programs, and have been for years.

MAPPING THE APOCALYPSE—THEN AND NOW

On June 6, 2007, “climatologist” Bill Patzert from NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory announced that, due to global climate change, the “world is no longer normal.”

The expert’s prescription for recovery is a massive “good old-fashioned pandemic that wipes out millions” of people. When we heard this, our ears perked up, since this is exactly what is happening in Africa today. Consider how this relates to DFGF-I’s repeated propaganda war about “human encroachments” into gorilla habitat—and identifying, by any means possible—the location of these encroaching humans.

In 1999, Earth Search Sciences Inc. was contracted to undertake a remote-sensing mission flyover of Virungas Volcanoes National Park. Dr. Nicholas Faust was the principal scientist in charge. The ESSI mission, coordinated with the Rwanda government, occurred in August 1999 with a fixed-wing aircraft. ESSI, the Rwanda Government and the DFGF-I all received data sets after the mission—massive files with megabytes of bitmap data. According to Dr. Nick Faust, the DFGF-I project with ESSI in Rwanda lasted from 1998 to 2002, and was “pretty much concluded” some time ago.¹⁹

“Dubbed PROBE-1,” the Associated Press reported at the time, “the sensor flew in a twin-engine Cessna over the green-shrouded dormant and extinct volcanoes of northwestern Rwanda where the gorillas roam, recording reams of environmental data so detailed that it has filled 22 CD-ROMs. Researchers hope the information will help them to better understand the habits, the coping mechanisms and the threat to Rwanda’s remaining 310 mountain gorillas from encroaching human settlement. The probe, a ‘hyperspectral sensing instrument,’ successfully scanned the 10 varieties of

¹⁸ “Using Advanced Spatial Technologies for Gorilla Habitat Analysis – DFGF-I,”

http://www.travelersconservationtrust.org/projects/dian_fossey.html

¹⁹ Private communication, Dr. Nick Faust, 2006.

bamboo eaten by the gorillas in the three sweeps it made during a week last September, reading 128 bands of light or wavelengths, instead of the normal three picked up by orbiting satellites. The probe was developed by the Idaho-based Earth Search Sciences, Inc., one of whose owners is media mogul Ted Turner (CNN).”

Again the euphemism, *encroaching human settlement*, is carefully crafted into the press release.

Multiple sources have confirmed that DFGF-I CEO and President Clare Richardson personally delivered some 21 CD-ROMs of raw data from the 1999 PROBE-1 remote sensing over-flights directly into the hands of Dr. Theogene Rudasingwa, a high-level official from Rwanda’s Ministry of Defense; President Paul Kagame was completely informed. Richardson and other DFGF-I officials also met with Rwandan President Paul Kagame and Rudasingwa for private discussions.²⁰

In 2006, The World Congress on Information Technology (WCIT 2006) announced the addition of Rudasingwa, who was then a former Rwandan Ambassador to the U.S., and a current visiting scholar at the University of California at Berkeley, to the forum’s roster of speakers and panel participants, including General Colin L. Powell, USA (Ret.), former United States Secretary of State (2001-2005), one of the principle signatories and/or architects to the CARPE related Congo Basin Forest Partnership during his time as Secretary of State.

According to Dr. Nicholas Faust, the DFGF-I also gave a private briefing to the U.S. Embassy in Kigali. Asked which Department of Defense or intelligence agencies were present, Dr. Faust referred the question to the DFGF-I.²¹

DFGF-I, as we have noted, has refused to answer any questions.

According to available tax and other financial records, it appears that the DFGF-I was about to go under until they got the USAID money for imaging studies in the mid-1990’s.

“I know for sure that the late nineties were the worst financial years at the Karisoke Research station,” one insider claims, reiterating concerns about personal safety in speaking out. “In 1998, Karisoke operations—direct gorilla support from DFGF-I—were less than \$100,000. But tax forms show \$660,000 in assets for that year. Where’s the money?”²²

Is the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International involved in spawning worthless research, or in clandestine defense and intelligence activities, or in mining adventures in Central Africa? Is the National Geographic Society also playing a supporting role in furthering defense, intelligence and mining interests in the region? Or is this merely a poignant example of how the money that is pumped into wildlife conservation and development projects in Central Africa is cycled back to the networks of privileged individuals and institutions connected to where that funding comes from in the first place?

²⁰ Private communication, interviewee No. 4 & interviewee No. 2, 2005.

²¹ Private communication, Nicholas Faust, 24 February 2006.

²² Ibid.

DFGF-I's remote sensing initiatives regularly received tremendous amounts of press. Kicking it all off in December of 1999, for example, the National Geographic EXPLORER aired a television documentary about the DFGF-I remote sensing mission, titled *Gorillas on the Edge*; the documentary was rebroadcast on CNBC in March 2000 with a spotlight on Earth Search Sciences Inc. (ESSI).

There were additional remote sensing over flights of Central Africa involving DFGF-I in partnerships with NASA and the U.S. Department of Defense. According to public information, “data have already been processed, but have not been released outside of NASA and DOD. We (DFGF-I) are working to be some of the first to have access to this data of our study area.”²³

The DFGF-I programs in these high technologies transfers evidently won't end with Rwanda. “We want to provide the training and equipment for local universities to learn to collaborate internationally,” said CEO Clare Richardson. “Ultimately, we want to have centers for GIS and remote sensing dotted around the globe.”²⁴

Reminds us of that meeting in Atlanta in December 2005, where the top brass of the DFGF-I—and their highly paid corporate lawyers—presented their map of the future Dian Fossey® brand universe and its global corporate Empire to the horrified officials of the DFGF-E, and their lawyers.

GIS and remote sensing centers dotted around the globe? Hmm. The latter statement by DFGF-I CEO and President Clare Richardson is very telling, given that the gorillas exist today only in several biodiversity hotspots in Central Africa. What is the real agenda of the DFGF-I?

THE WANNABE FEMME FATALE

DFGF-I sponsors and friends, listed in DFGF-I documents for January to December of 2003, in the \$25,000 and above category included: Dr. and Mrs. Nick Faust; John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation; Daniel K. Thorne Foundation; Zoo Atlanta; and Oracle Corporation. The MacArthur and Thorne Foundations are regular funders of DFGF-I. Turner Broadcasting (CNN) was credited with a gift in the \$5000 to \$9999 category, and we shouldn't forget that CNN journalist Gary Strieker is a member of the DFGF-I Board of Trustees.

Described as a veteran correspondent, Gary Strieker was CNN International's Chief Environmental Correspondent in Africa. Gary Strieker's stories about primate conservation appeared in the late 1980's, throughout the 1990's, and into the new millennium. In this period he did numerous pieces with award-winning independent environmental reporter Karl Ammann about the bush meat trade and great apes conservation in Africa.

CNN connections to DFGF-I don't stop there, but only a few of these will be illuminated at this point. For one thing, Gary Strieker took Rhett Turner, son of CNN media mogul Ted Turner, to visit Rwanda's Karisoke gorilla research groups that are open only to moneyed interests: neither Rwandans nor ordinary western tourists can visit these animals.

²³ “Mountain Gorilla Protection: A Geomatics Approach,”

²⁴ “Gorillas Endangered: Technology boosts efforts to save Africa's endangered mountain gorillas,” Georgia Tech Alumni Magazine Online, 2000.

“Gary Strieker provides sympathetic press on CNN for the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International,” charged one DFGF-I critic. “It’s not about gorilla conservation. The theory is that Rwanda lets the U.S. fly over their airspace to get oil and uranium information, and in return Rwanda gets defense maps. Forget about the gorillas. This would explain why a third rate NGO like DFGF-I can stonewall Congress and get away with it. There’s no accountability, no audits, no pressure. And it’s a huge conflict of interest that Gary Strieker provides favorable DFGF-I coverage on CNN when he is sitting on the DFGF-I board.”²⁵

Asked about the potential conflict of interest cited above, Gary Strieker stated: “I have never done any stories about DFGF-I on CNN.”²⁶ A brief search for Gary Strieker publications or broadcasts shows otherwise.

In “Poaching for Baby Gorillas Turns Deadly,” November 30, 2002,²⁷ CNN correspondent Gary Strieker features as his experts on gorillas primatologist Amy Vedder of the Wildlife Conservation Society, a woman with a deep connection to the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International story, and Dr. H. Dieter Steklis, Rutgers University professor, then Chief Scientific Director of the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International and former coordinator of the DFGF-I remote sensing operations.

Dr. Amy Vedder was a student of Dian Fossey’s who worked with Fossey at Karisoke in Rwanda. It is no historical secret that the Vedder hated Fossey. In her speeches and writing—in a systematic campaign of character assassination of the dead—Vedder has characterized Fossey as raving drunk and maniac.

Fossey biographer Farley Mowat summed up the state of affairs at Karisoke after Vedder’s arrival there as a “viper’s nest.”

Amy Vedder was employed by USAID before she was hired by the Mountain Gorilla Project, one of the DINGO’s of Fossey’s era. This association also connects Vedder with Emerson Melaven, who was in charge of the investigation of Dian Fossey’s death. Vedder is mentioned in this connection because she would become involved with satellite mapping of Central Africa in the late 1990’s—as one of the “collaborators” in Central African countries for “validation of the regional image classification” through NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory.²⁸

Amy Vedder was responsible for setting up the Congo Gorilla Forest at the WCS Bronx Zoo in New York, a six-acre exhibit boasting “over 300 animals, including the one of the largest breeding groups of lowland gorillas” in the world. The Congo Gorilla Forest doesn’t once mention or refer to gorilla research pioneer Dian Fossey. Lowland gorillas are the prize of the Tayna Project and centerpiece of the Mwami’s Tale. The WCS Gorilla Forest is literally falling apart, and while it charges fees that are claimed to be directed toward gorilla conservation in Central Africa, some gorilla experts believe the funds are misappropriated for other WCS operations in New York.

²⁵ Interviewee No. 1.

²⁶ Telephone interview, Gary Strieker, May 2006.

²⁷ < http://rainforests.mongabay.com/baby_gorilla_poaching.htm >;

< <http://archives.cnn.com/2002/TECH/science/11/30/our.planet.mountain.gorillas/index.html> >

²⁸ http://southport.jpl.nasa.gov/centralafrica/africa_proposal.html#rationale

Amy Vedder was one of the individuals who carried Dian Fossey's body down the mountain, wrapped in a sleeping bag, so the omission of Fossey's important historical contribution to gorilla conservation is rather remarkable.

Many of Vedder's press releases suggest that she, Amy Vedder, is single handedly responsible for the survival of the Mountain Gorilla as a species. But, Amy Vedder was only an understudy for the roster of true Femme Fatales to enter the life and times of Kong after Fossey's death.

Vedder's biography, posted by a booking agent, Grabow Entertainment, says in part, "in addition to her in-depth work with mountain gorillas, Amy Vedder has managed wildlife conservation programs in over 100 projects on four continents while serving as Director and Vice President of the Wildlife Conservation Society. She has recently initiated a new program entitled "Living Landscapes," in which large scale conservation efforts are extended beyond the borders of parks and reserves to meet the needs of wildlife species in contexts of complex social, economic, and political interests."

Once again, the subtext speaks of extending conservation interests beyond the borders of parks and into the lives, hearts and hearths of indigenous populations, and always for their betterment. But the ground truth for the locals, as we have mapped out, and will map out again, is starkly, and horribly different.

On April 17, 2005, CNN ran a video story with Gary Strieker reporting on gorilla survival from the Volcanoes National Park in Rwanda. His primary sources for this story were Clare Richardson, CEO of the DFGF-I, and another British national, Katie Fawcett, a DFGF-I researcher based in Rwanda.²⁹

Challenged with the information that he had, clearly, reported on DFGF-I activities for CNN, Gary Strieker maintained that this simply was not true. Offered the exact date and title of the earlier story from 2002, Strieker finally consented that, well, perhaps he had done one story after all which had some DFGF-I link to it. But that was the only one, he said, and it was quite some time ago. When we suggested that there were definitely other stories that he was perhaps forgetting about, Strieker hung up the telephone.³⁰

"So why did Strieker tell such a BIG lie?" asks one source close to this story.

"Gary and I have worked on a few pieces for CNN," said journalist Karl Ammann. "And he is doing the post-production now for another one in return for U.S. rights. The pieces we do together are straightforward. I was not aware that he was on the board of DFGF-I until you told me. I do not know how much any of the board members really knows what is going on. They seem to mostly appoint 'donor type of characters' who can then throw some cocktail parties. I have told JGI (Jane Goodall Institute) board members what is going on with JGI projects in Africa and generally I find they have no clue... Whenever I take on an NGO the story tends to be the same. Everybody lives on telling success stories and the reality on the ground tends to be the opposite."³¹

²⁹ Gary Strieker, CNN, 17 April 2005.

³⁰ Telephone interview, Gary Strieker, May 2006.

³¹ Private communication, Karl Ammann, 27 May 2006.

Notably, in 1994, Gary Strieker was the CNN correspondent who covered the cataclysm in Rwanda. Amy Vedder has also written extensively about Rwandan politics. Like virtually every single Western media source, the story sold to the public was the story of the “One-Hundred Days of Genocide.” The Western media failure to accurately cover the events of 1994, which CNN and Gary Strieker played a part in, was another of those tidied up frameworks that peddled the mythology of tribalism and savagery in Africa. The savage zombies depicted in KONG are symbolic of the real-life images of genocide in Rwanda.

The deeper military realities were completely hidden.

“I was with the RPF (Rwanda Patriotic Front), behind their lines, during the war,” says Strieker. This admission helps to explain the one-sided reportage that whitewashed the U.S. involvement in genocide in Rwanda from 1990 to today.

In a major military psychological operation—PSYOPS—against the western public, the media saturated the public mind with images of the dead, the withered, fleshless skulls and mangled skeletons—the mindless tribal slaughter—of black Africans killing black Africans. According to the media it was hopeless: Joshua Hammer for Newsweek reported that the best “we could do” is to “sit out the slaughter and wait.”³² These images of withered skeletons have been replayed to the Western “news” consuming public again, and again, and again. They always accompany some mythological text spinning the sordid tale of how the U.S. was a “bystander” to genocide.

In a telephone interview, CNN correspondent Gary Strieker admits that he operated as an embedded reporter behind the safety of the Rwandan Patriotic Army lines. As the conflagration unfolded, Gary Strieker—one of few journalists to cover the unfolding carnage—operated only from within the “safe zone” behind the lines of RPF control.

ENTER THE MAD SCIENTIST

For another, more curious connection behind the sordid stories and manufactured myths, as we have already noted, Ted Turner is an owner-shareholder in Earth Search Sciences Inc. (ESSI), which in 1999 loaned the state-of-the-art “hyperspectral” probe to the DFGF-I / Georgia Tech team who performed the interesting “studies” in Rwanda under the direction of Dr. Nicholas Faust.

Dr. Faust is the “Mad Scientist” of this tale, as much as there is one, and he won’t be waving a tattered old map. Dr. Faust is one of the DFGF-I sponsors cited previously in the “\$25,000 or above” category of donations

Along with CEO and President Clare Richardson and Dr. H. Dieter Steklis, Dr. Nicholas Faust is one of the key architects of the GIS related thrusts with the Rwanda government and the National University of Rwanda (NUR). Dr. Faust is said to be part of the deep “inner circle” of the Western classified remote sensing and intelligence arena.

³² Joshua Hammer, Newsweek, April 1994.

“The idea of tying GIS, geographic imaging, GPS, and communications together is a fairly new concept that we hope to explore through this collaboration,” explained Dr. Nicholas Faust, in several gorilla conservation articles.

Dr. Faust is the principal DFGF-I research scientist for GIS projects and associate director of the Georgia Tech Center for GIS. He is the co-founder of a GIS software technology program called ERDAS—Earth Resources Data Analysis Systems. He is the principal scientist behind both the ESRI and ESSI corporations, and he is deeply involved in the Georgia Research Alliance.

Dr. Faust’s replies to all inquires, while not hostile or openly *un-cooperative*, were terse, simplistic and generally uninformative and evasive. Asked if the DFGF-I remote sensing projects were tied to international security and intelligence interests operating in Central Africa, either the interests of the United States, Belgium or Rwanda, Dr. Faust inquired, “What interests are these?”

Dr. Faust later responded that he “did not know of any U.S. security interests” in the Central Africa region. However, Dr. Faust is clearly aware of defense and intelligence interests, because they are listed on ESSI’s own web site. Asked if remote sensing activities by ESSI and DFGF-I would also “clearly benefit U.S. defense and intelligence interests,” Dr. Faust replied: “Not clear to me?”

When asked about the sanitation of remote sensing data, whereby the defense and intelligence establishment removes all sensitive information before anything at all—like vegetation information for a gorilla conservation organization—is declassified and allowed to enter the public or commercial arena, Dr. Faust replied: “I’m not aware of such a sanitization procedure or what raw data would look like.”

However, other information suggests that Dr. Faust is intentionally obfuscating the picture.

A publisher’s blurb for the book [Landscape and Life along the East African Rift: the Virunga Mountains, Rwanda](#), by Robert E. Ford—a scientist who worked in the Virunga Mountains from 1983 to 1992—notes that it “includes a few satellite images taken by the SIR-C (Shuttle Imaging Radar) mission of NASA and JPL, Pasadena. The actual images were first “cleaned-up” and prepared for interpretation for the Dian Fossey Mountain Gorilla Project by the Center for Remote Sensing and Spatial Analysis of Rutgers University as part of a public-use NASA contract.”³³ The publisher’s use of quotes around “cleaned up” underscores the “public-use” aspects of the declassified data.

“The big picture is that the USAID-CARPE Program is not releasing the resolution they are getting,” says one remote sensing expert working for a company on the inside of defense and intelligence programs. According to this expert, who used the example of a commercial satellite called LANDSAT, “If you look at the images they have released from the LANDSAT satellite...they have removed the detail.”

“If the government (USAID) asks for imaging, they have to pay the commercial company (ESSI or ESRI) for it. Then the government usually asks that the imagery be removed from the commercial site—where any of us can buy it—for a certain amount of time. If the government requests this, it is usually done. Of course, the buyer (CARPE, or DFGF-I, funded by USAID) does not want to anger

³³ John Wiley & Sons: < http://www.wiley.com/college/geocases/cases/case7/slide_intro.html >.

the government (USAID) so they will take the detail from the image so that the image is worthless to anyone who could take it from their (buyer's) web site. This also hides exactly what they are seeing and mapping. It would be nice to believe that all they care about is gorilla habitat.”³⁴

Examples of highly sensitive remote sensing maps cleared or sanitized for “unclassified” publication can easily be found on the Internet. The statement by Dr. Nicholas Faust—denying that remote sensing information is not highly screened and sanitized by defense and intelligence interests—is ludicrous.

When asked about the DFGF-I coming under fire for failing to provide required audits, Dr. Faust commented that the “ESSI flights and analysis were done FREE for publicity for a National Geographic special.” Further outlining the DFGF-I’s piggybacking on top of the funding of others, one news story about the collaboration with PROBE-I reported, “Much of the money for the first two years of the project is from a \$300,000 grant from the state-financed Georgia Research Alliance.”³⁵

If these facts are true however, and the DFGF-I was piggy-backing its remote sensing work on other funding, then it suggests that there may be an even greater lack of transparency for DFGF-I activities because some of the activities the DFGF-I is claiming to spend funds on—for example, remote sensing—have actually been donated by partner organizations, like ESSI and Georgia Tech. If the DFGF-I has not had to pay for these projects, or at least some of them, for which they have received USAID funds, then *where is all the money going?*

When asked a very specific question “about how researchers expect GIS technologies to benefit the gorillas, for example, given the rates of human encroachment, the illegal militias operating in these areas, and the criminal activities of these,” Dr. Faust answered with these incomplete sentences: “Monitor vegetation health and distribution (habitat). Potential food groups for gorillas (nettles, bamboo, etc).”

Huh? Excuse us? There are huge disconnects between the questions asked and the answers Dr. Nicholas Faust has given. Will researchers use bamboo and nettles to fight off the heavily armed militias who are always accused of poaching gorillas—those alleged *Mai Mai* savages, for example, whose representations we saw in the Skull Island savages of Kong—or use stinging nettles to fend off soldiers of all stripes and nationalities who are raping young women and girls and pillaging whole villages in the region?

Dr. Faust initially responded to a question about DFGF-I remote sensing projects in 1994 by declaring that the DFGF-I had not been involved in remote sensing in Rwanda in 1994. He later stated that he was not involved with the DFGF-I until 1998, suggesting that he didn’t know about the Space Shuttle Endeavor flights at the height of the “genocide.” But a later comment suggests that he did know about the NASA flights of 1994.

In fact, it is not plausible to believe that Dr. Nicholas Faust, who joined Dr. Dieter Steklis to lead remote sensing projects in Central Africa, would begin the projects in 1998 without first being or becoming familiar with preceding research. Also, comments by his close remote sensing affiliate,

³⁴ Private communication, interviewee No. 1, from additional source, 2005.

³⁵ James Glanz, “Tracking Gorillas and Rebuilding a Country,” New York Times, Section: F, p.3.

Dr. H. Dieter Steklis, indicate that the plan was always to produce vegetation maps of the Virungas by combining hyperspectral data collected by fixed-wing in 1999 with the 1994 NASA data. They also claimed they would translate some of Dian Fossey's original findings onto the maps they would make.³⁶

Somebody is lying. And it is not only Gary Strieker from CNN and DFGF-I.

Responding to questions about the risk of transitioning such key defense and intelligence technologies to foreign governments—or their falling into the hands of terrorists—Dr. Faust indicated that the data collected by remote sensing projects in 1999—using the ESSI Probe-1 technology—was of rather poor quality. If this is true, it is the ultimate condemnation of this technology, and further indication that a lot of so-called “conservation” money is being thrown into a big black hole, a “heart of darkness” centered on private moneyed interests, but one that feeds off the blood of poor Africans.

“Your email indicates that the resolution (of these technologies used by ESSI and DFGF-I) isn't very good,” Dr. Faust was asked in follow-up question, “so you are saying that there can't be any kind of National Security issue—and even the gorilla vegetation, for which the surveys are undertaken, isn't represented very well... Is that correct?” “Yes,” Dr. Faust replied.

However, contradicting Dr. Faust's statements are his own countless research papers lauding the *incredible* efficacy of these technologies. There are also his own organizations' press releases: “*The PROBE-1 instrument delivered highly accurate images*” (emphasis added), reported ESSI. “If current satellite technology were like a magnifying glass,” reported Dr. Larry Vance, founder and chairman of ESSI, “our PROBE-1 technology would be the equivalent to an electron microscope. A satellite may be able to tell you a particular area is a forest, but PROBE-1 can tell you what kinds of trees and plants are in that forest and the state of its health.”

But the kinds of bamboos and species of plants are not all that the PROBE-1 can see. Examples of the power of certain remote sensing and imaging technologies include the two Lacrosse American Spy Satellites KH-12, whose optical sensors, perpetually pointed back at earth, can snap clear photographs of objects on the ground that are no larger than a paperback novel, from 120 miles up (264 kilometers).³⁷

It is important to recognize that Dr. Faust has been heavily involved in “counter-drug-enforcement” initiatives, involving federal intelligence agencies, and with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Dr. Faust is also deeply involved with the Georgia Institute of Technology, known to be a hotbed of CIA activity and CIA-backed academics, with many connections to the National Security apparatus.³⁸

³⁶ Private communication. Dr. Nicholas Faust, January 2006; James Glanz, “Tracking Gorillas and Rebuilding a Country,” New York Times, Section: F, p.3.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ See: “List of Attendees,” National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee (NSTAC), Research and Development (R&D) Exchange Workshop, March 2003, Atlanta, Georgia: <http://www.ncs.gov/nstac/rd/nstac_03list.html>.

Dr. Faust has been the principal investigator on research projects at Georgia Tech that were funded by the Department of Defense (Army Research Laboratory, Office of Naval Research). Dr. Faust has also presented countless papers on GIS technologies and remote sensing. One of these, at a Department of Defense sponsored conference, listed Dr. Nicholas Faust's affiliation as *U.S. Department of Defense*; his paper was co-authored with seven people all listed as *U.S. Department of Defense*.³⁹

"Nick Faust is downplaying the capabilities of remote sensing," says one remote sensing expert who evaluated Dr. Faust's responses to inquiries about the DFGF-I and his work in Central Africa. "DFGF-I employs similar techniques, depending upon the funding outcome it is seeking. For example, the numbers of Grauer's and lowland gorillas seem to rise and fall depending upon the circumstances. When requesting federal funding, DFGF-I paints a dire picture of the numbers of gorillas remaining. When touting its accomplishments, DFGF-I points to significant increases in the populations. In a similar manner, Dr. Faust downplays the capabilities of Probe-1 when asked about military and mining operations that seem counterproductive to environmental goals. But DFGF-I and ESSI both tout the advanced capabilities of Probe-1 in press releases that laud the environmental work that they are supposedly doing in the Great Lakes Region."⁴⁰

"But all that ESSI does these days is mineral exploration for DOD and others," this expert claims. "They are very up front about military applications of what they do."⁴¹

"These guys aren't looking for habitat," comments another remote sensing expert who has visited ESSI facilities and works in the classified arena, "they are looking for oil, which is what they do, and they probably got funding for habitat assessment from USAID and are using the data to provide their owners with oil, minerals and uranium info. I'm not aware of any natural resource vegetative project that they have done in the past. It strictly sounds like taking the taxpayer dollar to fatten some oil guy's pockets."⁴²

Fatten some oil guy's pockets? WOW! What a claim! What a concept! This story gets greasier and greasier, like a really slick PR job.

Indeed, looking at ESSI's and ESRI's government and corporate partners, one might get the idea that there really is something very slippery going on behind the King Kong screen. Before we get into that dark forest of invasive species, it is important to remember what we are talking about: gorilla "conservation" in Central Africa.

The Environmental Sciences Research Institute was born at Harvard University in the 1970's, and they expanded rapidly. ESRI became increasingly defense and intelligence oriented, but their classified portfolio took off exponentially in 1989, when ESRI was awarded a \$10 million contract with the U.S. Defense Mapping Agency. In 2002 ESRI was selected as a subcontractor to defense giant Northrup Grumman on a \$72 million contract from the National Imagery and Mapping

³⁹ See: The Seventh Annual International Crime Mapping Research Conference: <
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/maps/boston2004/agenda.html> >

⁴⁰ Private communication, interviewee No. 1.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Private communication, interviewee No. 8.

Agency; the team provides critical GIS software and mapping technologies for mission applications for the Department of Defense. ESSI partners today include the George Herbert Walker Bush connected Barrick Gold Corporation.

ESRI has worked with its partner company, Oracle, since 1995. ESRI's other partners include Intel, National Geographic, and the secretive U.K. aerospace and intelligence firm BAE Systems. BAE Systems is known for connections to clandestine mercenary activities in Africa. BAE connected John Bredenkamp is one of Britain's 50 richest men, a crony of Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe, an arms dealer and long-time exploiter of Congo's mineral wealth, and a friend of Washington interests.

Several of ESRI's annual GIS industry conferences have had very notable conservation themes.

At the 21st Annual ESRI International User Conference in 2001, Wildlife Conservation Society explorer J. Michael Fay spoke about his 15-month, 1,200-mile trek through Central Africa. This became known as the Central Africa 'Mega-transect' and it was purportedly part of the impetus behind the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP), a massive project advertised by numerous National Geographic magazine features and film specials.

The enthusiasm generated after the talk spurred ESRI to create a Web site with the mission of raising some \$3.6 million to purchase the logging rights to about 600,000 acres of Gabon's Langouz Forest and support legislation to make it a national park. Fay's "mega-transect" benefited from regular helicopter drops of supplies costing tens of thousands of dollars a day, and given the quality of life of the people in Central Africa, the expedition's funding levels were obscene.

As defined by USAID: "The Congo Basin Forest Partnership seeks to promote economic development and alleviate poverty, while promoting forest conservation programs in Cameroon, Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and Republic of the Congo... CARPE will contribute to the partnership's goals through its investment in the greater Basin area, while the U.S. contribution will help further CARPE's goals through its support to the eleven priority landscapes within the CARPE project area. Implementing partners include: African Wildlife Foundation, Conservation International, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Peace Corps, Smithsonian Institution, U.S. Department of Agriculture/Forest Service, University of Maryland, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, University of Virginia, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Resources Institute, and World Wildlife Fund."⁴³

Dr. Jane Goodall was the speaker at the 25th Annual ESRI Conference in 2005. In front of an audience of 14,000 people, Dr. Goodall described her amazing observations, gleaned over 40 years of chimpanzee studies at Gombe National Park in Tanzania, but she pointed out that the chimpanzee population was 'vanishing as we speak.' What was once a population of one million is now down to 150,000. "There are many reasons why they are disappearing," according to Dr. Goodall.⁴⁴

⁴³ Biodiversity Conservation: A Report on USAID's Biodiversity Programs in Fiscal Year 2002, USAID, 2002.

⁴⁴ ESRI Press Release, "Jane Goodall Tells Her Story at ESRI's 25th User Conference," 2005: < <http://www.esri.com/news/arcnews/fall05articles/jane-goodall.html> >.

When ESRI and its Conference attendees laud the work of J. Michael Fay or Dr. Jane Goodall, and seek to support it, what kind of “conservation”—meaning conservation of what, for whom, and until when—do these backers have in mind? Secretary of State Colin Powell negotiated the CBFP treaty with regional nation-states of the Congo Forest Basin, including Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon, Gabon, Republic of Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Uganda.

Examining the U.S. logging and mining companies which signed onto the CBFP—companies like Georgia Pacific and Weyerhaeuser—it is clear to see—for anyone willing to open their eyes—that the CBFP has much more than a wildlife and nature “conservation” agenda, unless we define conservation to mean reserving for tomorrow what we don’t yet need to feed the machines of today. Perhaps, on the other hand, “conservation” in this context translates to setting aside “nature reserves” in otherwise impoverished countries for the exclusive use of high-paying customers from the West—which will apparently include the foot-soldiers of the Department of Defense sent to train in some remote tropical forest walled off by the client-government and its extensive security apparatus.

Notable examples of client dictatorships in Central Africa today, and CBFP signatory countries, include Gabon, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Uganda and DRC. But in this case, conservation translates to acquisition and control and, ultimately, the not-so-new ethic of an age-old land-grabbing imperialism that throws out the rightful, traditional owners of the land. Remember the Mwami’s Tale?

THE MAYOR and HIS CRONIES:

In Kong: Part Two: The Monkey Smuggler, we met the Mayor of Beaufort Virginia—Dr. David M Taub, the former owner and then President of the monkey-smuggling firm, LABS of Virginia. The second Mayor to surface in this story is the Honorable Andrew Young, Mayor of Atlanta. Recall that when the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund held their gala fundraiser and pre-release King Kong showing, one of the big name celebrities they billed for the draw was former U.S. Ambassador and Mayor Andrew Young.

First there is the exclusive consulting firm Young founded, Goodworks International, a U.S.-based lobbying firm. Goodworks’ clients include the Governments of Nigeria and Angola, two governments heavily involved in massive human rights abuses connected to extractive industries. Goodworks’ corporate clients with interests in Central Africa include Chevron-Texaco, Guinness, Monsanto, Coca Cola, and—*well I’ll be a monkey’s uncle!!*—Barrick Gold.

Guinness is one of the recognizable brand names smartly placed in the recent Hollywood film *Blood Diamond*.⁴⁵ We will explore the Honorable Andrew Young’s ties to the bloodletting in the coming sequel to this series, KONG: Guerrillas in the Mists.

Oracle Corporation is another firm whose name is all over place as a sponsor or partner of the DFGF-I and its work in Central Africa. Oracle was first noted for a donation to DFGF-I programs in

⁴⁵ See: keith harmon snow and Rick Hines, “Blood Diamond: Doublethink and Deception About those Worthless Little Rocks of Desire,” Z Magazine, June 1, 2007.

2003 of “\$25,000 or more.” Oracle was also cited in DFGF-I and ESSI press releases for direct support of remote sensing programs.

Oracle is an information and communications company deeply intertwined with internet technologies and the Department of Defense. Oracle documents list their top aerospace and defense customers as Boeing, General Dynamics, NASA and Honeywell, while their big petroleum and natural gas customers include the China Petrochemical Development Corporation, China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), Shell, Schlumberger and Halliburton. Boeing is partnered with the Government of Rwanda on several key projects; at least one of which is connected to DFGF-I.

The above business links and corporate partnerships place Oracle smack in the middle of the ongoing war for Darfur, Sudan.

Oracle director Jack F. Kemp is the former Republican candidate for Vice-President of the United States (1996), was a member of congress for 18 years, and served in the G.H.W. Bush administration from 1989 to 1993. Kemp also serves as a Director of Hawk Corporation, an aerospace and defense firm that counts the U.S. Department of Defense amongst its many clients. Kemp is a trustee of the Africa Society of the National Summit on Africa (ASNSA), a very curious group of primates indeed, and one we will dissect later.

Oracle also brings the Hollywood connection back into focus.

Oracle director Jeffrey S. Berg has been an agent in the entertainment industry for over 35 years. Berg is also the long-time Chairman and CEO of International Creative Management, Inc., a talent agency and promotional firm for the entertainment industry. According to their web site, ICM “orchestrates production and development deals and structures and obtains independent financing for film projects. Additionally, the agency represents domestic and foreign films for sale to distributors and broadcasters in individual overseas territories.”⁴⁶

Recent motion pictures the agency has packaged include triple-Oscar[®] nominee *Hotel Rwanda*.⁴⁷ ICM is the public relations and management agency for *Gorilla’s in the Mist* actress and DFGF-I supporter Sigourney Weaver.

Conservation International director Barry Diller is also a director of IAC/Interactive Corporation, and of Coca Cola Company, the Washington Post, and FOX Broadcasting. Coca Cola is another of the brand interests advertised on the Manhattan billboards inside the King Kong storyline.

Coca Cola is based in Atlanta, a partner of Zoo Atlanta and a supporter of the DFGF-I.

The satiric movie, The Gods Must Be Crazy, hits pretty close to home for Congolese and Rwandan villagers when one ties together all of these players.

In “The Gods,” an empty Coke bottle drops from the sky near an African hunter and is brought into his camp, but after causing much trouble for the group, the hunter tries to return the bottle to the

⁴⁶ One ICM director, a Mr. Levy, also sits on the board of directors of UNICEF.

⁴⁷ See Keith Harmon Snow, Hotel Rwanda: Hollywood and the Holocaust in Central Africa, <<http://www.allthingspass.com>>.

Gods who must have dropped it. It is a spoof on the bushman of the Kalahari—who are being herded into death camps today for Anglo-American (partnered in Africa with Barrick Gold) and BHP-Billiton diamond mining.⁴⁸

Coke is EVERYWHERE in Africa, even the most remote villages in Rwanda and Congo. Makes you wonder why, and how, given that there are no basic education or health care in the same places.

Coke director James Williams is a former director of Atlanta-based SunTrust Banks, and a director of Georgia Pacific Corporation. Both Georgia Pacific and International paper—huge logging conglomerates—have signed on to the euphemistically named Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) for Central Africa.

The media connections to these defense, intelligence, oil and mining corporations clearly explain the fact that the western media has not equitably reported—if at all—on a single issue of consequence to the Central Africa region. In fact, reportage is selective, exclusive and universally disingenuous. Media coverage of wildlife, conservation or natural resource issues are generally favorable to the agenda of the BINGOs and DINGOs and their backers, and hostile to the interests of the people, wildlife or landscapes in Africa, who are routinely and casually blamed for their own suffering.

Have the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund or any of their BINGO and DINGO partners issued press releases about extortion, racketeering, crimes against humanity and genocide committed by the agents of the governments of Central Africa and their foreign bakers? Never. For one single but perfect example of this exclusive non-reporting, has anyone reading this story ever seen a news report of any kind about the Bongo dictatorship in Gabon massacring thousands of students at Port Gentil, Gabon? Instead we have the National Geographic peddling the Congo Basin Forest Partnership with photos of surfing hippos and former U.S. General Colin Powell in Gabon.

“If you can show me one conservation or NGO report on Kahuzi Biega and coltan that pinpoints the key players,” wrote wildlife photographer Karl Ammann, who is working with DFGF-I director Gary Striker, “then I will eat this email. Nobody with any stakes in the region ever dares to criticize; that even goes for most of the press. However to do reports without naming the real source of the problem is assisting with window-dressing. I have maintained for a long time that the conservation NGOs are part of the problem rather than the solution.”

It is not only that the BINGOs and DINGOs of the so-called “conservation” community are involved in specious forms of conservation: many of these are blatantly anti-conservation, hostile to true nature preservation and earth defense, working to target local villagers who dare to blockade international logging or mining cartels, and this too is a story we have yet to tell.

But the general public is no longer able to see the trees in the conservation forest. Looking into the monkey hole we find that we have only touched the tip of the funding iceberg: we’re talking about a lucrative world, billions of dollars in annual funding in remote sensing and mapping. The scale and proliferation of these technologies, programs, and organizations working with them are astronomical. Their hidden agendas befuddle even the most curious primates amongst us.

⁴⁸ See Keith Harmon Snow and Rick Hines, “Blood Diamond: Doublethink and Deception About Those Worthless Little Rocks of Desire,” Z Magazine, June 1, 2007.

NEXT:

KONG: PART FIVE--The Road to Tayna and the Hanged Man

Nienaber chided her “bodyguard” Robert Poppe: What are the Mai Mai going to do, shoot the Muzungu and eat her?”

She didn’t receive the answer she was expecting. “They are cannibals,” he replied. Great, the myth of the *Mai Mai* grows. “Do you have proof of this?”

“Oh there is proof all right, up in Ituri. The farmers have proof.”

Writing about this experience, Nienaber said, I never got a clear answer about this “proof,” but alleged cannibalism was definitely NOT on my agenda, so I let it drop. Inside, I was seething. I felt like I had become the enemy of the Congolese people by virtue of my inability to help the desperate people I have seen all day, not realizing at the time that Poppe was now out to get me.”

But, the HANGED MAN had it worse. Like his predecessor, Dian Fossey, THE HANGED MAN was a dedicated activist whose first priority was the protection of the plants and animals that inhabited the park. Sounds a bit like the Mwami’s Tale, except that the Mwami lived to tell his.