

# CHEERING FOR MASS MURDER

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In 1862, Dakota Sioux Indians went on a mass murder spree, butchering more than 600 innocent whites, mostly women and children at New Ulm, Minnesota.

The Indians murdered babies, beating their brains out and nailing them to trees. They tortured children. They engaged in gang rape of women on a mass scale. Their rampage was enabled by the fact that many Minnesota men were away, fighting in the Civil War.

That slaughter was the worst massacre by either whites or Indians from 1492 to the present. On a per capita basis, it was five times the carnage of September 11.

If the narrative sounds familiar, it should. What the Dakota did in 1862 was remarkably similar to what Gazans did on October 7. And the reaction, too, was similar.

Surviving whites were righteously infuriated, just like today's Israelis. A militia was quickly organized and sent to the Minnesota River valley, where the massacre took place. The federal government, which was losing the Civil War at the time, sent such troops as it could spare. A brief war followed—the Indians did not fare as well against armed civilians and soldiers as they did against unsuspecting women and children—and the uprising was put down.

Several thousand Indians were captured and many were tried by a military court. Initially, several hundred were sentenced to death. If the local whites had their way, they all would have been hanged. But President Lincoln intervened.

He ordered that the trial transcripts should be carefully reviewed, and only those against whom there was clear evidence of either murder (not killing in battle) or rape could be executed. The others must be let free. When the

local military commander objected that if he freed the Indians the settlers would kill them, Lincoln replied that it was his job to keep the Indians safe.

In the end, there was clear enough evidence of murder or rape to convict 38 Dakota. No doubt many more deserved to hang. But there were no survivors left alive to testify after some attacks, while in other cases, the survivors were unable to identify individual perpetrators.

Also, some of those who deserved to hang must have been killed in battle. But no doubt many murderers and rapists got off scot-free.

My colleague Scott Johnson and I reviewed the transcripts of the Dakota trials at the Minnesota Historical Society years ago, and wrote an op-ed in the Star Tribune debunking the pro-Indian myths that had developed over the years. But that didn't stop liberals from continuing to rewrite history.

Our op-ed preceded the Internet, but you can read John Phelan's balanced account of the 1862 uprising and its sequels here. Katherine Kersten adds more details and puts the events into the larger context of the Left's seizing control of historical narratives here.

But when did facts ever matter to liberals? They continue to lionize the Dakota who murdered and raped white children and women. Like, for example, Minnesota's far-left Governor Tim Walz:

*“161 years ago, 38 Dakota men were hung. Today, the Dakota 38+2 runners ran 71-miles overnight from Fort Snelling to Mankato in remembrance of the largest mass execution in U.S. history.*

*Their sacrifice reminds us all to continue our commitment to accountability and healing.*

— Governor Tim Walz (@GovTimWalz) [December 26, 2023](#)”

I replied to that dungheap of ignorance:

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