Hunt seals twins' fate

Models refuse to move back home

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QMI Agency

Choose seal skin and lose the Barbi Twins.

That's the message to Canada from the once iconic pin-up sisters.

The Barbi Twins — model sensations who made it big in the 1990s after it was found Prince William had a crush on the buxom siblings — are now boycotting Canada over the annual seal cull.

The duo, whose scantily clad pictorials and posters were once so popular they were found in a palace in Iraq, have added their moniker to a celebrity backlash against the seal hunt that's included Paul McCartney, Pamela Anderson and Brigitte Bardot.

But their outrage has held little weight with the federal government, which on Monday announced an increase in the quota for this year's East Coast hunt.

Fisheries Minister Gail Shea said in a statement the population of harp seals is an estimated 6.9 million — more than triple what it was in the 1970s.

This year's quota for harp, grey and hooded seals is 388,200 — an increase of 50,000 over last year.

Those hunt numbers don't sit well with those opposed to the cull, including celebrities like the Barbi Twins.

Shane Barbi-Wahl was planning to move to Burlington with husband Ken Wahl — best known for his '80s TV drama *Wiseguy*. But so long as the seal hunt is in place, they say, they're holding off.

Her mirror-image sister, Sia, has met and fallen for an anti-seal hunt crusader in Toronto, but vows not to travel north until Ottawa bans the cull.

"We do think it's an oxymoron to say there is such a thing as kind killing," says Shane, adding: "We're just two bimbos coming up with a better alternative — eco tourism — that's worked around the world."

The Barbi Twins want to move back to Canada but say they won't as long as the seal hunt goes on.

SUN Flashes

Canada news and notes

Accused killer in Belleville court

BELLEVILLE — An 18-year-old man charged with killing a woman and her daughter, and gravely injuring another daughter, made few comments at a packed hearing Monday.

Dean Brown only stated his name and acknowledged that he understood the charges of first-degree murder in the deaths of Tracy Hannah, 46, and her daughter, Whitney, 14, and attempted murder against Shannon Hannah, 18. He will make his next appearance by video Monday.

Thatcher loses royalties

REGINA — A Saskatchewan court has ruled that convicted wife killer Colin Thatcher can't make any money from a book he wrote proclaiming his innocence.

Thatcher had taken the province to court to challenge a law enacted last spring that says criminals can't profit from recounting their crimes.

He argued the law didn't apply to *Final Appeal: Anatomy of a Frame*, because his book is about his dealings with the justice system, not about the 1983 murder of JoAnn Wilson.

Rural web funds cut

OTTAWA — Critics are panning the Conservatives' move Monday to cut funds to a program that helps rural communities link to the web.

Erik Waddell, a spokesman for Industry Minister Tony Clement, told QMI Agency the 16-year-old Community Access Program has outlived its original mandate, which was to encourage and help Canadians get online at a time when few had access at home.

Feds pay to study travel

OTTAWA — The federal government wants to spend $176,000 for a study on global travel patterns to help save Canadians from future pandemics.

The Public Health Agency of Canada plans to award a three-month contract to Dr. Kamran Khan of St. Michael's Hospital.

Khan has already done significant work mapping international travel into Canada and potential health scares.

— QMI Agency, Sun wire services

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