

The BLACK C o M M e n t a t o r

An independent weekly internet magazine
dedicated to the movement for economic justice,
social justice and peace - Providing commentary,
analysis and investigations on issues affecting
African Americans and the African world.

www.BlackCommentator.com

January 22, 2009 - Issue 308

[Contents of Issue Menu](#)

[Click Here](#)

[Home](#)

**"Exterminate All the Brutes!"
Gaza, Race, and the "Tools of Imperialism"
Represent Our Resistance
By Dr. Lenore J. Daniels, PhD
BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board**

Click on the back button of your browser to return to non printer friendly page of this article

[Click here](#) to get helpful hints for viewing and printing this printer friendly plain text page

He means the weapons. They provided divine power...

Dilke's article is a draft of Conrad's story, which in its turn is draft of [Heart of Darkness](#), published two years later. And Carlier's 'exterminating all the niggers' is the first draft of Kurtz's 'exterminate all the brutes.'

-Sven Lindqvist, ["Exterminate All the Brutes": One Man's Odyssey into the Heart of Darkness and the Origins of European Genocide](#)

The hoax that Theodor Herzl and Golda Meir perpetrated on the world was neither humorous nor devoid of malevolence...both denied my existence and the existence of my country, Palestine. Their hoax would have been forgotten had it not become the West's reality, and in turn, the Palestinian catastrophe, *nakba*.

-Jamil I. Toubbeh, [Day of the Long Night: A Palestinian Refugee Remembers the Nakba](#)

When journalist Martha Raddatz reminded King George Bush, the Second, that Al Qaeda was not present in Iraq before the U.S. invasion, the King replied: Yeah, that's right. So what?

"Come on down"!

They hesitate.

"Behind one of these doors are economic benefits for the top one percent. Behind another is worker lay offs, health-related bankruptcy, more prisons, more school testing, and the privatization of everything left standing. Behind another door is CHANGE: a polite, soft-spoken, articulate African American man for president of the United States."

A good many people step up. They converse. One steps up before the doors. He looks back at the people. They are yelling now. "Door number one." "Door number one!"

The man points to door number one.

"You have selected door number one. Is that right?"

"Yes," shout millions, now!

The door number one opens, and there stands the polite, soft-spoken, articulate African American man next to a huge kettle. Golden light burst from the stage. The people strain to fins its origin. It's from the kettle; it's filled to the brim with bright, shiny coins. The whole stage is draped in the golden color of the coins. The African American man smiles, reaches into the kettle, grabs a hand full of the coins, and begins to toss them toward the people.

The camera faces the people. The hard hats, overalls, jeans, khakis, pants suits fade into the background. The millions are fewer, once again. People dressed in silk suits, stand beside decorated Navy whites and decorated greens. Others have name tags on their lapels: AIPAC, Chiquita Bananas, Citi-Group, AIG. Still others, reaching out and collecting the coins in huge sacks, are regally robed.

Far, far, far in the background, barely visible, those who stepped forward, who selected door number one, look stunned!

"It was a gigantic task the young Congo state had taken on, if the great civilizing assignment were to be crowned with victory, says, Pagels, who called the blessings of the Lord on the noble, sacrificing friend of mankind, the high-minded prince, ruler of the Congo, His Majesty Leopold II, leader of these strivings."

The quote is from *Exterminate All the Brutes*, by Sven Linqvist, University of Stockholm professor discussing the book he remembers coming across in his parent's home library. The book was titled, *Three Years in the Congo* (1887). Lieutenant Pagels had been advised to purchase a whip, the chicotte. It was important, Pagels was advised, not to betray feelings - compassion toward the Congolese, not to recognize another human being, let alone the inhumanity of the civilizing mission: "seem coldly unmoved while administrating the flogging."

In another book, *In the Shade of the Palms* (1907), Linqvist recalls reading: "Only the whip can civilize the black." This book Lindqvist recalls discovering in his grandmother's room; it was not among his parents' cherished books. The writer of this account of

European violence couldn't develop the ability to "seem coldly unmoved."

Sjoblom, the writer, provides an eye-witness account of what made it impossible for him to yield to the "whip." In it he recounts how young boys are captured at a Catholic mission, and taken to a camp for training as soldiers (in the civilizing mission). One boy is chosen for the chicotte demonstration of power. Lindqvist quotes the passage:

The captain often showed the boy the *chicotte*, but made him wait all day before letting him taste it.

However, the moment of suffering came. I tried to count the lashes and think they were about sixty, apart from the kicks to the head and back. The captain smiled with satisfaction when he saw the boy's thin garb soaked with blood. The boy lay there on the deck in his torment, wriggling like a worm, and every time the captain or one of the trading agents passed him by, he was given a kick or several...I had to witness all this in silence.

At dinner, they talked of their exploits concerning the treatment of blacks. They mentioned one of their equals who had flogged three of his men so mercilessly that they had died as a result. This was reckoned to be valor. One of the said: 'The best of them is not too good to die like a pig.'

The history generations will read through the ages should always begin with these memories. How else to find your way forward to true equalitarianism?

Europe's most important export, writes Lindqvist, "force." (And today? Force by another name?). The cannons "met little resistance among the peoples who were more advanced than we were." (And today? Progress! High-tech, smart bombs, fall from the sky, don't they?). And, as for the explanation, the story to write back home? In Ashante, the chieftain of Kumasi is made to crawl before the conquerors. "All over the illustration press," writes Lindqvist, were "drawings" of the chieftain, head resting at the feet of the conqueror, "an expression, he adds, of racist arrogance that does not flinch from the extreme denegation of its opponents."

Lindqvist recalls from his reading of these texts that after these severe floggings, the writers enjoyed the fruits of their *labor*: the individual Blacks flog would soon return to *work* "tenderly" tending to every needs of the flogger. But soldiers were to note the distinction between "individual blacks" and the "savage in general." The "savage in general" was not to be trusted.

In a third text, the diary E.J. Glave, Lindqvist discovers how "worse" punishment was "inflicted on women and children": "Small boys of ten or twelve with excitable, hot-tempered masters, are often most harshly treated..."

Progress.

Lindqvist tells us that in 1888, "the bicycle tire was patented." The demand for rubber from the Congo multiplied. Villages were "burned down," children murdered, and "hands cut off" if the village didn't cooperate with progress. Civilization. However, the violent methods were highly profitable. In the end, "profits were used, among other things, to build some of the hideous monuments, the Palais de Lacken, the Chateau d'

Ardennes."

What's to be gained through all this *civilizing* practice in Africa? Ivory, diamonds, gold - and most important, human labor, that is, "the civilizing influence of commercial enterprise..." Today, from the blood of the Congolese, the modern world needs copper so everyone in the United States, China, England, and wherever the corporations can a cable - everyone can have a cell phone attached to their ear.

Throughout African, Asia, South and Central American, and the United States, progress and civilization moved on. Africans, Asians, Arabs, Native Indians, Mestizo, Black Americans...

Yeah, that's right. So what?
I would have liked to tell you
the story of a nightingale who died
I would have liked to tell you
the story...
Had they not slit my lips.

-Samih al-Qasim سميح القاسم, Palestinian Druze Poet

But no one listens to the stories of "those whom the weapons of the gods subjugate," writes Lindqvist. These days, the gods, beneficiaries of the *civilizing process*, believe they are humanitarians as they deliver *freedom* to the "brutes."

"History loves repetition," writes Lindqvist.

A tiny little bundle cupped in someone's hand. It's a little face, barely visible. The eyes are closed; the mouth and nose distorted. Covered in black soot and blood, it's a very still little infant. And there's another like the first. The little hands are tiny and still.

We have to do it this way. We have to see it in our mind's eyes because Israeli and the U.S. media would rather you not see it. They would rather journalist be killed, and they have been, than to show the truth.

On a hospital bed is a tiny one. Male or female - it's impossible to tell. A bandage covers the child's eyes and forehead. Tubes extend from the child's mouth. The bottom lip is split and red. There's a large tube under the child's tiny head. The child is still. Disfigured children lie still.

Babies, with faces burned and swollen, cry on their hospital beds. A little girl, five or six years old, an Israeli police shot her hand and then shot her in the back. She points to her stomach. The bullet exited her stomach.

Babies and young children, three hundred babies and young children have been killed. Three babies born on the first day of the Israel strike, died. Died on the day they were born. Died on the day their parents awaited while blazes, red and yellow at the core, rose up in huge billows of black smoke high above blocks and blocks of burned-out buildings.

One street and then another and another is littered with shoes, pieces of clothing, and

glass from windows that once stood in mosques, hospitals, schools, homes that are no more now than a collection of large cement chunks here and cement chunks there.

Running through the streets are the occupied of Gaza, the trapped, trying to escape the burning and collapse of cement chunks - and the planes, forever flying over head and the boom of bombs falling nearby. There are pregnant women and children who want to go to school. The hungry want to eat. The weary want to sleep.

Do you see the brutes?

Do you see, really see, the brutes? See them hiding, as Bob Dylan wrote, behind their desks in Washington D.C., in Tel Aviv, in Cairo, in Riyadh, in London, in Paris?


Over 1,100 Palestinians of Gaza and counting...


[Click here to comment on any article
in this issue or see what others are saying in the](#)
The BlackCommentator Readers' Corner Blog

BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board member, Lenore Jean Daniels, PhD, has been a writer, for over thirty years of commentary, resistance criticism and cultural theory, and short stories with a Marxist sensibility to the impact of cultural narrative violence and its antithesis, resistance narratives. With entrenched dedication to justice and equality, she has served as a coordinator of student and community resistance projects that encourage the Black Feminist idea of an equalitarian community and facilitator of student-teacher communities behind the walls of academia for the last twenty years. Dr. Daniels holds a PhD in Modern American Literatures, with a specialty in Cultural Theory (race, gender, class narratives) from Loyola University, Chicago. Click [here](#) to contact Dr. Daniels.

[Contents of Issue Menu](#)
Click Here

[Home](#)

Click Here To
CONTRIBUTE TO  NOW

Click Here To
CONTACT 

Your comments are always welcome.

e-Mail re-print notice

If you send us an e-Mail message we may publish all or part of it, unless you tell us it is not for publication. You may also request that we withhold your name.

Thank you very much for your readership.

Website Design and Hosting provided by



Copyright © 2002-2009
www.BlackCommentator.com
All Rights Reserved