

On the Green Front by Rogelio A. Maduro

Green terrorist war against Norway

While the international media flocked to film the confrontation on the high seas, the truth was somehow blacked out.

Starting on July 1, two ecological terrorist groups, Greenpeace and Sea Shepherd, began simultaneous operations against Norway's whaling fleet that could have resulted in the deaths of dozens of Norwegians. While two Greenpeace ships launched assault boats against Norway's whaling ship *Senet*, Sea Shepherd's flagship, *Whales Forever*, set out to sink the rest of the Norwegian whaling fleet.

Fortunately for Norway's sailors, the Norwegian government deployed Coast Guard vessels to defend its whaling fleet and territorial waters. The final tally, so far, has been one Greenpeace ship and four assault boats captured, and more than a dozen Greenpeace activists arrested. Sea Shepherd's *Whales Forever* escaped after ramming Norway's Coast Guard vessel *Andenes* on July 6.

The Green assault succeeded in disrupting the whaling season; however, it could have been much worse. Greenpeace activists, using assault boats, succeeded in boarding the *Senet* repeatedly. According to Norwegian press accounts, the objective of the Greenpeace activists was to destroy the ship's cannon and remove its harpoon. When a harpoon is loaded into the cannon, its grenade is automatically armed, and the grenade contains over 10 kilograms of high explosives. Had the harpoon been removed, the Greenpeace activists would most likely have killed everyone on board the ship, including themselves. It was for this reason that the *Senet*'s crew grabbed the Greenpeace activists and threw them overboard, and then threatened them with knives as they attempted more assaults.

A well-informed observer noted that either the ecologists were extremely stupid, or they were sent in deliberately to be killed in action. A bloody shirt would definitely lay the basis for future fundraising by the group.

Sea Shepherd's assault was certainly meant to provoke violent incidents. In a press release distributed at the start of their cruise, Sea Shepherd announced that the destination of their ship was "the northern coast of Norway," and that they would have "a showdown with any whaling ship found to be in violation of the worldwide ban on commercial whaling."

At a press conference before their departure from a Dutch port, Lisa Distefano, the strategist of the terror campaign, told the press, "We have already sunk two Norwegian pirate whalers" and "we intend to sink more." She added "this isn't some namby-pamby banner-hanging Greenpeace protest. This is a whale war. I would be very nervous right now, if I were a Norwegian whaler or an underwriter of a Norwegian whaling ship."

Distefano contacted all Norwegian maritime insurance companies to warn them that all Norwegian-registered whaling ships are targets for Sea Shepherd. Sea Shepherd said that they also intended to attack whaling ships from the Danish Faeroe Islands and Iceland.

Distefano and her cohort Paul Watson were tried *in absentia* in Norway in May, for last year's attempt to sink the *Senet*. They were found guilty and face an outstanding arrest order.

On board the *Whales Forever*

there was a veritable circus. The ship had a crew of 20, representing 13 nationalities. In addition there were 20 journalists armed with cameras, and sophisticated satellite equipment that enabled the reporters to provide a "live feed" of the confrontation.

As *Whales Forever* was leaving port on July 1, Greenpeace activists deployed from the *MV Solo* assaulted the *Senet*. The assault was broken off by the intervention of the Norwegian Navy vessel *Volstad JR*, which sent inflatable boats to protect the whaling ship.

Less than a week later, the *Senet* was assaulted again by Greenpeace, this time by the *MV Sirius*. During this assault, the *Senet*'s crew threw two Greenpeace terrorists overboard. The Greenpeace commando teams, however, were able to cut loose a whale that had been harpooned by the Norwegian vessel.

While Greenpeace was busy assaulting the *Senet*, Sea Shepherd had entered Norway's territorial waters and was refusing requests by the Coast Guard to leave. As the Coast Guard vessel approached the *Whales Forever*, the Sea Shepherd ship made a hard turn to starboard and rammed the *Andenes* amidships. Incredibly enough, the international media rushed to claim that it was the *Andenes* that had rammed the Sea Shepherd vessel. Norwegian television footage taken from a helicopter demonstrated clearly this was a lie.

Claims that the *Whales Forever* had been attacked by commando groups, bombed, and fired at with cannon and machine-guns, were fabrications, according to Norwegian reporters. After ramming the *Andenes*, the *Whales Forever* left Norwegian waters and started to send SOS messages all over the world, claiming that the ship was sinking and that several of the crew had been injured.