

The oligarchs' real game is killing animals and killing people

by Allen Douglas

"Crack! The rifle shot hits its target, and a mother rhino dies. Its little calf, now abandoned, is also condemned to death. As another of our endangered species is pushed nearer to extinction, the poachers' blood-lust grows."—World Wildlife Fund circular of July 17, 1987 condemning the "proud men of the Middle East" for their "criminal ignorant waste" of the rhino, because they use its carved horn as handles for their ceremonial knives.

In January 1961, a few months before he would launch the new "Noah's Ark," the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), to save the world's endangered animal species, Prince Philip accompanied Queen Elizabeth on a royal tour of India. Among the attractions that one of his hosts, a local Rajah in Jaipur, put on for the royal party was a tiger hunt. From a platform high in the trees out of all danger, Philip shot one of the famed Indian tigers, which had been lured by the tethered goats which the rajah had staked out. The photo of Philip standing proudly by his victim, nearly 10 feet long from nose to tail, caused a worldwide outcry.

Shaken, the royal consort continued his tour, arriving in Kathmandu with a conspicuous bandage on his trigger finger, explaining that an injury would prevent his participation in the king's "traditional hunt," which he would, nevertheless, accompany. Philip and Elizabeth rode perched atop some of the 300 elephants which were used to flush the game, as the Queen whirred away with her camera. Several tigers were killed that day, none officially attributed to Philip. Nor did Philip receive official credit for another animal killed that day, an exceedingly rare Indian rhinoceros. Only 250 were then left in the world, after British tea planters had finished slaughtering them to make way for their crop.

As the elephants lumbered on, a female rhino with an infant calf became trapped within their closing circle. One of the royal party, Lord Alex Douglas-Home, known as one of the finest shots in England, fired near the animal in an attempt to scare it away. But the rhino blundered on, into Philip's path. "To everyone's horror, Philip shot it," Ian MacPhail, the WWF's first international appeals director, later told a British film crew. The dead rhino's terrified calf escaped by darting away through the elephants' legs. Said MacPhail, "It must have died as well. It was far too young to have managed on its own."

The whole business was covered up, MacPhail explained, for plans were already afoot to found the World Wildlife Fund. "I was a party to the cover-up," he told the film crew in 1990, believing that the greater good was to save various animal species as a whole. Reflecting on the WWF's utter failure to do so over the three previous decades, he concluded: "But with a heavy heart I have to report to you that I was wrong. The rhino, the elephant, and the panda missed the boat, and the new Noah's Ark sailed on without them."

Philip's personal behavior has characterized that of his World Wildlife Fund as a whole. From 1961 until the present, the WWF has presided over, and in many cases organized and financed, including the purchase of weapons, the systematic slaughter and near extinction of the most prominent species under its self-appointed control. And, under cover of concern for the animals, it used substantial portions of the several hundred million dollars it has raised to date, to finance the slaughter of human beings, in particular in sub-Saharan Africa.

In the account to follow, it must be understood that the WWF was, from the outset, the personal fiefdom of Philip, who oversaw its operations almost down to the smallest detail. Sir Peter Scott, a WWF founder and longtime chairman, explained to *EIR* in an interview conducted in the early 1980s why Prince Bernhard, rather than Philip, became the WWF-International's first president: "When we started WWF, a British president would have looked too colonial." But, Scott emphasized, it was Philip, not his friend Prince Bernhard, who was the driving force—testimony echoed by others in the WWF hierarchy. Longtime Director General Charles de Haes told a journalist, "Prince Philip is brilliant, he has a remarkable knowledge. He's been involved with WWF since its founding in 1961. He's incredibly active. He chairs all the executive committee meetings. He's involved right down to every aspect of policy." Added the WWF's Dr. Anne Schlotz, "The Duke of Edinburgh devotes perhaps one-fourth of his time to the WWF—he is remarkable."

The WWF is best-known for its efforts to conserve four animal species, all of which were in vastly better condition in 1961 than they are today. Two of these, the panda and the African black rhinoceros, are near extinction, and two others, the African elephant and the Indian tiger, are rapidly heading

in that direction.

At numerous times during the past 33 years, the WWF has been made aware, often through reports it has itself commissioned, of the approaching extinction of various species. In each case, it has suppressed, sometimes brutally so, the information. Three of the more notorious instances include:

The "Black Ebur Report." In 1972, WWF founder Sir Peter Scott commissioned a Nairobi-based big game hunter, Ian Parker, to look into the lucrative and burgeoning illegal trade in animal products such as elephant tusks and rhino horn. Among other things, Parker found that the family of Kenyan President Jomo Kenyatta were notorious traders in illegal products, and that his daughter Margaret was the secretary of a company which sold rhino horns and elephant tusks to the Far East, a trade which had probably done more to decimate Kenya's large animals than any other single cause. Parker also named many of Kenya's most prominent "conservationists" as poachers.

Within hours of turning his report over to Scott, Parker was picked up, taken to the Kenyan Special Branch's notorious Langatta Road station, beaten for three days and told to shut up about what he had written or his wife would be killed. The report, then the most comprehensive inquiry into African wildlife slaughter ever conducted, remained suppressed until 17 years later, when Irish filmmaker Kevin Dowling unearthed it to use for his scathing exposé of the WWF, "Temptation in the Panda," for Britain's Independent Television network.

At almost the same time that Parker was being beaten, then WWF-International President Prince Bernhard bestowed on Kenyatta his specially created "Order of the Golden Ark," for "saving the rhino." Bernhard was well aware that vast numbers of animals had disappeared during Kenyatta's tenure, because he had received—even signed for—a copy of the Black Ebur Report. When word leaked out that Bernhard possessed this devastating report, WWF Director General de Haes claimed that this was not a WWF corporate affair, that it was merely Bernhard's "private investigation."

The Phillipson Report. In late 1989, Oxford professor John Phillipson completed his internal audit, commissioned by the WWF, of the organization's effectiveness. Phillipson's 252-page report, excerpts of which are made public here for the first time, was a scathing indictment of WWF's outrageous incompetence and blundering, or worse. It concluded that what the WWF had adopted as its special mission—saving individual species—was what it was least good at. Upon receiving a copy of the report, Philip immediately sent a secret memo to Director General de Haes, directing that Phillipson be urged to tone down his findings or, failing that, that the report's key findings be suppressed.

Operation Lock. Under this code name, in 1987, the WWF authorized a lavishly funded "emergency effort to save the rhino." The premise of this extremely secret operation was to organize infiltration, from a base in South Africa, of the continent's wildlife smuggling rings in order to stop the

animal slaughter. By all accounts, a vast amount of information was gathered. Once again, nothing was done with it, except to suppress it.

Of course, as many conservationists noted at the time, trying to stop wildlife poaching "at the source" was a ridiculous proposition, akin to trying to stop the world's drug trade by rounding up local pushers, while leaving the bankers who finance the trade and launder its hundreds of billions, untouched. The center of trade in illegal wildlife products was, as with the drug trade, the British Crown Colony of Hongkong.

Saving the animals?

Let us review some of the WWF's most highly publicized, as well as lucrative, efforts to save individual species. Counterposing these efforts by what might seem at first to be merely a gang that can't shoot straight, to the most sensitive mission WWF has ever launched, Operation Lock, lays bare WWF's true purpose.

The panda. At the time of its formation in November 1961, the WWF proclaimed that it had the answer to what it claimed was the threatened extinction of many species: "There is only one hope for them—symbolized by the loveable giant panda. *He* was saved from extinction because man acted in time. Now the panda is the emblem of a world crusade to beat the 20th century death flood—the World Wildlife Fund."

The WWF claimed that "scientific breeding" had saved the panda, an approach which now must be applied to all other species. After raising money off the symbolism of the cuddly mammal for 23 years, the WWF suddenly discovered that it, too, was an endangered species. In 1987, Philip launched a new appeal for still more millions to "save the panda."

The WWF's efforts, which included "relocating" thousands of poor Chinese peasants out of their homes in the pandas' "range," and building an expensive laboratory in an attempt to breed pandas, were appraised by consultant Phillipson. After noting that WWF had spent 4,493,021 Swiss francs on eight projects since 1980, Phillipson observed that "despite a staff of 43 (23 allegedly science-trained), panda breeding has not been a success and research output negligible. . . . The laboratories, equipped at a cost to WWF of SFr 0.53 million, are essentially non-functional. . . . A lack of proper advice, inadequately trained staff, and poor direction have resulted in a 'moribund' laboratory. . . . The obvious conclusion must be that WWF has not been effective or efficient in safeguarding its massive investment. . . . WWF subscribers would be dismayed to learn that the capital input has been virtually written off."

Finally, wrote Phillipson, "It must be accepted that WWF activities in China are largely in disarray. . . . The policy of widening WWF involvement to cover other interests has, in my opinion, been counterproductive and, in view of the virtual cessation of support for all forms of panda research,

amounts to an abrogation of responsibility for the much publicized 'Panda Program.' ”

After 30 years of raising money off the animal, Prince Philip was forced to admit in 1990 that the panda was “probably doomed.”

The elephant. A study by noted animal population ecologist E. Caughey in 1988 concluded that there were 3 million elephants in Africa in the early 1950s. By all accounts, there was little or no decline in elephant numbers during the colonial period, that is, approximately up to the “Winds of Change” policy enunciated by British Prime Minister Harold MacMillan in 1960, almost contemporaneous with the founding of the WWF. The first systematic field survey, done in 1976 by the Scottish Kenya-based conservationist Iain Douglas-Hamilton, found 1.3 million elephants alive at the time.

Throughout the 1970s and most of the 1980s, the WWF stoutly maintained that there was no “elephant crisis,” fighting the efforts of various conservationists to ban trading of the animals’ valuable ivory. By the time the “Year of the Elephant” was declared in 1988-89, the WWF maintained that there were 750,000 left, a number that mounting evidence forced them to revise downward to 650,000. However, a survey done in 1988 by the former WWF president in France, Pierre Pfeffer, who was forced off the board, found that there were only 400,000 left. That number has dropped still further, till various experts interviewed in the 1989 British film “The Elephant Man,” spoke of the great beast’s looming extinction.

Once again, the WWF had done its bit. In 1963, WWF-International Chairman Peter Scott, in a report to the Ugandan Parks Board, recommended the “culling” of 2,500 elephants. The job was contracted to game hunter Ian Parker, who massacred 4,000 hippos while he was at it. Scott had recommended the slaughter on the malthusian premise that “overpopulation” required the killing of many individuals in order to “save the species.” In reality, as it later emerged, Scott wanted to create a valuable mahogany plantation in the forests where the elephants fed, and they were in the way.

While Parker shot the elephants, WWF directors made a tidy profit from the business. Scott tipped off fellow WWF founder and Prince Philip’s Extra Equerry, Lord Aubrey Buxton, that the slaughters were to happen. Buxton, chairman of Survival Anglia, makers of some of the world’s leading “nature documentaries,” and on whose board Scott also sat, arranged to film the slaughter.

In the early 1970s, the bloody Ugandan dictator Idi Amin was installed in power by British intelligence, and maintained there until 1979. The British government watched benignly as Amin slaughtered thousands and thousands more elephants.

Today, there are fewer elephants left in Uganda than Scott had ordered Parker to kill in one drive.

In 1975, the African Wildlife Leadership Foundation, founded by U.S. WWF President Russell Train, contracted with Parker to kill virtually all the elephants in Rwanda,

on the basis that the Rwandans could not protect both the mountain gorilla and the elephant, so the elephant had to go. One of gorilla expert Diane Fossey’s assistants later charged that the elephants had been killed because the land they lived on was ideal for the production of pyrethrum, a natural “non-polluting” insecticide. Within a few years, an artificial substitute for pyrethrum was found and production collapsed. Now cleared of trees, the slopes where the elephants had lived lost their topsoil through erosion, while the rivers backed up with sediment and flooded.

The slaughter continued

In 1986, former Rhodesian bush fighter Clem Coetzee of Zimbabwe was awarded the WWF Conservation Award by Director General de Haes for overseeing a campaign in which 44,000 elephants were killed. This was necessary, said the WWF, “to protect the environment” of Zimbabwe’s “overcrowded” national parks. De Haes lauded Coetzee’s work as “exemplary and a model for all Africa.”

While other conservation groups worldwide were screaming about the plight of the elephant and calling for an ivory trade ban, the WWF was still maintaining things were fine. When the WWF belatedly rang the alarm bells in 1989, the “Year of the Elephant,” their assistance to the elephants of Uganda was most curious. With funds raised through tear-jerking campaigns “to save Nell the elephant,” the WWF set up a camp to rescue the beleaguered behemoths, into which the standard extensive paramilitary gear was flown. This camp was near the Mountains on the Moon on the Rwandan border, despite the fact that virtually all of Uganda’s elephants were in Murchison Park, nearly 1,000 miles away. But it was from precisely this area that the Rwandan Patriotic Front was to invade Rwanda a short time later.

The black rhino. The WWF was launched in London with a special “shock edition” of the *Daily Mirror* on Oct. 6, 1961. Virtually the entire front page of the newspaper was given over to a banner headline, “Doomed—by Man’s Folly, Greed and Neglect,” and to a giant picture of a black rhinoceros. Only 100,000 “short-sighted and likeably ugly rhinos” like Gertie, as she was christened, who stood there with one of her infant calves at her foot, survived in the wild, *Mirror* readers were told. And they were dwindling fast. If the rhino were to be “saved” in the troubled times ahead, the whole African herd would have to be “scientifically managed.”

Support from the *Mirror*’s working-class readership poured in. Widows sent their pension money, and children their pennies saved up for school. In all, £45,000 was collected, a huge sum for the time. The WWF thus obtained “a basis for its financial security,” and it was off and running. *Yet it spent virtually nothing on saving rhinos until almost 10 years later, and sponsored only two rhino projects in its first two decades!* Behind its trumpet blare of concern for the rhino, the WWF had by 1980 spent only 118,533 tax-sheltered Swiss francs, out of more than \$110 million raised, to “save the wild black rhino,” whose population in the meantime had

declined by 95.5%. And when the WWF finally did sponsor "rhino projects," the rhinos invariably died, or at best were sent off to zoos or, more frequently, private game farms. Today the black rhino is virtually extinct in the wild.

Exemplary of the WWF's work for the "likeably ugly beasts," is a sampling of the rhino projects scathingly criticized by the Phillipson report, chronicled below.

In 1965, a Kenyan resident gave the WWF SFr 36,300 to move six white rhino from Natal, South Africa to Meru Game Reserve in Kenya, which, according to the WWF

From 1961 until the present, the WWF has presided over, and in many cases organized and financed, the systematic slaughter and near extinction of the most prominent species under its self-appointed control. And, under cover of concern for the animals, it used substantial portions of the several hundred million dollars it has raised to date, to finance the slaughter of human beings.

Yearbook 1965-67 "was felt to contain the right sort of habitat."

Said Phillipson: "The project was ill-conceived and indefensible in conservation terms; the Southern White Rhino has never, at least in historic times, occurred in Kenya: Moreover, there is no evidence that the Northern White Rhino ever roamed the lands which now constitute the 87,044 hectare Meru National Park. The assumption must be that in the mid-1960s WWF was either scientifically incompetent, hungry for publicity, greedy for money, or unduly influenced by scientifically naive persons of stature."

Phillipson concluded, "The program came to an abrupt end in November 1988, perhaps mercifully in that it removed a constant source of embarrassment. Insurgent Somali poachers shot all the remaining white rhino in an act of defiance, an unfortunate end for the rhino but no doubt a welcome relief for concerned conservationists. Project 0195 is not a project that WWF should look back on with any pride."

Nor was Project 917, in which 85 "surplus rhino" from Natal were shipped into Mozambique; all of them died.

Nor was the Lake Nakuru National Park rhino project in Kenya. Half of all the money the WWF spent on Kenya has gone into what it calls "the protected area management" of

this park. Originally set up as a bird park, with hundreds of thousands of flamingos and many other varieties of tropical birds breeding on the lake and its environs, WWF decided by the late 1980s to turn it into a rhino park in which to place the last of the Kenyan rhinos. Seventeen black rhino were translocated, and penned in behind an electric fence. Soon it became obvious that the project was a disaster. As Phillipson remarked with biting irony:

"The logic behind the choice of Nakuru as a site for the release of black rhinos remains something of a mystery. About one-third of the park is a lake and another third is open grassland, quite unsuitable in the normal course of events, as rhino habitat. . . . Nakuru was a daft place. What price walking safaris for birdwatchers now that there might be a rhino around the next bush? The park was, after all, created for the birds."

WWF Director General de Haes was notorious among his staff for his reported statement that he "couldn't give a continental f***" about the rhino. But if the WWF has not been saving endangered species, as it clearly has not, then on what has it been spending its hundreds of millions of dollars? A look at the WWF's "Operation Stronghold," and its sister, "Operation Lock," two more "save the rhino" gambits, gives the answer.

Operation Stronghold

Funded with 1 million Swiss francs and coordinated with Operation Lock, Stronghold was nominally to enable the Zimbabwe Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management to save the 700 black rhino left in the Zambezi Valley, the last major population in the wild in Africa. Chief Game Ranger Glen Tatham toured the United States, announcing that, with WWF's help, he and his rangers "were going to war" against the poachers allegedly coming over the border from Zambia.

On Nov. 10, 1988, Tatham and two of his assistants were brought before a court in Zimbabwe and charged with murder. It was alleged that they had set up a sting operation against poachers, who, when they approached the meeting place, had been shot dead from ambush without warning by the accused. It soon emerged in a parliamentary debate that Tatham and his men had killed 70 poachers since early 1987. A law was rushed through parliament, the Protection of Wildlife (Indemnity) Act, which gave game guards immunity from civil and criminal prosecution for killings or woundings carried out in the course of their duties. Ten parliamentarians opposed the bill on the grounds that it would "legalize murder." As one of them, Mica Bhebe, put it, "We are giving people a blank check to kill people."

Official figures show that between July 1984 and September 1991, some 145 "poachers" were killed. Of the 84 killed in the Zambezi Valley, most were shot from a helicopter paid for by WWF and manned by WWF contract employees. According to the Game Department's figures, of the 228

people killed or taken prisoner, only 107 guns were recovered. Given that another 202 individuals were recorded as having fled, some badly injured, some of whom would have lost or been unable to carry away their weapons, this means that Tatham et al. failed to recover weapons from three-quarters of those killed, taken prisoner, or driven away. This raises the question of whether those targeted by the guards were in fact armed poachers at all. According to sources interviewed by the British film crew which made *Ten Pence in the Panda*, several of the dead were in fact associated with the military wing of the African National Congress.

And what happened to the rhino?

From the moment that the project was agreed to in February 1987, the WWF's aim had been "to translocate rhinos captured in the valley to safer areas elsewhere." Drugged and immobilized, the rhinos were shipped off to privately owned game farms in Zimbabwe, elsewhere in Africa, and to the United States and Australia. In other words, the WWF paid to slaughter human beings, in order to destroy the last living rhino herd in the world. The reason for the "relocation" became quickly clear, aside from the immense profits it generated for private, WWF-associated interests. It emerged that the International Monetary Fund (IMF), then dictating a "restructuring" of Zimbabwe's economy, had mandated that a beef ranching business be set up in the Zambezi Valley, in the rhino range, to provide beef to the European Commission. After the rhino had been "relocated," squads of animal exterminators moved into the valley and killed scores of elephants and 5,000 buffalo to make way for the IMF-mandated beef ranch, which soon collapsed into bankruptcy, leaving large debts and no rhinos.

Operation Lock

In late 1989 and early 1990, a scandal broke into the British and European press which threatened to cause immense damage to the green oligarchs at WWF. One of WWF's most secretive operations, code-named "Operation Lock," ostensibly an aggressive attempt to save the endangered rhino by sending an elite squad of British Special Air Services (SAS) operatives into southern Africa to penetrate, expose, and neutralize the illegal wildlife smuggling cartels, had gone badly awry.

A million pounds sterling had disappeared, and it appeared that the SAS team had started dealing in the very products, in particular rhino horn and ivory, which it had been sent to stop. There were also, as in Operation Stronghold, whispers of rising death tolls of "poachers."

WWF hastily prepared its own version of the matter. In 1986, they said, Prince Bernhard and the new head of the WWF's Africa Program, John Hanks, became alarmed while on a tour of Africa, at the rapidly dwindling rhino numbers. The two cooked up the notion of sending a team of elite trained sabotage experts and killers, SAS men, to Africa to

deal with the problem by unorthodox means. Prince Bernhard, unbeknownst to WWF, put the £500,000 or more he received from the sale of a valuable painting into the project, and off it went. It was completely secret, so the story goes, from the WWF headquarters in Gland, Switzerland, even though Bernhard was at the time president of the Netherlands WWF and two other national WWF organizations.

The SAS team, which had been organized into a company named KAS Enterprises Ltd. for the purpose, was led by Col. David Stirling, the legendary founder of Britain's SAS regiments during World War II, and the veteran of dozens, if not hundreds of special operations all over the Mideast and Africa in the postwar period. Stirling chose the initials to echo those of his earlier Capricorn Africa Society (CAS), whose purpose had been to "preserve apartheid in a sugar coating," in the words of Kenya governor Sir Philip Kerr. Capricorn's treasurer had been Mervyn Cowie, the architect of the Kenyan Park system and controller of the Mau Mau, while its chief propagandist was Elspeth Huxley, the wife of Julian Huxley's cousin Gervas.

Curiously, the most detailed revelations about Operation Lock, which obviously relied on internal WWF documents, came from the newsletter *Africa Confidential*, widely regarded in Africa and elsewhere as an MI-5 asset, and which had been founded in Stirling's flat in London.

The issue, as defined by *Africa Confidential* and its editor, who left the newsletter at this time and authored a series of exposés on Operation Lock in the British and Dutch press, became: Who in the WWF bureaucracy knew about this crazy, if deadly, scheme and when? Was this another "offline" operation by Bernhard, as the "Black Ebur Report" supposedly had been, or was this official WWF policy?

It soon emerged, contrary to the lies that the WWF leadership and its Director General de Haes spread, that the entire operation from the beginning was official policy, and that a WWF project description—later called a "mistake"—explicitly called for the purchase of arms. Files existed in the Gland international office titled "Anti-Poaching Units," which operations had indeed been funded by WWF.

Though scandalous, the various exposés missed the point of Operation Lock.

First, as anyone familiar with Africa's parks is well aware, the main "poachers" are usually the guards themselves, often financed and armed by the WWF. Second, the man whom Bernhard (again, according to the received version of events) approached to carry out this delicate "save the rhino" work, was a man who had not only founded the SAS and who had extensive covert operations experience in Africa, but who had been the "Gold Stick" at the coronation of Elizabeth II as queen in 1952. Though an Anglo-Catholic educated at the Benedictine monastery at Ampleforth contemporaneously with Lord Buxton, Philip's Extra Equerry, and with others of the WWF crowd, Stirling was chosen for the extraordinary honor, coveted among all British peerage,

to be the personal defender of the body of the queen, the head of the Protestant Church of England. And, as do all the men of SAS as well as MI-5, MI-6, and the Life Guards, he had sworn his loyalty not to the British state, but to the person of the monarch.

Throughout the postwar period, Stirling had carried out dozens of the most sensitive political-military operations for the British Crown. A Scottish aristocrat, he was close personally to the Queen Mother, Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon, herself of the very cream of the Scottish aristocracy. The aging Stirling chose as the operational officer for his KAS company, Lt. Col. Ian Crooke. Crooke was also a legend. Decorated with the rarefied Distinguished Service Order for his service during the Falklands campaign, he was the hooded "man on the balcony" who commanded the SAS team which stormed the Iranian Embassy in London in May 1980, and whose picture was flashed round the world. His brother Alastair was a British consular official in Islamabad, Pakistan, reportedly in charge of arming the Afghan mujahideen. Crooke's number two man in Operation Lock, Nish Bruce, was reportedly the most highly decorated British soldier in the Falklands fighting. (Curiously, WWF founder Lord Buxton's daughter was in the Falkland Islands "birdwatching" just as the fighting broke out.) Others on the team had extensive service in Northern Ireland, and were specialists in hunting down IRA men.

Thus the unit pulled together to "stop poaching" comprised some of the very elite of the British special forces.

Crooke was the head at the time of the 23rd SAS Regiment, the part-time SAS unit which is used, as are dozens of "private" security firms in London such as Stirling's, for operations sanctioned by Her Majesty's Government, but ones which "HMG" prefers to deny. That Operation Lock was official government policy is obvious: The chain of command in the WWF led to Prince Philip, the royal consort, and Stirling even admitted to the press that he was in close contact with the British Ministries of Defense and Foreign Affairs. One SAS member familiar with Operation Lock reported that there were regular toasts to the Queen Mother in SAS's favorite pub, while another, himself a Lock participant, stated in writing that among Lock's consortium of financial backers was the Queen Mother. Another subscriber to Lock was Laurens van der Post, the tutor to Prince Charles and at the time Mrs. Thatcher's chief adviser on Africa policy.

What was KAS really?

Stirling was a curious choice to save Africa's wildlife. He was very close to, among other well-known traffickers in wildlife, the Unita organization of Jonas Savimbi, who in 1988 admitted that his men had killed some 100,000 elephants in order to finance their war against the MPLA government in Luanda. Furthermore, internal KAS documents showed that Stirling's company planned to make a profit out of trading in the very ivory, rhino horn, etc. which they had ostensibly been sent to Africa to stop. Under Crook's

command, 25 SAS veterans set up a fortified headquarters in Pretoria with sophisticated computer equipment and imported (illegally, due to the embargo then on against South Africa) large amounts of highly sophisticated weaponry. But, if they weren't saving the rhinos, what were they doing?

Zimbabwean Minister for National Security Sydney Sekerayami had an idea. According to the Dutch paper *de Volk-rants* of Aug. 24, 1991, he "plainly stated in public that he suspected KAS of being a cover for the destabilization of southern Africa." Numerous other governments, including wildlife officials in Kenya, Tanzania, and Zambia were suspicious of the Lock men, and refused to work with them. Rowan Martin, director of research in Zimbabwe's wildlife department, declined to cooperate with Crooke, who flew from Johannesburg to see him because Crooke was "vague about his sponsors and the objectives of his mission." It also seemed odd to Martin that "they seemed more interested in military technology than wildlife. . . . They hinted at some pretty irregular methods."

South African Military Intelligence, evaluating the "anti-poachers" as obviously an elite British intelligence unit, sent their own man in to infiltrate the Lock crew. Crooke managed to work out liaisons with Namibia and Mozambique, and with elements of the South African special forces and intelligence community. Then in a war against the African National Congress (ANC), South West African People's Organization (SWAPO), and the majority-ruled front-line states, some South Africans viewed the paramilitary training capabilities of the British as an asset.

From an operational headquarters in Bophuthatswana's Pilanesberg Park, and in numerous other parks such as Etosha in Namibia and in the game parks in the KaNgwana homeland on the South Africa-Mozambique border, the KAS crew turned out "anti-poaching units."

One such unit which Crooke's men trained, and the political circumstances in which it operated, is of particular interest.

The 'third force'

From before Nelson Mandela's release in 1990 until the present, well over 10,000 black South Africans have been killed through black-on-black violence. Observers have attributed much of this murder and mayhem to the agent provocateur actions of a mysterious "third force," which is neither the ANC, nor its Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party rival. The third force, by attacking each of the rival groups in turn—which then blame each other—keeps the deadly violence going. Such activity must be gridded against the work of Crooke's unit in Namibia.

After being taken from the Germans following World War I, South West Africa became a protectorate of South Africa. In the 1980s, as the SWAPO guerilla force of Sam Nujoma waged war against the South African-backed, white-dominated government of the country, South African special

forces trained the notorious "Koevoet," Afrikaans for "crowbar," black special warfare units, whose savagery was notorious. Crooke and his crew retrained the Koevoet men as "anti-poaching units." Simultaneously, they set up liaison with the then-minuscule "stock theft unit" of the South African Police.

In late June 1992, shortly after the notorious Boipatong massacre of June 18, in which 39 were killed and many more injured by mysterious "third force" assassins, a joint task force of ANC intelligence, the Goldstone Commission (an inquiry into violence), and a special police unit raided the premises of the British-owned Gold Fields firm. There, to their surprise, they discovered a "stock theft unit" of 40 men, mainly re-trained Koevoet veterans from Namibia. According to the South African *Weekly Mail* of June 26-July 2, 1992, "The African National Congress says it has witnesses who will testify before the [Goldstone] commission on the unit's role in the Boipatong massacre."

Gold Fields was chaired by Robin Plumbridge, an Oxford graduate and a Trustee of the South African Nature Foundation, the WWF's South African affiliate. As the *Weekly Mail* put it, "The presence of a 'third force' on a British-owned mine will have major international repercussions."

Though £1 million had been spent, "As one of [Operation Lock's] employees himself put it, there is no proof that the [project] ever even saved one single rhinoceros," according to the Dutch newspaper *de Volkskrant*.

Population controller John Hanks

The story that Prince Bernhard and John Hanks ran Operation Lock as a rogue operation out of their back pockets is nonsense, but it is clear that Hanks did play a key role in the affair. His career and specialties help shed further light on the operation. Hanks had gotten his start in the conservation business cutting up elephants in an *abattoir* in Zambia, where elephants were butchered to feed the workers in southern Africa's mines. He spent some time in Rhodesia where, according to his own account, he worked for military intelligence. In the mid-1970s, he became the chief parks officer of the National Parks Board at Pietmaritzburg in Natal.

But his overwhelming preoccupation from 1976 on, was with human population control. In numerous speeches, he railed about how "Durban will [soon] be worse than Bombay." The problem, he said, was that "African women are among the world's most prolific breeders, with the average woman bearing 5.2 children." With all these mouths to feed, "demands are being placed on our natural resources which are not sustainable and can only lead to chronic environmental degradation." In 1977, he called for a "national population control policy," and the liberal use of contraception, abortion, and sterilization.

In 1979, Hanks became the first director of the Institute of Natural Resources in KwaZulu, founded with a grant from the K.E. Taeubner Management Trust, named for a member

of the 1001 Club. He continued to specialize in population matters, and became an executive member of the Family Planning Association of South Africa. In 1986, he became the head of the Africa Program of the WWF.

When Operation Lock was exposed in 1990 (at least certain aspects of it), it caused a bit of a stink, and Hanks was forced to leave the WWF. He issued a statement on Jan. 4, 1990: "My own involvement in the project ceased when Prince Bernhard's funds had been exhausted in late 1989. I am aware that similar operations are continuing, but I am no longer involved in any way."

He took up the post of executive director of the WWF's South African branch, the South African Nature Foundation, which Prince Philip called "an elegant solution" to the embarrassment of what to do with him. However, the Dutch paper *de Volkskrant* reported on Aug. 24, 1991, "He still works on operations like Lock, together with some of the former British soldiers who also took part in the original project."

Indeed, as an internal KAS situation report of Jan. 18-May 31, 1989 marked "Secret" stated, "KAS should seize this opportunity to become the leading expert on all forms of anti-poaching training throughout Africa." The document furthermore noted that "the experience gained so far in SWA/Namibia has proved invaluable."

Who are the poachers?

The nominal purpose of Operation Lock and Operation Stronghold was to "stop poachers." But as the case of the 120-square-mile Ngorongoro Crater in Tanzania demonstrates once again, it is usually the WWF which is paying the poachers.

In the late 1950s, WWF founder-to-be Dr. Bernard Grzimek of the Frankfurt Zoo took an animal census in the Ngorongoro Crater, claiming to find that wildlife was disappearing. This Grzimek blamed on the Masai pastoralists, who herded their cattle across the area, but who rarely killed anything except the lions which attacked their flocks. As a result of the hysteria Grzimek and his allies kicked up, in particular around the associated Hollywood film "Serengeti Shall Not Die!" the Masai were banned from entering vast areas of the national park around the crater, their traditional territory.

In 1964, some 108 rhinos had been individually photographed and given an identity, the most carefully documented population in Africa. A WWF program was set up to "save" them. Despite the WWF-financed game guard program, by 1981 there were only 20 left. Not one poacher had been caught by the three anti-poaching teams in years. In that year, an eyewitness wrote to the offices of the African Wildlife Leadership Federation in Nairobi, shedding some light on the disappearing rhino herd. The WWF-financed game guards, she reported, had shot dead two large tame males and wounded a female, "all in broad daylight." She concluded, "Isn't it fairly obvious what is going on in the crater?"