

# Chronicles of Ecoimperialism: Real Whales, Real People

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Longtime activist for indigenous rights - "especially against racists, fascists and imperialists."

Evil is no faceless stranger

Living in a distant neighborhood.

Evil has a wholesome hometown face

With merry eyes and an open smile.

Evil walks among us, wearing a mask

Which looks like all our faces...

from "The Book of Counted Sorrows" in Friendly Fascists: The New Face of Power in America by  
Bertram Gross

In 1995, the Makah, whose reservation is on Washington's Olympic Peninsula, outlined their plan of reviving a culturally significant practice in their community to the US Attorney, the FBI, the US Coast Guard, the US Marshal's Service, the National Fisheries Marine Service, the National Park Service, the Washington State Patrol and the Clallam County Sheriff. That practice was hunting whales, which the Makah's 1855 treaty with the US government guarantees their right to pursue. They also sought and received an aboriginal subsistence whaling permit from the International Whaling Commission (IWC) in October 1997 with US support. Although Greenpeace and the World Wildlife Fund - what you might call the first order "save the whales" folks - did not object, the response from the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society was swift and furious. They had successfully sought the aid of US Representative Jack Metcalf (R-Washington) to push a House Resolution withdrawing US support for an earlier Makah petition to the IWC, and faced with the Makah's ongoing plans, sought an injunction against the hunt as recently as September which was denied by a Tacoma judge. Its most vocal opponent has been Captain Paul Watson who is conducting a press and action campaign including ships on standby to interfere with the hunt, a decommissioned Norwegian sub playing whale alarm songs to warn off targeted whales, and a \$2000 reward for the hunt's starting time and location.

He claims to have been led to these actions by a vision engendered in a Native American setting. But in the course of fighting the Makah's self-limited hunt of four whales a year, Sea Shepherd has made some startling alliances. Dark Night field notes asked James Michael Craven who has been following the arguments swirling around the proposed hunt to speak to the hidden cultural and economic imperialism, environmental and spiritual arrogance, and "strange bedfellow" unions that underlie Watson's "Where is the Whales' Manifesto?"<sup>1</sup> We present Watson's argument and Craven's responses point by point:

- **Watson:** It is ironic and sad, yet appropriate, that I find myself leading the fight to oppose plans by the Makah Tribal Council to slaughter four Eastern Pacific gray whales in the waters of Washington state. A few weeks ago in Seattle, a sympathizer for the Makah's whaling initiative,

demanding to know why I cared so much about four whales, yelled at me "Where were you when they were shooting Indians at Wounded Knee!?" "I was there," I answered.<sup>2</sup>

- **Craven:** When I first read this, I could smell it coming: "Me a racist? Some of my best friends are Indians..." But it goes further than that. Let's assume he was indeed at Wounded Knee, that he did do all he claims and that he is proud of his contributions there. And did Watson, while he was supposedly at Wounded Knee, tell the Lakota that defending treaty rights, preserving sacred lands and survival of sacred culture, exactly what the Makah are fighting for, were insignificant imperatives to be summarily dismissed in favor of his pet self-professed missions if they conflicted with them?

Far from being allied with the interests of the people at Wounded Knee, Watson, in a recent interview with M.J. Milloy for Montreal's Hour Magazine, denied his ugly, credibility-damaging real alliance with open neo-fascists and racists dedicated to exactly what the warriors of Wounded Knee were fighting against. Asked about the neo-Nazi, skinhead and racist connections of his close supporter Willis Carto and the anti-treaty rights, anti-Indian and racist record of his supporter Jack Metcalf, Watson claimed ignorance, saying: "I haven't seen any evidence that he's anti-Indian at all .... You have to agree to disagree on certain things and take your support where you can get it."<sup>3</sup>

Let's deconstruct this. For the moment, let's assume this statement is true (it isn't) - that he only found out about his staunchest supporters during this interview. Talk about "long on arrogance and venom"; he is effectively saying that we have to "agree to disagree on certain things" which he later characterizes as "lesser issues," presumably "lesser" than saving a few gray whales. But these lesser things his allies are for are antisemitism, Holocaust denial, racism, sexism, homophobia, fascism, the KKK, anti-minority violence, genocide, and neo-nazism. He seems to have no notion here that in "taking support where you can," you tacitly, if not explicitly, support what your supporters support. Of course, he also has a poor notion of the Makah "taking support where they can."

But there is a difference between the Makah and Watson in where and on what basis they draw their support. Where Watson denies and has never publicly refuted his supporters' ugly "venom", the Makah have never supported wholesale whaling by the whaling superpowers, who may indeed be only be supporting in hopes of a "slippery slope" leading to the restoration of wholesale whaling Watson often threatens. This is the worst kind of narcissism and arrogance: only my cause and my little market niche matter - "the enemy of my enemy is my friend." But since Watson repeatedly points to the Makah's funding sources (never endorsed or solicited by the Makah), his own organizational connections and funding sources are fair game - especially since they demonstrate his proclivity for lying and embellishment.

But alas, Watson's feigned surprise at the organizational affiliations and proclivities of his main supporters Metcalf and Carto - is simply and provably not true. According to the Anti-Racist Emergency Action Network, Representative Jack Metcalf is well-known throughout Washington State as the second most influential long-time anti-Indian and anti-tribal activist. Metcalf is one of the founders of S/SPAWN which later became the United Property Owners of Washington and is linked to the Washington Property Rights Network and the Wise Use Movement, who "are further

organizationally and actively connected with the Citizens Equal Rights Alliance, a national anti-treaty rights organization. Activists recorded Metcalf opposing South Africa's apartheid regime in the Washington State Legislature in Olympia making "staggeringly racist comments about Africans being genetically incapable of governing themselves... in open committee meetings."

Further, Watson portrays his anti-whaling as an integral part of an overall environmentalism; yet the Sierra Club ranks Metcalf among the lowest in environmental legislation. He voted against bills for logging restrictions and clean air and water (presumably Watson doesn't care if the whales die of water pollution), and for bills weakening the Environmental Protection Agency. In the very interview in which he feigned ignorance of Metcalf's anti-Indian racism, Watson was confronted with the connections between Carto and Metcalf, and said he was not surprised: "Metcalf is floating on the edge of the extreme patriot right." Watson can't keep track of his lies. What exactly does he think the "extreme patriot right" is about if not racism, especially against Indians?<sup>4</sup>

Both Watson and Metcalf have been featured and praised in Willis Carto's publication "The Spotlight." Anyone who wants to find out what Carto is need only type any of these terms into any search engine: Willis Carto, The Institute for Historical Review, the Liberty Lobby, Aryan Nations, Holocaust denial, neo-Nazis, racist skinheads, KKK. Or you can consult the Simon Wiesenthal Center which has an extensive file on Carto as America's leading antisemite and Holocaust denier. This begs the question: What possible support could Metcalf and Carto give the "just cause" of saving whales that could ever justify support from and for open fascists, antisemites, and racists of their ilk?

It should be very clear who is long on arrogance, venom and very unrighteous indignation and short on truth and facts. It is not the Makah - it is this very selective "environmentalist" and savior of the whales. It should be noted that these forces allied with Metcalf and Carto are also avid gun nuts who love to kill and mount all sorts of animals; Watson's concern for life and the environment apparently stops at that which doesn't feed his trough directly.

Watson simply and summarily arrogates to himself the right to define and declare what cultures and practices are worth preserving, what treaties are worth respecting and defending, what Faustian bargains with the forces of evil are defensible and yes, even what forms of life are worth any sacrifice to protect. Apparently Indians are not on Watson's "close-to-extinction" list.

- **Watson:** I received my life's mission to protect the great whales while serving as a medic for the American Indian Movement (AIM) at Wounded Knee, South Dakota, in 1973. I was holding the other end of the stretcher when a US Marshall's bullet struck down medic Rocky Madrid as we were running through a hail of lead. I assisted Leonard Crow Dog in removing the bullet. I was made a warrior brother to the Oglala Lakota Nation and was given the name Gray Wolf Clearwater. In the sweat lodge ceremony, I had a vision, a dream wherein an arrow struck a buffalo. The arrow had a long string attached to it. The buffalo asked for my help and I broke the string and chased the hunter away. Wallace Black Elk interpreted my dream. "Your mission is to help the buffalo of the sea - the whales," he said. "It will not be easy."

Two years later, in a high-speed zodiac, Bob Hunter and I became the first people to place our bodies between a whale and a harpoon. We were confronting the Russian whaling fleet sixty miles off the coast of Northern California in the first Greenpeace whale campaign. Never did I dream that more than twenty years later I would be returning home to defend the whales once again in American waters, this time from Americans.

- **Craven:** By his account, it would appear that Paul Watson played a major role (enough to be "named") in a major action. Why then does Peter Matthiessen's *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse*, the definitive account of Wounded Knee and the FBI's war on the American Indian Movement, never mention Watson or this incident? Why would this Wounded Knee "hero" be opposed by real Wounded Knee veterans in demonstrations against Watson and his organization? What prompted him to go to Wounded Knee, if he did, in the first place? Did he have another vision of his destiny to become a "white savior" for the poor ignorant Indians under siege?

At Wounded Knee, there were central players, critical support players, peripheral support players, peripherals and wannabes. It is quite easy and understandable these days to find people who were "at" Wounded Knee sometime, perhaps not even the relevant and dangerous times, who now find themselves undergoing "The older I get, the better I used to be" syndrome. But Watson's past documented misrepresentations and name-dropping are typically far more calculating and opportunistic. For example, Watson has also claimed to have been a central figure supporting AIM and Leonard Peltier. Yet according to Arthur J. Miller, deeply involved in the Leonard Peltier case for the past 19 years, coordinator of the Northwest Leonard Peltier Support Network (NWLPSN) and someone who worked in the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee Office back in the 1980s, he has never seen one reference to Watson or one thing connecting Watson with Leonard Peltier. In fact, AIM Wounded Knee veterans (the real ones) and NWLPSN picketed his big show meeting in Seattle.<sup>5</sup>

There was a Clearwater at Wounded Knee - a Cherokee named Frank Clearwater who was killed by a stray bullet and later slandered by the FBI as being "a white man, dishonorably discharged from the Army, who later fraudulently re-enlisted." Of course, Leonard Crow Dog was at Wounded Knee (who once denounced the martyred Anna Mae Aquash as a police spy) and of course Wallace Black Elk as there. But there is no record of the heroic contributions of Paul Watson or this special white savior "named" Gray Wolf Clearwater.<sup>6</sup> And named by whom? When has Watson ever publicly used or signed this name Gray Wolf Clearwater prior to his recent article denouncing the Makah?

But far more disturbing than any apparent embellishment or even outright lies about past heroics at Wounded Knee is his cynical use of the memories and sacrifices of Wounded Knee to promote exactly the opposite of, and thus desecrate, what Wounded Knee was all about. Wounded Knee was about defending Sovereignty against overwhelming odds and against lies and vilification. Wounded Knee was about defending sacred land, sacred ways and sacred birthrights. Wounded Knee was about defending and trying to preserve what is left of the Lakota People against genocidal onslaught. Wounded Knee was about defending the Lakota nation against the very kinds of racist, fascist and anti-Treaty forces whom Watson allies himself with without the slightest shame. Wounded Knee was about preserving and teaching traditional ways to the young so that

they could grow up to preserve and protect the Lakota nation. Wounded Knee was about defending and instilling Indian pride and commitment to counter the ugly effects of drugs, alcohol and the intrigues and divide-and-rule machinations of the non-Indian - and sell-out Indian - forces and interests.

Wounded Knee was about exactly what the Makah intend with the whale hunt. Wounded Knee, like the Makah whale hunt, was about defending treaty rights, defending what land is left and defending sovereignty paid for with blood and sacrifice. Of the over 800 US treaties and over 400 ratified treaties between the US Government and the Indian Nations, every single ratified treaty has been broken and/or seriously abridged by the US government while being respected by the Indians who signed them. This is despite the imperative of Article VI, Section 2 of the US Constitution which reads that Treaties are: "the supreme law of the land, and the judges in every State shall be bound thereby, anything in the Constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding."<sup>7</sup> History has taught us very clearly that treaties not continually used and defended are lost forever - and with them, the nations who failed to exercise and defend their treaty rights. Further, any anti-whaling treaty the US government signs cannot speak for, bind or contravene another treaty signed with the Makah without the consent and participation of the Makah as this would render treaty-making meaningless, violate the Common Law of Nations and violate Makah sovereignty. The US government doesn't make treaties with American citizens and further, Indians weren't even recognized as American citizens until 1924, when they were summarily declared US citizens without the participation or acceptance of the Indians themselves.

The 1855 Treaty between the Makah and the US Government is a clear unconditional promise to secure to the Makah the right to engage in whaling. It has been upheld by US federal courts and the US Supreme Court and it is inviolable only as long as it is defended. Further, it is all the more important for the Makah to defend this Treaty, after voluntarily agreeing to suspend whaling for over 70 years while gray whales were endangered, because they are dealing with the US government. This is a government that was one of the handful of nations refusing to sign the UN Convention on Genocide<sup>8</sup> for over 40 years, the same government that in common with only a handful of other nations tried to block and refused to endorse the formation of a World Court to deal with Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity.

Interestingly, what Watson calls the "extreme patriot right," his supporters, are really into "sovereignty" when it comes to demanding that the US not sign any treaties on genocide that violate US "sovereignty." So according to their arguments, if genocide is an "American Thing," then the US is immune from any international conventions, treaties, laws or sanctions. Yet they are the first to scream about violations of international "human rights" law and call for unilateral sanctions against Cuba, China and other countries, without recourse to any international law or courts. They even call themselves "sovereignists"; but when it comes to Indian treaties or any treaties they don't like, then treaties mean nothing. The Makah, like other Indian nations, are far closer to total extinction than the gray whales. People close to extinction do not need the permission or acceptance of Watson, Carto, Metcalf or anyone. This is like asking a Jew to accept the "assurances" of the Nazis.

Watson makes reference to his involvement in the first Greenpeace action against whaling but

makes no mention of why he's no longer in Greenpeace or, if he's so determined to stop whaling, why he isn't supporting Greenpeace's efforts. The reason: in Greenpeace, he could no longer be a big frog in a small pond. According to the Greenpeace activists who knew and worked with him, he left or was expelled (there are differing versions) because "Captain" Watson's megalomania, narcissism, reckless disregard for others, showboating and instability compromised their organizational goals, credibility and missions.

- **Watson:** Native Americans have been on board Sea Shepherd's ships on many campaigns, including our 1991 boarding and seizure of the replica Santa Maria in Puerto Rico, pre-empting the 500th anniversary celebration of the Columbus voyage. We secured a formal apology from the Spanish government for the conquest and exploitation of native Americans.
- **Craven:** What does exploiting seizing a replica of the Santa Maria or getting an apology for "the exploitation of Native Americans" mean when his present associations deep-pocket him into the pants of the far right, people who are carrying out the continued genocide of native Americans. Let me translate: "I have openly stated that I don't give a damn about the hidden agendas of my supporters as long as they profess to be anti-whaling, but I have a problem in that many of the anti-whaling people who are eco-minded and liberal on a wide range of other issues, the kind of people my Carto and Metcalf type supporters hate, would not care to look anti-Indian. So, to keep the donations coming in, and stay Big Frog in this little pond, I'll do my 'Some of my best friends are Indians,' my 'I was there at Wounded Knee' and my 'Do you know what else I've done for Indians, ...oops, make that Native Americans' routine.
- **Watson:** This is not an issue of race or culture. It's an issue of global whale conservation. In the Makah Manifesto, Whaling Commissioner Johnson attempts to assure the Seattle Times' readers that it is no such thing. It's just four whales.<sup>9</sup> Commissioner Johnson avers that the Sierra Club, despite the urgings of "animal-rights activists...who are trying to get them to come out against our whaling" has "refused to join the attack" because it doesn't "see this as a conservation issue."

In fact, the Makah approached the Sierra Club in a bid to secure their support for the hunt. The Club appointed a 12-person task force to look into the issue. The task force did so, concluded that the hunt was environmentally unsound, and voted 11-1 to condemn it. The dissenting vote came from the chair, an Alaskan Eskimo. Citing her cultural heritage of whaling, she overruled the vote and dissolved the task force. As a result, the Sierra Club has opted to take no position on the hunt. Sea Shepherd is not investing this time and expense, committing our entire fleet, to oppose a tribal whale hunt of four or five whales. We know our opposition is headquartered in Tokyo and Oslo. Last year, at the Monaco meeting of the International Whaling Commission, Tadaio Nakamura, representing the Japanese delegation, asked "What is the difference between cultural necessity for the Makah and cultural necessity for the Japanese?"

- **Craven:** The difference between "cultural necessity" for the Japanese versus "cultural necessity" for the Makah lies in the very arena that Watson sometimes selectively alludes to: international law, the common law of nations and the Vienna Convention. The Japanese Government can and did sign the International Convention on Whaling; the US Government could and did sign on

behalf of Americans in the same fashion as the Japanese Government signed on behalf of Japanese citizens; but the US Government cannot, as a matter of international law and the US Constitution itself (Article VI Sec 2) abrogate the 1855 Treaty with the Makah nor can the US government sign any treaty on behalf of the Makah without Makah consent that would effectively abrogate the 1855 Treaty.

Curiously, Watson can ignore the Sierra Club when it denounced Metcalf's poor Congressional voting record on environmental issues but he's happy to quote them here. And Sea Shepherd is really devoting "their entire fleet" (giving a whole new meaning to the term "fleet") to their market niche, the cause on which they raise donations to pay for the infrastructure of Watson's little empire, the cause that allows them to draw money equally from neo-fascists and liberal-minded animal rights activists alike. This is a golden opportunity for Watson and his group of self-styled "saviors to carve out market share; there are only so many dollars for the cause and only so many publicity-generating stories to go around.

- **Watson:** If cultural necessity becomes a reason for whaling, the slaughter will be unrelenting. The Makah will be killing the grays for the benefit of the Japanese. Whether or not the meat is sold to Japan directly, the Japanese whaling industry will profit enormously because the Makah will be turning the key to overturning the global moratorium on whaling. Commissioner Johnson can say that it isn't so, but it is indeed the case that if the Makah succeed in changing the basis for aboriginal whaling to a cultural need, as opposed to a subsistence need, the Japanese, Icelanders, Norwegians, and many others will claim the same right.
- **Craven:** This is the elementary fallacy of the slippery slope, in the absence of any concrete past and present evidence that one action is designed to and will inevitably lead to another. In any case, if the International Whaling Commission wants to negotiate with the Makah directly as a sovereign nation to join in the international moratorium, they can. But they cannot negotiate anything with the US government that abrogates a pre-existing treaty with a sovereign nation, such as the Makah's, on behalf of and without that nation's participation.

Further, the Makah have bent over backward to give assurances that they will abide by US Federal Law - assurances they did not need to give under the 1855 Treaty - that they will not engage in commerce in whale meat and will only sell products made out of whale bone by Makah carvers. This is also a matter of Makah tribal law. The whale meat will be distributed to the 1800 tribal members in the ancient Makah way, apportioning whale meat and parts according to their culturally-based division of whaling labor, and "any meat remaining will be stored in frozen meat lockers for later distribution."<sup>10</sup> Any attempts to get around federal law and Makah tribal law would be easy enough to detect. Further, the Makah being called liars by the likes of Paul Watson, given his documented lying, is like being called an abuser of women by Ted Bundy.

- **Watson:** The United States has been a great whale conservation nation for three decades. We are preparing to throw that away in order that a few Makah whalers may "traditionally" blast a whale from the water with .50-caliber assault rifles. Meanwhile, in Tokyo, the recruitment of the United States into the ranks of the whale-killing nations will be noted in the boardrooms of the Japanese whaling industry with a quiet satisfaction. If the Makah kill those whales this October, the harpoon

cannons of the North Atlantic, North Pacific, and Antarctica will be pouring the blood of thousands of whales into the sea.

- **Craven:** The Whaling superpowers may have their own agenda, and indeed they may be hoping for the slippery slope Watson threatens, but that is not the Makah's problem. Any breach of the international moratorium would be on the heads of those who committed the breach and would presumably be dealt with by the others signers of the IWC. The Chukotchi, Russian aboriginals, have been harvesting about 165 gray whales per year for the last 30 to 40 years and there has not been any consequent wholesale breach of the international moratorium. The need for the moratorium arose from the whaling superpowers' reckless high-tech overharvesting of whales in the first place, not from the harvesting of whales by any Indian nations. This is similar to how the very countries that have produced most of the world's pollution in industrializing and getting rich, now tell the poor countries that had little if anything to do with the present situation to stay poor and "think green" in order to prevent their becoming self-sufficient or eventually growing into competition.

The Makah have proposed and promised a detailed whale management plan, far more detailed and conservation-minded than anything proposed by the whaling superpowers.<sup>11</sup> It contains:

1. strict reporting requirements
  2. a limit to take only migrating as opposed to resident whales
  3. a prohibition against taking suckling calves or females accompanied by calves
  4. a prohibition on the sale of whale meat or products except in traditional native handicrafts
  5. US National Marine Fisheries Service monitoring of the hunt
  6. provisions for the prosecution and punishment of any Tribal whalers who violate any Tribal regulations or terms of the memorandum of understanding with the National Marine Fisheries Service
- **Watson:** While we may debate that point (as, either way, it constitutes a conclusion based on an event which has not yet occurred), Commissioner Johnson's manifesto was replete with more than a few outright lies, two of the largest ones coming in the same sentence: "[Sea Shepherd] threatened to sink our boats if we whaled without [International Whaling Commission] sanction, smug in the assumption that we would never get approval from the IWC." Contrary to much popular opinion, feverish rumor, and inaccurate reporting (energetically disseminated by the Makah), we have never threatened to sink the Makah's boats, and the Makah never got approval from the IWC for their whale hunt. That second widespread misperception is the result of an energetic "spin" effort by the US delegation following the 1997 IWC meeting. This has misled many people, but has not changed the fact that the Makah did not get specific permission to hunt whales from the international body that is the ultimate permitting authority on whale hunting. Nor does it alter the fact that the clause requiring a recognized subsistence need in order to receive an aboriginal exemption to the ban was included in the IWC resolution addressing the issue for the express purpose of clarifying the point that the Makah have no such authorization and are therefore



barred from a hunt as a matter of international law.

- **Craven:** Simply more lies. The US government did in fact assist the Makah representation of their case to the IWC, but not out of any love for the Makah. The US government clearly understood the 1855 Treaty and were clear that a challenge to their signing on to the international moratorium on whaling without the consent and on behalf of the Makah, thus abrogating the 1855 Treaty could open up a whole can of worms, possibly more very threatening sovereignty cases in the US Courts. So they took the path of least resistance and cut their losses.

Further the exemption clause for aboriginal subsistence whaling ("whaling for purposes of local aboriginal consumption carried out by or on behalf of aboriginal, indigenous or native peoples who share strong community, familial, social and cultural ties related to a continuing traditional dependence on whaling and the use of whales") fits the Makah exactly and was passed by the IWC in 1981 long before this hunt; this is another outright lie by Watson.

But the bottom line is that if the Makah hunt were indeed not "specifically" authorized by the IWC, why would US government forces be deployed to oversee and facilitate it rather than stop it? Watson is so enamored with his rhetoric and so used to playing fast and loose with facts that this elementary logic escapes him. When the US Air Force vacated their facilities in Neah Bay, thus depriving the Makah of close to half their stable revenues, rather than bringing in gambling casinos or whatever, the Makah sought self-sufficiency by developing local industries (like handicrafts) that allow them to survive without the forms of government support and gambling activities that Watson's racist supporters are so fond of denouncing.<sup>12</sup>

- **Watson:** Whaling Commissioner Johnson says "We have no plans to sell whale meat in the future. Though it may be difficult for some people to accept, we are acting out of purely cultural motives." There's a reason why the Seattle Times' readers should find this difficult to accept: Because the Makah have previously affirmed that the hunt has a financial motivation, and that they have every intention of selling whale meat in the future. On May 25, 1995, three weeks after the Makah Tribal Council first cited its need to kill whales for purposes of spiritual and cultural revival, Seattle Times columnist Don Hannula related a conversation with Makah fisheries manager Dave Sones in which Sones said "the tribe hopes in the future to do some commercial whaling. There are markets overseas for the meat and oil." Hannula further reported that Sones told him "the value of a Gray whale is estimated at a half-million dollars." Statements like these - which abruptly ceased shortly after the Makah retained the services of the public relations firm of Miller & Associates to handle the whaling issue - make a dramatic contrast to Mr. Johnson's latter-day claims of cultural purity.
- **Craven:** First, Mr. Sones is not the whole Makah People or even the whole Tribal Council. Second, some elements in the Tribe may indeed hope to do commercial whaling in the future if whale stocks continue, if the international moratorium is lifted, if Makah tribal law changes to reflect new imperatives for survival and/or if current federal funding cutbacks against Indian nations (vigorously advocated by Watson's neo-fascist supporters) continue such that Makah survival mandates commercial whaling. But for now, the Makah Tribal Council have given their word as to their intentions and their word should not be questioned by the likes of Watson.

- **Watson:** There is another statement the Makah Tribal Council would like everyone to forget: In 1991, in pressing the National Marine Fisheries Service for the removal of the gray whale from the Endangered Species List, the Makah's lobby group asserted that this move was "aimed not at allowing the hunting of gray whales but so that research money can be shifted to other species in need of monitoring, such as salmon or marine birds."
- **Craven:** In 1993 whale specialists determined that the gray whale population exceeded the numbers existing before industrial whaling on this species began. In 1994 the gray whale was removed from the endangered species list. The most recent estimate in 1996 was 22,263 whales with an annual growth rate of 2.5 percent per year.<sup>13</sup> Despite the naked deception of Watson's statement that "This is a community that is very well off. I've not seen any poverty in their community," resources are scarce there and must be allocated among many uses. The Makah assessment was correct and anticipated the IWC decision by three years.
- **Watson:** "It is costing our tribe an enormous amount of money to carry on the whale hunting program," says Commissioner Johnson. They're not alone. Clallam County officials are seeking \$150,000 in federal funds to underwrite estimated policing costs of the hunt. They have already received \$10,000 from the Justice Department. Over \$200,000 in federal funding has gone to support the Makah's whale hunt lobbying efforts, including the cost of food and travel to France, New Zealand, Oman, and Alaska by tribal members. The whale hunt has already paid off handsomely for the Makah Tribal Council, at taxpayers' expense. In the face of this jackpot, Commissioner Johnson has the gall to say "Sea Shepherd is actually in the commercial whaling business and we're their best ticket."
- **Craven:** Actually the policing costs of the whale hunts, exacerbated by Watson's provocations, are minor compared with the potential costs of litigation and legal decisions that would go against the US government if it presumed away Makah sovereignty by behaving as if its signature on the international moratorium binds the Makah. The US government understands this very well and is thinking strategically - especially in the context of new moves to sever funding ties with the Tribes coupled with an explicit treaty (not just a memorandum) guaranteeing Makah whaling rights. Further, the 1981 Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling (ASW) exemption fits the Makah like a glove. The songs, dances, rituals, dress, language, stories, humor, social structure, clans and other aspects of the Makah - even genetics to some extent - are all built around over 2000 years of whaling.<sup>14</sup>

And if the Makah hunt was not "specifically" authorized by the IWC and the ASW exemption, why is the US government spending funds to assist the hunt? Does that mean that the US government is also violating the international moratorium on whale hunting? Watson is so used to telling contradictory stories in various protected venues or with what he takes to be compliant interviewers that he has never learned elementary logic or how to keep his stories straight, even in the same article.

- **Watson:** And while US taxpayers, the vast majority of whom overwhelmingly abhor the killing of whales, are forced to pick up the tab for the Makah's whale hunt, Whaling Commissioner Johnson

proudly asserts that the majority of the tribe backs the plans of the Makah Tribal Council and Makah Whaling Commission. He doesn't say how these groups go about securing their backing. Seven Makah tribal elders have gone on record in opposition to the whaling scheme. They have been called "traitors" by the MTC and have been subjected to threats, intimidation, and firings. "It's grandmothers fighting this fight against them," tribal elder Dottie Chamblin says of the MTC. "The tribal council issued a memo that nobody was to talk to the newspaper.... They wanted to banish those of us who oppose whaling from the reservation. This fear of banishment really stopped a lot of people from helping us."

- **Craven:** First of all, what is the authority for the statement that the majority of Americans "abhor" whaling? What surveys have been done on this question and what methodologies were employed? Here we see the inconsistent anthropomorphism of some self-declared "animal rights" activists, whereby some life is too dear to humans to eat and some not. Do they also "abhor" killing cattle, chicken, fish, or plants? Is Watson a vegetarian? Who is Watson to declare one life form and traditional source of food superior to another? These are the same "animal rights activists" whom Watson's "sportsman" buddies hate and use. They profess to know which animals are worthy versus unworthy to be "saved," which hunting is worthy versus unworthy of condemnation, which national sovereignty is worthy versus unworthy (Indian) of respect.

For Watson, it all comes down to profit in the end: which groups can be most easily attacked, vilified, marginalized or slandered at the minimum cost with minimum opposition while yielding the maximum possible revenues and profits from donations, publicity, free labor and spin-off customers for the "extreme whale watching" business.<sup>15</sup> It also comes down to market saturation, staying Big Frog.

The Makah who oppose the hunt are a handful out of the 1,800 nation members. Watson has only been able to come up with one elder and a few others to use in his propaganda.<sup>16</sup> As for threats, the Makah suffer daily death threats from anonymous would-be whale protectors, such as the threat to take two Makah lives for each whale life, after the pattern of Nazi retributive decimation in occupied territories, the execution of thirty for every Nazi killed.<sup>17</sup> These people who love selected animals for selected reasons but don't count human beings on the verge of extinction as life "worthy of life and survival" remind me of the Nazi concept of human "life unworthy of life."

Under siege by the likes of Watson who has sworn to disrupt the hunt, who has slandered the Makah and revealed himself to be capable of any lie or publicity stunt for his self-professed mission, most Makah will understandably not appreciate tribal members who give him aid and comfort by openly supporting him. They are like those who collaborated during Nazi occupations because they had problems with the policies of their established governments (the enemy of my enemy is my friend). But there are no documented examples of direct reprisals against the few Makah who do oppose the hunt, some for tactical reasons and some out of fear of anti-Makah repercussions rather than opposition to whaling per se. Their voices have been heard. I personally feel no Makah should ally himself or herself with Watson out of opposition to whaling which is a separate point. They would be making themselves no different from the liberals who ally with neo-nazis on the ground that "saving the whales" is a cause transcending every other. Actually, the neo-nazis themselves don't give a damn about whales and other animals; this is just cover for

drawing support from diverse single-cause groups for their own hidden and very ugly agenda.

- **Watson:** Makah tribal officials are very good at calling us liars and propagandists, and have been doing so steadily for the last three years. They are equally proficient at playing the race card. A sympathetic national media (including this newspaper and the Sunday New York Times Magazine) has been saturated with the reverse racism inherent in the "noble native" take on the hunt. They have effectively created an atmosphere in which concern for the welfare of whales is now perceived as a de facto attack on native rights and the cultural heritage of an oppressed minority.
- **Craven:** There is no race card being played except by Watson and his neo-fascist supporters. The Makah are playing the treaty card and the US Constitution card, otherwise known as Article VI Sec. 2. Carto and Metcalf's anti-Indian and anti-treaty stance goes far back and shows no evidence of any concern for whales or whaling until very recently. They are pro-white sportsmen and pro-white landowner advocates from way back. Their organizational backgrounds, writings and speeches make it clear that what they are and that what they intend has nothing to do with whales.

For Metcalf, Carto and their ilk, this is about using the myopia and narcissism that result from the typical eurocentric paradigm of elevating a single issue to the point that nothing else seems connected or to matter in comparison. It is about the cynical manipulation of the forces they mobilize as shock troops and money sources to support the inflated issue. Their hidden agenda is ultimately to eliminate the very people they use. Watson knows well what they are about, and is willing to be used in this, unlike those single-issue anti-whaling activists who are unable to see how they are being used. But for the Makah, this is about race and the survival of Indian nations far closer to extinction than any whales.

- **Watson:** Where is this stepped-up campaign based on heavy-handed accusations of racism, political incorrectness and invocations of white guilt really coming from? The recent history of a situation Sea Shepherd has been involved in for some time north of the border offers a telling parallel. In 1985, the environmental movement had the barbaric Canadian seal hunt on the ropes and heading for extinction due to successful combined campaigns of direct action, media work, public education, letter writing, boycotts, and a European ban on the import of baby seal pelts. That year, the Canadian Department of External Affairs got an idea about how to blunt or divert international censure of the hunt. In contemplating "the manipulation of public attitudes," they determined that "defusing the basis for individual action/commitment" should have been the government's goal when international outrage over the hunt first began to build, but now it was necessary "to take dramatic counter-action that will dissipate the initial commitment. Such action could be based on contradictory emotional themes of interest to the same target publics, e.g., preservation of traditional indigenous cultures."<sup>18</sup>

It worked. The government PR machine cranked up, and the "traditional" Canadian seal hunt managed to survive the collapse of the much larger commercial hunt. Though reduced from 80 to 90% of what it had been before, the hunt was kept alive, and so was able to roar back to life ten years later as a government-subsidized commercial enterprise, larger than it had ever been.

The Canadian Department of External Affairs' confuse-and-conquer strategy was not new, but it is seldom recognized by the people who are duped by it. The Makah Tribal Council's PR consultants are clearly advising them that this is the strongest card they can play, but no amount of cultural agitprop can obscure the reality of what the Makah are planning to do. The near-desperation inherent in Commissioner Johnson's attempted defense of the indefensible is evident in this extraordinary paragraph near the end of the Makah Manifesto: "The photographs of gray whales surfacing to be petted by people are all taken in the calving lagoons of Baja California, and Mexico. This behavior is not exhibited by gray whales anywhere else, particularly by migrating whales passing through our waters."

- **Craven:** Here, Watson is simply engaging in Freudian projection. The forms of duplicity he mentions (manipulative public relations and statistics, theatrical agitprop, lies, Faustian bargains and alliances, divide-and-conquer tactics, equivocation, misrepresentation of counterpositions and their strength, hiding the true intentions of allies under noble banners) are the very ones that Watson and his neo-fascist allies deploy. He projects his methods and intent on others, assuming that everyone behaves as he does. It is true that in order to pimp for non-Indian sealing interests the Canadian government attempted to use and blunt environmentalists' criticisms and actions by using their "contradictory themes of interest" (supposedly pro-aboriginal rights and anti-sealing). That was the tactic of the Canadian government in the service of non-aboriginal sealing interests; the Canadian government did nothing in the service of First Nations peoples or First Nations rights per se.

But applying Watson-logic as demonstrated above, can we not say that Watson and his allies are using the "contradictory themes of interest" of the save-the-whales groups (anti-fascism and anti-whaling) to blunt their attacks against Watson's neo-fascist allies? Further, those who claim to favor preservation of aboriginal cultures and aboriginal rights as long as they can arbitrate which rights and cultural aspects are worthy of support really have no "contradictory themes of interest" that could be significantly used. When push comes to shove, they are as arrogant and anti-aboriginal as the ones out in the open.

- **Watson:** Setting aside the fact that Mr. Johnson, a former school teacher, evidently does not know that Baja California is part of Mexico, one must wonder exactly what point he is trying to make, and what he thinks "migrating" means. Does he not know that the whales being petted in Baja are the very same whales the Makah intend to blast into oblivion off the Olympic Peninsula? Does he believe they become different whales when they move from one place to the other? Does he think the failure of the whales to engage in the same behavior off the coast of Washington as they do off the coast of Mexico is a prerequisite for their execution? It is statements like these that cast doubt upon Mr. Johnson's assertions that "we Makahs know the whales, probably better than most people...we have an understanding of the relationship between people, the mammals of the sea and land."

This, of course, is another way of saying "we know better than you;" that the Makah are culturally superior and above the national and international laws that prevent other American citizens from sailing forth with heavy weaponry to put a few slugs into passing cetaceans out of nostalgia for the cultural traditions of our hearty whaling ancestors.

- **Craven:** Indeed what can be said of someone who says "We know better than you"? What can be said about Watson who says: "We believe in native sovereignty, but there's a bigger issue: the gray whale"?<sup>19</sup> But what Treaties have the gray whales signed? Here is Watson again declaring that only his conception of "worthy" animals, nations, peoples, treaties, cultures, needs, survival imperatives and sovereignty are to be protected, and assuming he is fit to do decide which is which.
- **Watson:** When the Makah hunted whales, they did not hunt out of a cultural or traditional impulse, they hunted in order to survive. This, and the arduous and dangerous nature of the hunt, was the entire grounding for the hunt's cultural context. Without that purpose, the hunt has no meaning. The need for the Makah to hunt whales has passed into history. What they contemplate now, as minutely described by Mr. Johnson, is an unreal, half-hearted, techno/traditional hybrid, further bastardized with military .50-caliber rifles and power boats (which commissioner Johnson neglected to mention), which are being used in order to eliminate insofar as possible the physical perils of what was once a nearly equal combat arising from a basic necessity.

From this primal equation arose the body of cultural traditions around the hunt. Without that equation, the hunt is an act of make-believe, an empty gesture toward a vanished past with only one component that will have a real, immediate meaning: The violent death of a living creature that has every right to be left alone.

- **Craven:** How would Watson and his friends like it if China were to tell the government of the United States: "We will tell you what practices and aspects of American culture are real and worthy of preservation. We will tell you what forms of trade and commerce you may engage in. We will tell you what traditions are legitimate and what traditions you may retain. We will tell you where and what to hunt and where and what to produce and how to distribute that produce. We will tell you what survival imperatives are acceptable and what are not."?

The hubris, duplicity, racism, manipulation, interests and agenda of Watson and his overt and covert allies are clear, vicious and serious. It is up to each person of conscience to analyze, clearly understand and resolutely oppose Watson and his ecoimperialist ilk whenever and wherever they surface or hide. In Bertolt Brecht's *The Resistable Rise of Arturo Ui*, the title character, speaking of Adolf Hitler, warns: "Let none of us exult too soon. The womb is fruitful from which this one crawled."

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#### Notes:

1. ProjectSeaWolf@seanet.com, or <http://www.seashepherd.org>
2. Wounded Knee: On February 28, 1973, members of the American Indian Movement occupied Wounded Knee on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, site of the 1890 US massacre of Lakota, demanding among other things, a review of the Treaty of 1868

between the Lakota and the US government. For 71 days, the occupiers underwent a military siege by the FBI, the US Marshal Service, the Bureau of Indian Affairs police and the advice and supplies of the US Army at a government cost of about seven million dollars.

3. M.J.Milloy, "Pilgrim's Progress," Hour Magazine, 10 Sep 1998, 12.
4. "Anti-Racist Emergency Action Alert," 28 Aug 1998. Senator Slade Gorton is the first.
5. "Town Hall Panel," Seattle, 30 June, 1998.
6. Anna Mae Pictou Aquash (Miqmaq), 1946-1976: a Wounded Knee veteran and American Indian Movement activist, considered a martyr to COINTELPRO instigated rumors that she was an FBI informant. Her murder, attributed alternately to FBI agents or AIM members who believed the rumors, is still unsolved. See *The Life and Death of Anna Mae Aquash* by Johanna Brand. Leonard Crow Dog enjoys prestige as one of the first spiritual advisors to AIM. An incident in which he expressed his distrust of her is recounted in Peter Matthiessen's *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse*, p. 222. Frank Clearwater is discussed on p.77.
7. Quoted in Ward Churchill, *Indians Are Us*, Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press, 1994, 18.
8. In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group as such: (a) killing members of the group; (b) causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) imposing measures to prevent births within the group; (e) forcibly transferring children of the group to another group. The US only signed in 1988 with the inclusion of the Helms, Lugar, Hatch Sovereignty Clause, causing other US allies to regard the US as not quite a full signatory. Article III of the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide 1948 reads that the following acts shall be punishable: (a) genocide, b) conspiracy to commit genocide, c) direct and public incitement to commit genocide, d) attempt to commit genocide, e) complicity in genocide.
9. "Makah Manifesto." Seattle Times Intelligencer. 23 Aug, 1998
10. "Makah Indian Tribe and Whaling: A Fact Sheet." The Makah Whaling Commission. 21 Jul 1998
11. "Makah Indian Tribe and Whaling: A Fact Sheet."
12. The International Whaling Commission let the US and Russia share a gray whale quota between the Makah and the Chukchi of the Far East in October 1997.

13. "Makah Indian Tribe and Whaling: A Fact Sheet."
14. Report of the ad hoc technical committee working group on development of management principles and guidelines for subsistence catches of whales by indigenous (aboriginal) peoples. International Whaling Commission C/33/14, 1981.
15. The quality of being "extreme" is characteristic of the macho ecowarrior image. Watson's piece was put on the Internet by project Sea Wolf/Arcturus Adventure Communications, which calls itself "The Source for Extreme Adventuresports Photojournalism." Watson's break with Greenpeace was characterized by his extreme positions and actions.
16. In 1995, a tribal referendum on whaling showed 85% in favor. "Makah Indian Tribe and Whaling: A Fact Sheet"
17. Paul Shukovsky, "Clash of Whalers...." The Seattle Post-Intelligencer. 8 Jan 1998
18. "Defence of the Fur Trade." Discussion paper. Canadian Department of External Affairs. May 1985
19. "Confronting the Sea Racists." An Anti-Racist Emergency Action Network Statement.