

the seal pups start shedding their fuzzy white coats), a few hundred to a few thousand Canadian fishermen (almost all of European descent and most living in Newfoundland and the Magdalen Islands of Quebec), find their way to the floes and proceed to club, bludgeon, shoot, and skin tens to hundreds of thousands of harp seals. About 95% of the seals killed in the commercial seal 'hunt' are 3 weeks to 3 months old.

## FAQ:

### How many seals have been killed?

On average over 300,000 seals are reported killed during a hunt. This does not include seals which were abandoned or which slipped into icy waters.

### Are seals consumed or eaten?

In the commercial seal hunt, no part of the seal is consumed or eaten. The seal pelts are sold to fashion houses.

### Is the hunt performed by aboriginals?

While aboriginals hunt seals in Canada, this is a small number and is unrelated to the commercial Canadian seal hunt. No one is opposing aboriginal hunting. Commercial sealers like to confuse the public by throwing the word aboriginals around. They are not aboriginals. They are white men that live as you do, they own houses, garages, automobiles, they watch movies, and they shop at the local mall and buy food in supermarkets.

### Is there a seal over population?

No, if anything there is a severe shortage in the population. When European explorers landed on the East coast of Canada, there were an estimated 30 million seals. Between 1950 and 1970 it was estimated that the seal population had declined to 2 million. This prompted the US government and European nations to ban the importation of seal products. The Canadian Government worked

afterwards at population stability but in recent years has moved away from this in order to employ out of work fishermen. The reason behind this is false scientific logic and scapegoating the seals for a decline in the cod population. Cod were over fished which resulted a collapse in the Canadian fishery industry. In 1999 a survey reported the seals to number above 4 million. This report was severely flawed.

### Who hunts the seals?

Out of work fishermen in the provinces of Newfoundland, Labrador, and Prince Edward Island are mostly responsible. The hunters are not aboriginals. They hunt seals to earn money and to sell seal pelts to the fashion industry.



### Who pays the fishermen?

The government subsidizes the hunt with Canadian tax dollars. The government also spends tax dollars in attempts to create markets for the pelts. Some pelts are sold to undisclosed fashion houses.

### How much does this cost tax payers?

In the past the Canadian government has pumped millions in subsidies. This amount has increased, but the government refuses to release figures.

### Is this to help the cod recuperate from over

### fishing?

This is the propaganda that the Canadian government has been releasing. The truth is the cods were in higher numbers long before the seal hunt started. Cod consists of less than 3% of a seals diet. Seals actually feed on squid, skate, and other predators of cod. In other words seals serve as the ecosystems check in keeping cod populations in high numbers. By killing seals, hunters are hurting the cod population.

## What would you suggest out of work fishermen do instead?

The government should spend the money that is used on this cruel hunt to reeducate these hunters, or to enter into new industries. There is no scientific justification for this hunt, therefore it should be terminated immediately.

## If polls show that the majority of Canadian citizens are against the hunt, why don't they just stop it with a vote?

The Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans is a bureaucracy run primarily by Newfoundlanders. They set the policy. Politicians have basically rubber-stamped the wishes of the bureaucrats. Most of the Fisheries Ministers have hailed from Newfoundland. Another problem is that there is much competition between the political parties to control Newfoundland and any party that opposes the seal hunt is out of the running. Therefore the parties have all agreed to support the hunt, leaving no alternatives for people who are opposed to the hunt. Even the Green Party of Newfoundland supports the seal kill for fear of losing votes.

## SKINNED ALIVE:

In the past, 5 eminent veterinarians (2 British, 2 American, and 1 Canadian) monitored the seal hunt in the Gulf of the St Lawrence. What they found is disturbing. They concluded the hunt caused "considerable and unacceptable suffering". Over 40% of the seals that were caught were conscious and fully aware, when they were skinned alive. Postmortem examinations revealed 25% of seals showed minimal or moderate signs of injury when the skinning occurred. This is proof that the seals were still alive & well.

