

ECO

International Whaling Commission Annual Meeting

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Japan's Vote-Buying Strategy Dominates IWC

Japan's policy of recruiting poor nations into the International Whaling Commission and buying their votes with foreign aid—termed “vote consolidation” by the Japanese Government—is now dominating the agenda of the 2004 IWC meeting. It is now quite obvious that Japan is attempting to take majority control of the treaty organization by bringing a growing list of subservient states into the IWC.

Monday's secret ballot proposal by Japan, which touched off forceful statements from both sides of the whaling issue, reflected Japan's vote-buying scheme. Every small nation receiving multi-million-dollar “fisheries aid” packages

from Japan came down on the side of secrecy. The proposal failed, however: 24 yes to 29 no. It would have been a lot closer if three member countries that have received Japanese fisheries aid

(Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire, and Morocco) had fully paid their dues on time to qualify for voting.

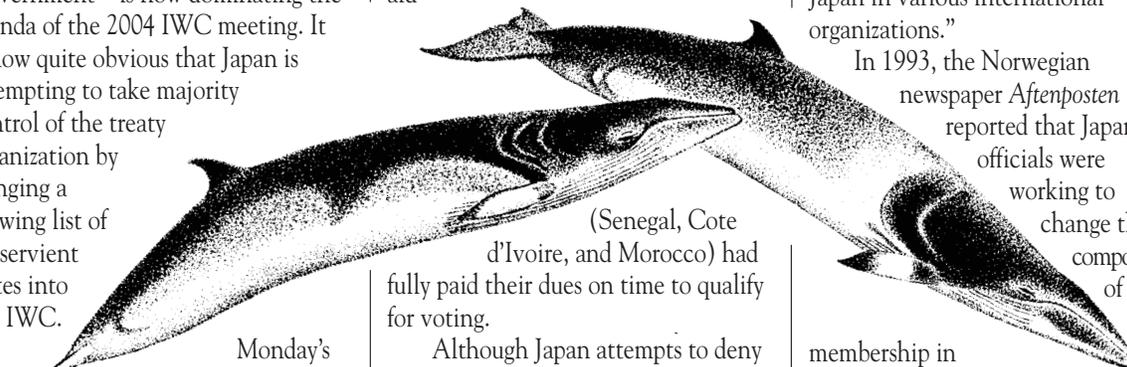
Although Japan attempts to deny that its fisheries aid program is a vote-buying operation, there is ample proof otherwise from Japanese Government statements over the years. As far back as 1987, according to a report on a meeting of Pacific Island states in Tokyo, a Japanese Fisheries Agency

official told participants that, “When the Japanese government selects the countries to which it provides fisheries grants, criteria include that the recipient country must have a fisheries agreement with Japan and it must take a supportive position to Japan in various international organizations.”

In 1993, the Norwegian newspaper *Aftenposten* reported that Japanese officials were working to change the composition of the IWC

membership in order to “transform it into an organization more sympathetic to Japan's whaling interests.”

In 1999, an official of Japan's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Hideki Moronuki, *concluded on page 3*



Grenada Charges Former IWC Commissioner Stole Japanese Payoff

Grenada's commissioner to the IWC from 1997 to 1999, Michael Baptiste, has been charged with pocketing more than US \$75,000 that was sent from the Government of Japan as contributions to the Government of Grenada for its support of Japan at the International Whaling Commission.

The Grenada government filed fraud charges against Baptiste last September. The trial of Baptiste is scheduled to begin next week.

“Baptiste is charged with

fraudulent Breach of Trust in which it is alleged that he pocketed over EC\$200,000.00 which the Government of Japan donated to the Government of Grenada during his tenure as Agriculture Minister from 1997-1999,” reported *Grenada Today*, the nation's leading newspaper.

Investigators from Grenada have already visited Japan and the U.S. gathering evidence on the alleged theft. According to news reports, three payments were made in 1998 and 1999 through a U.S. corporation

owned by a Japanese businessman, Hideuki “Harry” Wakasa. Three checks of 21,000 British pounds, 24,000 pounds and US \$3,000 were diverted by Baptiste, who was Minister of Agriculture, to a Barclays Bank account he controlled, according to news reports.

“Baptiste said the charges are politically motivated,” reported the *Grenadian Connection* after his arrest. “He said he was not required to give an account of the money to *concluded on page 4*

More Japan "Science" Means More Slaughter

Japan has announced a substantial increase in whaling, in keeping with their scheme to use "scientific" whaling as an excuse for commercial whaling.

Japan will kill 380 minke whales for "research" in the Northern Pacific, far more than the 260 killed last year. Japan will also double the kill of sei whales to 100. An additional 400 minke whales will continue to be slaughtered in the Southern Ocean Sanctuary, plus 120 minke whales to be killed along the Japanese coast.

The IWC has consistently stated that the "scientific" whaling conducted by Japan is not necessary for research. Indeed, the killing of whales by Japan is less about science than it is about commerce – Japan has repeatedly asked its own people to increase their eating of whale meat. Yet, meat sales are still lacking.

"James Bond" Supports Whales

On June 7th, super-secret agent James Bond (aka actor Pierce Brosnan) helped IFAW launch a new research vessel, *The Song of the Whale*, designed to study whales and other marine mammals without harming any.

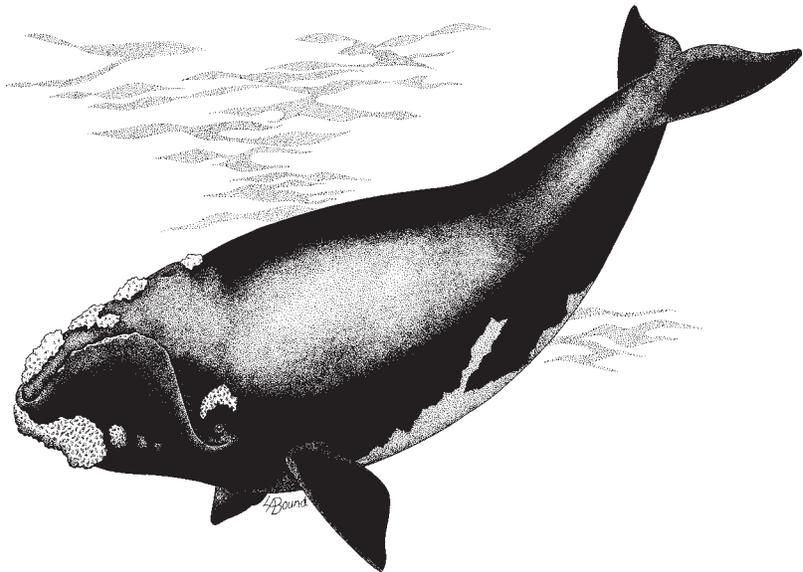
Brosnan noted: "Norway, Iceland, and Japan: You do not have a license to kill the whales of the world. I'm standing here as a father. I want my children and my children's children to be able to enjoy whales."

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ECO is published on the occasion of the 56th Annual Meeting of the International Whaling Commission.

Even more disturbing, Dr. Scott Baker of the University of Auckland has, using DNA analysis, discovered sei whale meat from the southern hemisphere in Japanese retail markets, according to a news story. The sei whale has been protected by the IWC since 1980.

Dr. Baker claimed the sei whale meat did not necessarily come from Japan's scientific whaling expeditions. "It is more likely," he told reporters, "that somebody has taken sei whales illegally, and they have made their way into Japan. What it shows us is that the Japanese market is permeable to products of suspicious origin."



In Memoriam: Jane Tipson

Environmental activists around the world are mourning the loss of our friend and colleague Jane Tipson of St. Lucia. Jane has been a regular activist at meetings of the International Whaling Commission. In 1995, she co-founded the Eastern Caribbean Coalition for Environmental Awareness (ECCEA) and was responsible for the regional program in St. Lucia in the Caribbean. She also created the St. Lucia Whale and Dolphin Watching Association and promoted the development of a now flourishing whale-watching industry in that country. She

further founded and dedicated her time and entire income to the St. Lucia Animal Protection Society (SLAPS) alleviating the intense misery of hundreds of wild and domestic animals in a way few people have ever done.

At one o'clock in the morning on the 16th of September 2003, as she entered her property at Monchy in St. Lucia, Jane was ambushed and shot on the bridge she was driving across to her house. ECO denounces this crime and will miss Jane's dedicated work for whales and animals.

Warning! Eating Whale is Hazardous to Your Health!

The Environmental Information Agency's (EIA) latest assessment of contamination of whale meat by human-caused pollution points out that Japan, Norway, Iceland, and the Faroe Islands have all issued pollution-related health warnings to their citizens specifically on contamination issues with whale meat.

Mercury, PCBs, and pesticides

have all been documented at high levels in whale meat, blubber, and other products for human consumption. Brominated flame retardants, a new series of chemicals, are now also showing up in the blubber of harbor seals and beluga whales in Canada.

Mercury contamination in particular can cause irreversible neurological damage, and fetuses and

young children are particularly vulnerable. PCBs and some pesticides can cause cancer as well as disrupting immune and endocrine systems.

Yet, Japan, Iceland, Norway, and the Faroe Islands governments continue to promote commercial whaling and consumption of whale products to their people, regardless of the health consequences.

Vote Buying, concluded from page 1 was quoted in an Associated Press story ("Japan Urges Support for Whaling") as explaining that Japan hoped to coax developing nations to join the IWC in exchange for financial assistance. Aid would be offered in hopes of balancing the votes in Japan's favor, the story stated.

In 1999, a *Guardian* (UK) story ("Japan Admits Aid Link to Votes") quoted the vice minister of MAFF, Hiroaki Kameya, that, "We would like to use overseas development aid as a practical means to promote nations to join, expanding grant aid towards non-member countries which support Japan's claims."

In 2002, the Japan Whaling Association (JWA) a quasi-governmental organization, issued a press release declaring that Japan was the world's largest aid donor and that "Caribbean countries have been benefiting from Japanese assistance." The JWA stated that "Antigua and Barbuda and several other Caribbean territories have supported the position of the JWA in its international negotiations on the issue of harvesting of whales."

The most infamous statement on vote-buying was made in 2001 by the outspoken deputy commissioner, Masayuki Komatsu. In a radio interview with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Komatsu stated that there is "nothing wrong"

with using Overseas Development Aid (ODA) to buy votes at the IWC.

"Japan does not have a military power. Unlike U.S. and Australia, you may dispatch your military power to East Timor. That is not the case of Japan. Japanese means is simply diplomatic communication and ODAs. So in order to get appreciation of Japan's position, of course you know that is natural that we must do, result on those two major truths. So, I think there is nothing wrong," stated Komatsu, who was international director of the Japanese Fisheries Agency at the time.

Komatsu's remarks drew a scathing response from the government of New Zealand, which was pressing for adoption of a South Pacific Whale Sanctuary at the upcoming 2001 IWC meeting. Prime Minister Helen Clark declared that New Zealand was "very concerned by the stacking" of the IWC membership by Japan. She stated that the political manipulation and vote-buying at the IWC were "blatant" and must be challenged.

"New Zealand and other countries opposed to whaling have long suspected that Japan was using overseas development aid money to persuade poorer nations, without any direct interest in whaling, to support Japan's pro-whaling stance at the International Whaling Commission," Prime Minister Clark said.

When the IWC meeting convened in London, the head of New Zealand's delegation, Minister of Conservation Sandra Lee sharply criticized Japan's corrupting tactics: "My Prime Minister and Government view the proposition of vote-buying as outrageous and have publicly said so. Taking advantage of the poverty and vulnerability of developing countries and small island states to buy their votes can only be regarded as a serious misuse of power and influence by a wealthy nation."

The New Zealand minister added, "The 1970 Declaration of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation Among States, in accordance with the U.N. Charter states that: 'No state may use or encourage the use of economic, political or any other type of measures to coerce another state in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its sovereign rights and to secure from it advantages of any kind.'"

Japan and its raft of vulnerable states bought with "tied aid" blocked the South Pacific Sanctuary, and they have continued to obstruct whale conservation measures to this day. Since 2000, a dozen nations receiving heavy Japanese aid have joined the IWC. Japan continues to shamelessly recruit more poor nations to its effort to take over the treaty organization.

Japan Will Bolt IWC?

The BBC has reported that Japan has set a deadline to bolt the IWC by 2006 if their whale killing is not approved.

Yoshimasa Hayashi, a member of Japan's parliament with the Liberal Democratic Party, told BBC that: "I

told officials at the White House that if we see no clear sign of improvement, we'll have to take the walk-out option seriously ... The Japanese people can't wait any longer than two more years."

"Last year, without consulting us, (the IWC) agreed to establish a conservation committee, which we

oppose as a distortion of the IWC's fundamental purpose," Mr. Hayashi told BBC.

Mr. Hayashi continued: "In Japan we have pet dogs. But we don't tell the Koreans to stop eating dogs. Nor should people tell us to stop whaling."

No Secret Ballots

Despite efforts by Japan to turn back the clock and despite complaints by several puppet nations that they were being "pressured" by other bigger nations and NGOs, the IWC decisively rejected secret ballots.

Twenty-nine countries voted for transparency and open votes; twenty-

four voted to keep their votes secret from the world.

Iceland claimed that open voting in that country in the past led to "land-owners" intimidating "peasants." The UK noted, however, that indeed the voting public wanted to be sure that their government representatives at the IWC would be "held accountable" for their positions on the issues.

In the end, Japan's continued vote-buying efforts failed to persuade a majority of the IWC government representatives to ignore transparency and open government. The public cares deeply about the protection of whales, and it is telling that supporters of secret ballots also support continued slaughter of whales.

Grenada Payoff, concluded from page 1 government since such sums were deposited to his personal account—a practice that was nothing new and had the full knowledge of the Prime Minister himself. He said the money is sent by persons or agents who are looking for governments who support their view at the International Whaling Commission."

"There will be questions asked about the entire issue of Grenada's—and indeed other islands in the Eastern Caribbean—stance at such IWC meetings," the newspaper commented. "It is an 'open secret' that Grenada's vote at the conference, starting back with the George Brizan administration, has been bought by both private and public interests particularly in Japan, which is seeking the lifting of an international moratorium on whale hunting. Not only has Japan increased its direct aid to Grenada for such support, but, as we understand it, 'private individuals' have showered top Grenada officials with 'gifts'—

monetary and otherwise—a practice that started in the days of the previous government."

"In his press conference, Baptiste made a telling confession—that normally he and other government representatives sometimes collected

money from 'a man' on [sic] airports when they were on their way to represent the country. No accounts were to be given either to the government or donors about how these sums, allegedly 'expense related,' were spent," reported the Grenadian Connection.

Baptiste left the government in 2000 and joined the opposition political party, the Grenada United Labour Party (GULP), with the intention of ousting the ruling New National Party in the 2003 election. He lost his seat in the election, crippled by the fraud charges.

The prime minister of Grenada,

Keith Mitchell, is embroiled in his own payoff scandal. Opposition leaders are demanding a formal investigation of charges that Mitchell received a Louis Vuitton briefcase containing US \$500,000 from a German businessman, Eric Resteiner, at a meeting in Switzerland in June 2000. The cash, in \$100 bills, was allegedly payment for the appointment of Resteiner as the General

Ambassador of Grenada. The Grenada government claims that Resteiner was appointed as a Trade Advisor, not ambassador, and that the amount of money in the briefcase was \$15,000 and was intended to cover expenses of Mitchell's trip to Europe. Resteiner has been convicted of securities fraud in the U.S., where he was fined \$4.4 million and ordered to disgorge \$15.9 million in ill-gotten gains, according to OffshoreAlert, a corruption newsletter (www.kycnews.com) that exposed the alleged payoff of Mitchell in April.

