



A Greenpeace Zodiac, with the *James Bay*
between two harpoon boats

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A Greenpeace Zodiac crew films the *Dalniy Vostok*, a killer boat, and their load of whales.

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Two Greenpeace Zodiacs pursuing and
being pursued



Mike Bailey in the killer boat's line of fire



A Russian harpooner and crew at the gun
of a halted killer boat



In their outboard-powered inflatable, Greenpeace crew speeds toward confrontation with Icelandic vessel

DELOFFRE & CUNNEY/GREENPEACE

Whale of a War off Iceland

A battle at sea on the eve of a summit to save the leviathans

In the choppy, chilly waters 100 miles west of the Icelandic coast, the black-hulled *Hvalur-8* was chasing a pod of fin whales. The fins, second only in size (75 ft) to the mammoth blues, are an endangered species fully protected everywhere else in the world, but the Icelanders are permitted to take a few hundred every year, most of which are shipped off to whale-eating Japan. Suddenly, as the whaler was about to zero in on its prey, a small, outboard-powered Zodiac inflatable materialized under the ship's towering bow.

The buzzing little boat and three sister craft were manned by members of an international conservation group called Greenpeace, which was founded a decade ago and has been protesting whaling operations throughout the world. Whenever a fin whale rose up from the depths to blow out air in a watery spray, the inflatable would run brazen interference for the giant mammal, interposing itself between the whaler and its quarry. With growing frustration, Captain Thordur Eythorsson, 36, stood by his ominous-looking harpoon gun atop the whaler's bow, unable to make his kill.

For 18 hours, the stalemate continued. Every time the whaler angled close enough to the fins for a shot, one of Greenpeace's four inflatables would dodge into its way. The contemporary Ahab was forced to hold his fire lest he hit the protesters. Finally, after two misses, the captain got off his shot when one fin surfaced directly in front of the catch boat. It was a painfully slow demise for the beast: to minimize the danger to the protesters, Eythorsson had removed the explosive cap from the harpoon. Cabled TIME Correspondent Erik Amfitheatrof of the grisly action: "The creature's struggle was un-

usually harrowing. Without the explosive, the fin lingered on until the captain fired a second 'cold' harpoon into it and then, at last, an explosive harpoon. It took 16 minutes to end the whale's agony."

As usual, the fin was pumped with air and towed to the Icelandic whaling station 30 miles from Reykjavik to be carved up. Back on shore, Greenpeace leader David McTaggart, 47, a dedicated environmentalist who had sailed a ketch into



Fin whale being hauled in by *Hvalur-8*

"What we saw today was disgusting ..."

France's South Pacific nuclear proving grounds in an effort to halt atomic testing, addressed his companions: "What we saw today was disgusting ... disgusting. The whale is a mammal. It makes love. It is warm-blooded. It has been here 40 million years longer than we have."

Soon the confrontation took a different turn. A few days later, the ship's operator, Whale Ltd., Iceland's only whaling company, went into the Icelandic courts to request an injunction that would restrain McTaggart and company from further interference with its four whalers. But Greenpeace was not ready to call it quits. Early one morning, the anti-whalers' mother ship, *Rainbow Warrior*, slipped out of Reykjavik in hopes of making it to the whaling grounds. Said McTaggart: "I think we've been so successful they will have to arrest us." Not quite. During the first attempt, an Icelandic gunboat simply signaled them back just a few miles beyond the harbor entrance. But when the *Rainbow Warrior* tried to sneak out again, both ship and protesters were detained. After McTaggart pledged to call off further interference, at least for the moment, the protesters' ship sailed out of Reykjavik at week's end.

The skirmishing off Iceland was only a warmup for next week's activities in London. At the plush Cafe Royal banquet hall, representatives of the 22 member nations of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) will gather for their 31st annual conference since the protective body's founding in 1946. Disdained in past years as a private whalers' club that supports the estimated \$650 million industry by setting excessively liberal whale-kill quotas (this year's total was 20,102), the IWC, under its youthful new chairman, Thordur Asgeirsson, 37, could

"The name traces to an old North American Indian legend that when the earth's animals have been hunted almost to extinction, a rainbow warrior will come down from the sky to protect them."

Here comes
number one.



JOHNNIE WALKER. SO SMOOTH IT'S THE WORLD'S
NUMBER ONE SCOTCH.

do much this year to change its image.

On the agenda are three strong whaling-moratorium proposals that require a 75% majority for passage. The most dramatic idea comes from Australia, until last year a vigorous whaling country. It wants an indefinite ban on all whaling. The Carter Administration, backed only last week by Congress, has submitted a similar suggestion, with one loophole: Eskimos in Alaska would be allowed to maintain subsistence hunting of the endangered bowhead whale under strict quotas (last year's ceiling: 18 kills). If the conference fails to act on the U.S. proposal or a similar one, Congress may toss out a legislative harpoon of its own: a bill sponsored by Senators Warren Magnuson of Washington and Bob Packwood of Oregon would deny U.S. fishing rights within a 200-mile coastal limit to any countries that ignore IWC rulings. Such legislation would strongly bolster any moratorium passed by the IWC, which has no enforcement authority. Says U.S. Delegate Tom Garrett: "We're finally starting to put our money where our mouths are."

The third and most modest moratorium call has been submitted by the Seychelles, an archipelago 1,000 miles off Africa's eastern coast. The young nation wants a three-year ban on all sperm whaling. It is also asking for creation of a whaling sanctuary in the Indian Ocean, where all species would be protected. The suggestion, given the best chance of passing, would allow scientists to test what many marine biologists regard as shaky thinking behind the IWC's current quotas.

At present, the IWC takes a rough guess at the numbers of a species and, using little more than simple arithmetic, decides how many whales can be killed without endangering the population's survival. But many scientists argue that the calculations should take other factors into account. Some of these marine mammals are believed to be monogamous, and the slaughter of one whale may break up a family unit, with a drastic effect on breeding. Since certain species have the largest brains of any creatures, they may be intelligent enough to fear such sounds as ships' propellers, even at distances of hundreds of miles. This too could disturb their mating habits.

Even if none of the moratorium calls are approved, the whaling industry may soon be sunk by dwindling profits. Greenpeace has observed that the whaling ships of the U.S.S.R. are rusted and worn and that Japan's are only slightly better—a clear sign that the world's most rapacious whalers are hesitant to invest more money in a losing business where catches are ever smaller. Some species like the bowhead and right whales may now number no more than 3,000 and perhaps are headed irreversibly toward extinction. Thus as the meeting convenes in London, the question may really be: Of whalers or whales, which will die out first?

Struggling to Save the Vanishing Whale

Greenpeace and the World Wildlife Fund

The words "endangered species" are now part of our vocabulary — the concept began with the total elimination of a bird called "the Passenger Pigeon".

The Passenger Pigeon was the first widely known species of animal to pass into total extinction in modern times but, of course, we know from fossil studies that many forms of life passed into extinction before man even evolved. Given the history of life on this planet, it is not the extinction of a species in itself that concerns scientists and ecologists, it is the *reason* for the extinction and the animal's *place* in the scheme of things that is the major concern. A famous science writer once observed that all life, save rats and man, had a specific biological function and that the disappearance of one form of life may lead to an imbalance in nature that might cause further extinctions. Rats and man, he went on to observe, are the only totally destructive forms of life on earth — even mosquitoes feed birds and bats while they in turn feed other animals.

Today, many ecologists believe man is responsible for the destruction of the vital and delicate balance of nature — a balance which makes it possible for man to survive. Man, it seems, "overkills". Sometimes this is done deliberately; sometimes by accident. What are the issues involved in the current protests against the killing of our fellow mammals, the whales? Who objects? Who favours continued hunts? And why? Read this article and discuss the issues. What dangers do you see in the extinction of various species?

Make a list of endangered species. As an example of how a species can be saved, study the current condition of the North American bison.

by Greg Gatenby

The captain stands behind the harpoon cannon on the sweeping bow of his rusting catcher boat. The Antarctic seas are tossing, the waves are eight feet high, and the water is so cold he can scarcely feel his fingers.

Nonetheless, he crouches, squints his eyes to take aim along the cannon sights and, when the rolling back of the



Concerns for young Canadians



fin whale shows for just a second his finger pulls the trigger, the stench of cordite fills the air, and the harpoon races like an arrow for the unsuspecting spine of the second biggest species of whale in the world.

Within two seconds of the harpoon's puncture of the whale's back, a small bomb goes off which is intended to kill the animal instantly. But this whale has been lucky; a wave came from nowhere just as the captain fired, causing the ship to list ever so slightly and his usually unerring aim of the deadly spear has been thrown awry. This time the whale escapes with a wound which may heal, provided the loss of blood is not so

great as to attract a roving pack of sharks.

Most of the great whales today are not so lucky. Ever since Svend Foyn invented the harpoon gun in 1869, whales have been fighting a losing battle with human technology. But not all humans are willing to allow the biggest things that ever lived on the earth (five times larger than the biggest dinosaur), to disappear into extinction. There are two charitable organizations that have focussed much of their conservation efforts on saving the whales: the older is the World Wildlife Fund; the more visible is The Greenpeace Foundation.

Greenpeace first came to the attention

of the world in 1971 when a small group of people in Vancouver, British Columbia, decided to protest American Government plans to test a new type of atomic bomb off the coast of Amchitka, Alaska. At the time, there was fear among some scientists in both countries that such an explosion might set off a tidal wave so devastating to the Pacific Coast that lives would be lost and millions of dollars of property would be destroyed.

Included in that group of young people was a columnist for the *Vancouver Sun*, Robert Hunter. As a newsman, Hunter knew if the press was on your side there was very little you could not

Concerns for young Canadians

accomplish. He told the group it would have to think of something spectacular that would interest the media yet, at the same time, would not be ineffective or frivolous.

After several ideas were discussed, a daring plan was finally agreed upon: the group would sail a ship to Alaska and moor it right at the spot where the bomb was due to explode. By refusing to budge from that zone, they hoped to delay indefinitely the atomic explosion.

The group also decided it needed a name indicating that its primary intentions were only to make people aware of what they thought was a senseless threat to human life and ecology. Thus they settled on the name "Greenpeace". The "green" part of the name indicating their environmental interest, the "peace" pointing to their belief in a non-violent approach.

While they failed to halt the Amchitka explosion, they were able to attract enough attention to the possible dangers associated with such tests that the U.S. government has since abandoned them. Perhaps, more importantly Green-

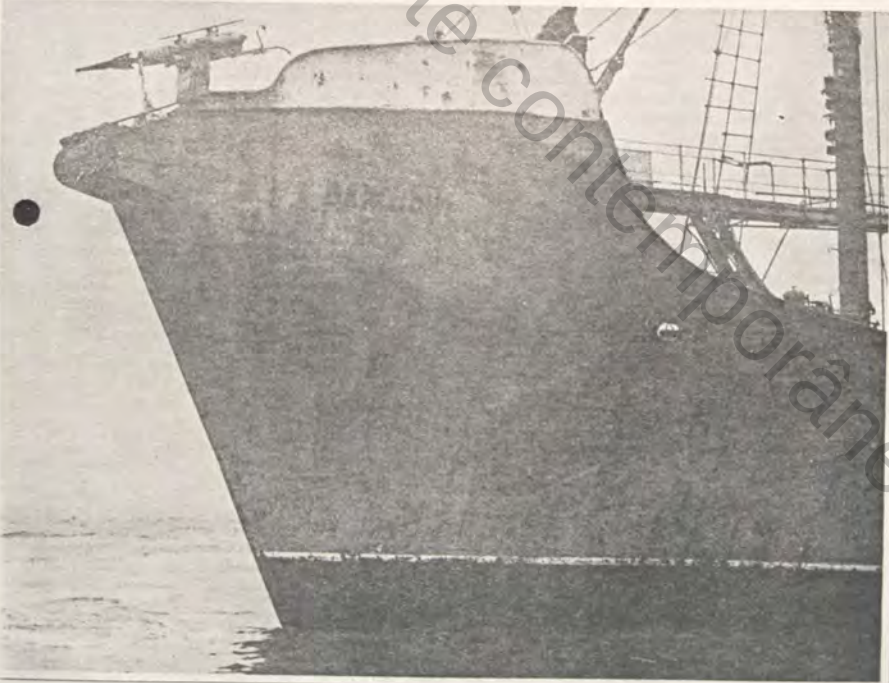
peace learned the value of dramatic confrontation with authority: pictures were flashed around the world, news stories were published in all major dailies, and millions of people were hearing of this ecological David in a world of Goliaths.

In speaking of the evolution of the Greenpeace approach to ecological issues, Greenpeace president, Dr. Patrick Moore, says, "We believe you cannot change people's values by setting up a committee and passing a resolution — you must set a moral example. After Amchitka, we were committed to the creation of strong images through a direct use of media."

While sailing to Alaska, the group asked the captain of the ship they'd chartered why there were no whales to be seen. He explained that once the ocean had been full of whales but overkilling had made their appearances a very rare event. The Greenpeaceers then knew what their next major project must be: find out what was happening to the whales, and if possible, stop their slide toward extinction.

Scientists classify all whales, dolphins and porpoises as members of the phylum *Chordata*, sub phylum *vertebrata*, Class *Mammalia* and the Order *Cetacea*. Humans then, belong to the same phylum and class as whales, dolphins and porpoises. Within the Order *Cetacea* (pronounced "seh tay shah") there are some 92 known species. One of these is the world's largest creature, the species *Musculus*, commonly known as the Blue Whale. Scientists estimate the adult Blue Whale to measure some 32 metres in length and to weigh about 142.24 tonnes. You could drive a compact car through their aortas which indicates their immense size. They gain 300 pounds a day for the first six months of their lives!

The big whales — the blue, the fin and the humpback — exist by taking large gulps of shrimp-like creatures known as krill into their mouths. By pushing their tongues against the bony fibres they force out the water before they swallow, much in the same way as you might squirt water between your two front teeth.



Concerns for young Canadians

Cetaceans have always been hunted for their meat and for the blubber that fatty layer around their bodies that keeps them warm in the cold waters of the sea. Sailors strip the blubber from a whale carcass, and boil it in large pots that render the fat into oil. Naturally the larger the whale, the more oil that can be obtained from it, and that is why so few of the great whales exist today. Within a few short years at the turn of the century, for example, the blue whale population was reduced so severely that most experts estimate fewer than 1,200 survive today.

Greenpeace knew that a body called The International Whaling Commission had made attempts to limit the number of whales slaughtered every year. And it knew that Canada and the United States protected all whales and dolphins within their territorial waters. At the junction of the Saguenay and St. Lawrence Rivers, for example, more species of whales congregate each summer than at any other spot on the globe. And many people who live on our west coast have been fortunate enough to see the Grey Whales make their annual migration of 10,000 miles from the lagoons of Baja, California to The Bering Sea. Nonetheless, despite overwhelming evidence as to its harm, there are still countries insisting on overkilling whale populations, Japan and the U.S.S.R. accounting for over 85% of the total.

So Greenpeace feels it must confront the whalers directly on the open seas by placing protesters in tiny rubber boats directly over the whales in the line of fire of the harpoons. While more effective than their Amchitka ordeal, such tactics clearly cannot save the thousands of whales killed each year. Greenpeace knows a more permanent solution must be found.

The World Wildlife Fund tackles the whaling issue from another perspective. Founded in 1961, the WWF is an international network of 27 organizations whose primary objective is to collect and manage funds to support scientific research, and action projects that have a measurable scientific benefit.

In the words of Executive Director of the WWF of Canada, Monty Hummell, "We find out information about species and inject that information into the political arena. Unlike Greenpeace, for us, political action is a spinoff of our primary role of funding research."

In contrast to Greenpeace, the WWF also prefers persuasion to confrontation. Both groups, interestingly enough, have respect for the other's stance towards ecological matters, but the WWF

feels more advantage can be gained for the whales through lobbying and educational projects than through strategies that often polarize the participants in an issue.

Between 1961 and 1979, the WWF has channelled over \$35,000,000 into more than 2,000 projects which have saved animals from extinction. Conservation of habitats is also an essential part of WWF activities: it has helped fund 260 national parks and other protected areas on five continents. These parks cover an area of 1,300,000 square kilometres, an area equal to twice the size of Texas, or the combined land mass of France, Italy, West Germany and Great Britain.

The World Wildlife Fund has embarked on an ambitious campaign known as *Save the Seas*, now entering its fourth year. Of the 52 marine research projects (costing more than \$1,000,000) incorporated in the campaign, 32 deal specifically with whales. They feel the situation is that important, that urgent.

As with Greenpeace, the WWF realizes that its projects lose much impact if people are not aware of them. Therefore, the WWF works not only with politicians and bureaucrats, but is also co-operating with the Scout Movement, and other youth groups around the world devoted to environmental studies. For instance, there are hundreds of Wildlife Clubs in Kenya, India and other developing nations, and in Switzerland more than 10% of all teachers belong to the WWF.

The Canadian chapter of the WWF works closely with the international organization, but has the freedom to raise funds for conservation issues unique to Canada. Because whales are found in many places, each of the 27 member organizations (including Canada) lobbies its own government to push the whaling nations to at least a ten-year moratorium on whaling, while acting as a single body at the annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission to ask again for a moratorium.

Whale conservation has been the number one priority of the WWF since its inception. This year more than ever it is intensifying its *Save the Seas* campaign. By trying to establish more accurate descriptions of endangered species, WWF hopes to provide one more tool for saving the whales.

Next year, the Canadian WWF will be working with its American counterpart in a co-operative project to study as completely as possible the lifestyle and population of the Grey Whale, the first whale species to be protected by law, and one whose numbers even today

represent but a fraction of the original.

Why are these two organizations so concerned about whales? Why not let them be killed for shoe polish, lipstick and car wax? Well, in the Antarctic we're already seeing what can happen when man interferes severely with the food chain by eliminating such an important creature as the whale.

Because there are now so few Antarctic whales, and because the whales used to eat so much krill (often 1000 pounds at a gulp), there has been an explosion in the penguin population, a drastic change in the oxygen level in the water, and a complete upset in the pattern of fish stock movements.

Perhaps more disturbing is the possibility the Japanese and Russians may abandon whaling (because there are not enough whales left to make the hunt economical) to begin a harvest of the krill now so abundant in the southern oceans.

As Patrick Moore says, "Harvesting krill is an invidious threat — it threatens to punch a gaping hole in the ocean's food cycle. Not content with killing most of the animals at one end of the food chain, the whales, the whalers are now thinking of eliminating the other end of the food chain, the krill. Where will it stop? When will they ever learn?"

Indeed, when will they ever learn? When will we all?

Greg Galenby is a Toronto writer and editor of "Whale Sound" published by Douglas & MacIntyre, Vancouver.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

The World Wildlife Fund and Greenpeace have active programs involving students of all ages. For information regarding school kits, posters and information about whales, contact:

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