

THE LORD ASHCROFT KCMG
HOUSE OF LORDS
LONDON SW 1A 0PW

April 30th 2007

News Release

British peer commissions Caribbean advertising campaign to counter proposed resumption of whaling

It was announced today that Lord Ashcroft KCMG has commissioned an unprecedented television advertising campaign which he hopes will persuade the inhabitants of six small Caribbean nations not to back Japanese-inspired plans to overturn the ban on commercial whale hunting.

Ashcroft has devised and funded the US\$500,000 campaign - *Tell Japan We'll Keep The Ban* - which will be screened throughout each of the six island nations whose votes he hopes to turn in favour of sustaining the current whaling ban. Screenings will begin tomorrow and will continue throughout May, in anticipation of the forthcoming International Whaling Commission (IWC) meeting which begins in Anchorage, Alaska at the end of May¹.

The campaign is being mounted in conjunction with the UK- and US-based Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA). EIA is one of the world's leading

¹ <http://www.iwcoffice.org/meetings/meeting2007.htm>

environmental campaigning organisations which, for more than twenty years, has investigated environmental crimes worldwide, often undercover.²

In recent years, the Japanese government, recognising the importance of national votes at the IWC, has been actively recruiting support from some of the world's smaller nations, trading financial assistance for pro-whaling votes at IWC meetings. The governments of six island nations in the eastern Caribbean, with a combined population of about half a million people, have succumbed to such overtures. They are **Antigua & Barbuda; Dominica; Grenada; Saint Kitts and Nevis; Saint Lucia; Saint Vincent & the Grenadines**. In every case, the Japanese have provided these nations with financial support in the form of fisheries aid.

Lord Ashcroft said, "Amongst the sightings of which I have the most vivid and fond memories are of humpback whales in the Southern Ocean, close to Antarctica. To watch these huge and extraordinary creatures 'breach' – launching themselves head first right out of the water and then crashing back down – is in my view amongst the great wonders of the world. It is entirely beyond my comprehension that the Japanese now plan to harpoon fifty humpback whales next year in the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary itself. We must persuade our Caribbean friends to resist the Japanese bribery, and to vote in favour of the whales and a continuation of the ban."

Allan Thornton, the Chairman of EIA said, "Japan's outrageous plan to kill fifty humpback whales in the Southern Ocean Sanctuary this winter can be stopped if the Caribbean nations oppose Japan's continued expansion of its commercial whale hunt. We hope our friends in the Caribbean will persuade their governments to let the humpbacks live and "Tell Japan We'll Keep The Ban".

²<http://www.eia-global.org/>

The television commercial can be downloaded from the following link:

<ftp://ftp017:whalepass@ftp.rushes.co.uk>

For further information please contact -

- for Lord Ashcroft: Angela Entwistle 020 7248 6700/07802 264769

Alan Kilkenny 01264 781228/07836 311639

- for EIA: Allan Thornton 001 202 361 6941

Notes to editors

- Lord Ashcroft spends many days each year at sea, on regular occasion actively seeking out whales in their feeding or birthing grounds in order to watch their behaviour. His observations have taken place from the Arctic to the Antarctic, and have included many of the world's oceans. He does not profess, however, to be a conservationist nor an environmentalist, and he is not philosophically opposed to the killing of animals if necessary. However, other than the minor exception of aboriginal subsistence whaling, he believes that there is no justification on either scientific or commercial grounds for the killing of some of the world's most beautiful creatures.

- EIA is well known to Ashcroft. He has previously provided help and financial support to an important EIA campaign. On this occasion, the Agency asked Ashcroft to use his influence to appeal to the government of Belize to seek that nation's continuing support against proposals for the resumption of whaling at the International Whaling Commission's Annual Meeting in Saint Kitts in July 2006.

- Ashcroft has a close affinity for whales, dolphins and porpoises - an affinity which has developed over many years of repeated observation of cetaceans around the world. He was easily persuaded to approach the Belizean authorities with such a brief. Belize was persuaded to attend the St Kitts meeting and to cast its votes against those proposals which had contemplated a resumption of whaling.

- The most important vote was in fact won by the anti-whaling nations with a majority of just one vote. The presence of Belize at the meeting was therefore crucial, even though Japan and its supporters would have required a three-quarters majority in order to reverse the current ban on whaling.

- Following the St Kitts meeting, Ashcroft tabled a series of questions in the House of Lords³, enquiring as to the British Government's attitude towards whaling. Following an unsatisfactory response to his parliamentary questions, Ashcroft decided instead to embark upon a programme of persuasion aimed directly at the citizens of the six Caribbean nations mentioned above, and thus to their elected representatives.

- Additional information can also be obtained from the following websites:

www.caribbeanwhalefriends.org

www.lordashcroft.com

www.michaelashcroftfoundation.com

THE LORD ASHCROFT KCMG
HOUSE OF LORDS
LONDON SW1A 0PW

April 30th 2007

News Release

TV commercial aims to prevent the resumption of whaling

Throughout May, a thought-provoking television commercial christened "*Tell Japan We'll Keep The Ban*" will be broadcast in six Caribbean nations which have been recruited by Japan to support a move to recommence whaling. The first screenings of the commercial take place tomorrow (see commercial⁴), and will be followed by approximately 1,000 'spots' across the six countries.

The brainchild of Lord Ashcroft, the commercial has been produced with the hope of persuading the inhabitants of six small Caribbean nations to pressure their governments not to back Japanese-inspired plans to recommence the killing of whales. Those nations are **Antigua & Barbuda; Dominica; Grenada; Saint Kitts & Nevis; Saint Lucia;** and **Saint Vincent & the Grenadines.**

The US\$500,000 campaign, funded by Ashcroft, and produced in conjunction with the UK- and US-based Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), is being screened in the run-up to the forthcoming International Whaling Commission meeting which begins in Anchorage, Alaska at the end of May⁵.

The thirty second commercial features a voiceover from the Trinidad-born presenter Sir Trevor McDonald who gave his services freely to support the initiative. It was produced under the aegis of Charming Carl - an award-winning independent TV and multimedia

⁴ <ftp://ftp017:whalepass@ftp.rushes.co.uk>

⁵ <http://www.iwcoffice.org/meetings/meeting2007.htm>

company - by a team which included writer Malcolm Gaskin, who is also a director of EIA. The producer was Kim Collins and the director and editor was Sam Hurford.

Post production, finishing and special effects **Rushes.**

Original music: **Adelphoi Music.** Titles **Digital Farm.**