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Local novelist releases new “eco-thriller”

by Andrew Board

C. George Muller, of Richmond, is a passionate man, so while working as a wildlife biologist around the world, supported by extensive research into illegal whale hunts by Japan, Norway and Iceland, C. George decided to bring the issue into the mainstream through an eco-novel.

Recent news coverage has brought attention to the whale hunting happening right now in the Southern Ocean by Japan under the guise of “scientific research”.

The newly released, “Echoes in the Blue”, is C. George’s second novel. His first won him the 2005 Richard Webster Popular Fiction Award. The novel is about a man who goes on a trip with his scientist brother to the Antarctic and learns of the atrocities being performed by Japanese whalers each year. The facts in the book are disturbingly true. C. George said many hours went into the research to make the book accurate.

“I started to get interested in the issue when it first happened in the 1980’s,” he said. “More recently, I’ve looked at the science involved and the justification becomes more ludicrous. Less than 1% of the population of Japan eat whale more than once a month.”

While Japan insists that whaling is a tradition and they should be allowed to continue to hunt, C. George refutes that argument. “Japan started whaling only just before World War II and it certainly isn’t a tradition to send great big factory ships to plunder our seas in the Southern Ocean.” Muller acknowledged that Japan’s expansion of its whaling programme this year could be the final straw for conservationists. Despite the ban on whaling, Japan plans to kill up to 1500 whales annually, including 50 endangered fin whales and 50 humpbacks in the Antarctic.

“Desperate times call for desperate measures. A kill that large could decimate local sub-populations of whales. There are only around 2000 Humpbacks that pass through New Zealand waters. At that rate of slaughter they would last only five or six years before becoming locally extinct.”

Muller’s book also predicts with uncanny accuracy the events of recent weeks in the Southern Ocean including the ramming at sea, and the fire aboard the Japanese factory ship.

Even the New Zealand government struggles to comprehend Japan’s rationale of continuing whaling with the Conservation Minister, Hon Chris Carter, saying, “There is no financial value in it, there is certainly no science in it, so it has to be a twisted nationalism.”

C. George hopes the book will be available in Richmond book stores at the end of this week, with the novel already available at amazon.com.

“It has had some really good reviews so far, which is great,” he said. The book will retail for \$38.95 and half of the profit will go to a save the whales charity.

Meantime, C. George will continue to spend his time in Richmond working on his website for the book and helping to fight our fires as a member of the Richmond Volunteer Fire Brigade.

Review:

Scientific Advisor to NZ International Whaling Commission (IWC) Commissioner

A really good read with an excellent exploration of the issues surrounding whales, whaling and the IWC. Very well researched and full of interesting facts including some extremely insightful observations about the nature of international politicking involved in the ongoing fight to protect whales.

C. George Muller delivers an entertaining story that combines fact and fiction nicely to make this an interesting, thought provoking and enjoyable read.