

# Kid's KOrner

## United States, Japan quarrel over whaling quotas

WASHINGTON — A three-way war of words over Japan's whaling practices has erupted, involving the U.S. government, the Japanese government and whaling industry, and American conservationists.

In the middle of the watery battleground are sperm whales, 12-ton creatures valued especially for their oil, the finest known. Herman Melville called them "the most formidable of all whales to encounter, the most majestic in aspect."

Sperm whales are declining in number, say the International Whaling Commission, the U.S. Commerce Department, and various conservation groups. The Japanese government and whalers contend, however, that the whales are sufficiently numerous that catching a few hundred of them each year will have little impact.

### Disagreement on agreement

Commerce Secretary Malcolm Baldrige announced in mid-November that the United States and Japan had reached an agreement designed to end all Japanese whaling by 1988.

But the Japanese insist that no agreement exists on anything except quotas for how many sperm whales may be captured during the 1984-85 and 1985-86 whaling seasons. Any agreement is subject to approval by the Japanese cabinet.

Conservation groups claim that American negotiators engaged in illegal talks to circumvent U.S. law, capitulating to Japanese diplomatic and economic pressures.

The International Whaling Commission voted, 25 to 1, in 1981 to ban all sperm whaling beginning with the 1984-85 season. Japan, the only dissenter, filed an official objection to the action. Under

commission rules, a nation that files an objection may ignore a ban and continue to catch whales.

At its 1982 meeting, the commission voted to impose a five-year moratorium on all whaling, beginning in 1986. Japan objected then, too.

Negotiations in Washington between Commerce Department officials and Japanese representatives began early this year because of a provision of American law known as the Packwood-Magnuson amendment to the Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

That amendment, adopted in 1979, requires the secretary of commerce to cut in half the fishery allocation of any nation that "diminishes the effectiveness" of conservation actions by the whaling commission. Japanese fishermen catch about \$500 million worth of fish annually in American waters.

On Nov. 13, Baldrige announced that the talks had led to an understanding that, if the Japanese would withdraw their objection to the sperm-whale ban by Dec. 13, Japanese whalers could catch as many as 40 sperm whales both this season and next without violating the Packwood-Magnuson amendment.

### No Whaling After 1987

Baldrige said that he had agreed not to take action under the amendment if the Japanese would withdraw their objection to the whaling moratorium beginning in 1986 and if they would promise to cease all whaling after 1987. The two governments would then agree on quotas through 1987, he said.

This portion of the understanding led Baldrige to say: "This agreement sets specific terms and dates by which the



Surprisingly agile for its massive size, a sperm whale heads for the depths of the Indian Ocean. One of the least-known whales, sperm whales have impressive teeth, though most of their food is swallowed whole, and a vast forehead filled with fine oil. The International Whaling Commission has banned sperm whaling, leading to a war of words involving the U.S. government, Japan and its whaling industry, and conservation groups.

Japanese will end their commercial whaling activities."

But when Japanese officials returned home and learned of Baldrige's statements, they called a press conference to say that they had agreed only to quotas for the 1984-85 and 1985-86 sperm-whaling seasons, subject to cabinet approval.

Meanwhile, nine U.S. conservation groups, which earlier had filed suit to prevent any sperm-whale catch as a violation of the whaling commission's ban, announced the reported agreement

as a sellout of the whales. They said the Commerce Department had buckled under pressure from the Japanese and from State Department officials fearful of a trade war with a major American ally.

Barry Zins, an attorney for the conservationists, said his clients expected the Japanese to circumvent any agreement, "even if it was airtight."

Craig Van Note of Monitor, an umbrella group for the nine conservation organizations, said U.S. negotiators had "given away the

store" in agreeing not to cite the Japanese for violating the commission ban.

A. Joseph LaCovey, a Commerce Department spokesman, acknowledged that there was no signed agreement with the Japanese. But he said they were under pressure to live up to what he called "a memo of understanding" because they valued their fishing rights in American waters.

LaCovey referred to this portion of Baldrige's statement: "The

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## COLOR THIS!

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|-----------|---------------|
| 1. BLACK  | 6. ORANGE     |
| 2. PINK   | 7. GREEN      |
| 3. YELLOW | 8. LT BROWN   |
| 4. BLUE   | 9. LT. BLUE   |
| 5. BROWN  | 10. LT. GREEN |

**FASCINATING FISH.** THERE ARE MANY BIZARRE LOOKING SEA CREATURES. THE OCEAN SUNFISH ARE GIANT CREATURES WEIGHING 600 LBS. THE GOOSE-FISH ARE FISHING FISH, WITH A ROD AND LURE THAT DANGLE IN FRONT OF THE MOUTH. THE BATFISH USE THEIR LARGE FRONT FINS TO WALK ON THE OCEAN FLOOR.

