

# Entrepreneurial Caribou Subvert Oil Drilling Plans, Purchase Arctic National Wildlife Refuge With Own Funds

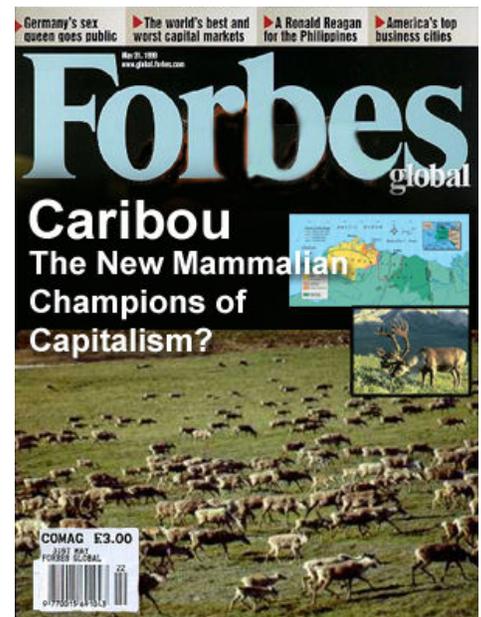


By Rodolfo Ecosystem

In a spirited effort to finally save their traditional mating grounds from the potential encroachment of the Bush administration's oil drilling hordes, a large herd of surprisingly entrepreneurial caribou in Northern Alaska evidently decided to simply raise the funds to purchase the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge outright. That they did so, and for a not too shabby sum of 440 billion dollars, not only surprised the hell out of the Bush administration and the rest of the Federal government, but also a lot of other folks who had always been quite frankly dismissive of the now all-too-evident financial know how of caribou. Forbes magazine even has a cover story running this month about caribou, labeling them "The New Mammalian Champions of Capitalism", for the first time displacing humans, and of course, those unassailable breadwinners of history, the pygmy marmosets.

"Now I know what you're thinking.", said Hypatia, a female caribou, and one of the leading caribou economists, who for some reason had decided to adopt a moniker in a peculiar homage to one of her favorite ancient Greek thinkers. "You're thinking that those are just a bunch of fucking reindeer out there on the Forbes cover, not caribou. We'll let me explain to you your error. You see, while reindeer and caribou do technically come from the same species (*Rangifer tarandus*...species names are always italicized, by the way), in reality, reindeer are simply semi-domesticated caribou. I emphasize this point because there's just no way in fucking hell that any group of lazy ass, monetarily retarded reindeer could raise 440 billion dollars in like 15 minutes like we did. If you were to eat me or a reindeer, yes we'd probably taste the same, but if you asked a reindeer to open up a checking account for you, he'd probably just take a shit in your shoes or eat your fence or something. Don't trust any reindeer with your Mutual Fund, let me tell you."

Exactly how the caribou raised this money still remains a mystery, and of course, Hypatia and others, including Anaxagoras, Anaximander, and Dave were very serious indeed in regard to financial secrecy throughout the whole process. As an aside, one of the caribou even ate my Master Card and a couple of Andy Jackson's, ostensibly for security reasons, but that's a whole 'nother story all together. But what is most assuredly true is that the aptly named "Caribou Association for the Get The Fuck out of Our Ancestral Mating Grounds" somehow rounded up 440 billion dollars, in cash, and promptly handed it over to the U.S. government in exchange for said piece of land. An incredidulous President Bush at first didn't trust the offer, stating plainly that the "United States of America Does Not Negotiate With Caribou", but when his shell shocked advisors informed him that 440 billion dollars was probably like way more than the oil in the refuge was actually worth, and that the U.S. could sure as hell use the money right now, Bush eventually acquiesced to his father's long standing hunting buddies. Even GW saw how that many bucks could pay for all sorts of things, like the continuing war with and rebuilding of Iraq, along with helping to fund our next 3-5 scheduled invasions of countries on various axes labeled with derogatory, dehumanizing terms. And besides, added his staff in hushed tones, we can just take the oil later if we want. We'll say it has to do with national security.



President, I mean, Vice President Dick Cheney, failing to suppress a large, positively terrifying scowl, also had trouble explaining where the caribou finances had come from. All he could do was chuckle awkwardly and repeat the unconvincing mantra, "Well, you know, those caribou", while nervously sipping his daily, hand fed power beverage consisting of Moroccan rum and gasoline, while simultaneously doing some work on a mighty fine, fiery Cuban cigar. "Embargo Schmembargo", remarked Cheney, messily, as his ensuing belch and minor personal oil spill spoke of high octane, professional grade, unleaded, somewhere between \$1.76 and \$1.83 a gallon.

## UPDATE ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Aside from the exact origins of the behemoth lump of caribou cash, other reporters in the liberal press, including this one, had begun to ask other questions, including, "Why the fuck did you even pay so much?"

This question, along with some fresh Alaskan lichen, was promptly handled by Dave, himself amongst the caribou financial elite. In an accent all too reminiscent of the old guy in *Don Juan De Marco*, Dave told us, "We had to give them an offer they couldn't refuse. And besides, we can always make more. Pshaaaaa." After the fact, seeing a caribou shake his antlers in paternalistic disappointment is a sight I would highly recommend.

"And besides", continued Dave, to the surprise of most of his Hellenically named companions, "you think we don't need the oil? I mean yes, we are built for long distance travel, herd migration, and all that, but sometimes, a caribou just really needs to feel the wind in his antlers, punch the accelerator, and fly with freedom over the open tundra in an all new, 2004 Subaru Outback. If that's not the way it's supposed to be, then I don't look exactly like that reindeer over there, you know, the one with the giant schlong."



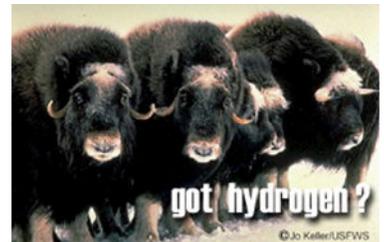
**Northern Alaskan Caribou**

"Don't listen to Dave over there," interrupted Hypatia, as she not so subtly bashed her corporate companion with her antlers, leading him to an unambiguous state of just-got-knocked-the fuck-out. "Suffice it to say, his thoughts do not coincide with the majority of caribou public opinion," added Hypatia, authoritatively. "Now let me tell you about the environment. The fact that it is precious beyond measure should go without saying, but in

addition, all America needs to do to solve its short term oil problems is increase fuel efficiency by 5% over the next 5 years, just back to 1981 levels. And it can start by getting all those SUV's and Hummers off the fucking roads. That means you, Arnold Schwarzenegger. Shit, man, even more ironic is the fact that there's not even enough oil in these reserves to fuel Dick Cheney's habit. And in the long term, you don't need the brain of a caribou financial genius to see that alternative, renewable resources are the only future of all the species on Earth, caribou and humans included. For Christ's sake, I know some fucking musk oxen that have already developed hydrogen power. What is it with these humans?"



**Northern Alaskan Reindeer**



©Jo Keller/USFWS

As it happened, a lone reindeer approached, and he actually looked a little sniffly, perhaps from allergies.

"I told you not to listen to Dave, but hell, please don't listen to that reindeer. While he may look just like most of our males, right down to the balls, (Dave excluded, of course), believe me, when he speaks, he only lies."

Said reindeer enacted a pouty demeanor of foppish recalcitrance and then proceeded to take a big fat reindeer shit not more than a few feet south of where he had previously stood. Hypatia considered the gesture momentarily.

"Although non-verbally of course, what this insidious caribou doppelganger is alluding to is actually a rather decent point. As it is, in a mainly symbolic gesture, we caribou have decided to defecate as a group in a continuous pattern, simulating a path mocking the currently existing Trans-Alaskan oil pipeline. It will take some time, but mind you, we do have a great quantity of feces, enough, our scientists calculate, to even make our so-called shit-pipeline visible from space."

In a moment perhaps unprecedented in the history of international, interspecies irony, Cosmonaut Vladimir Novikov, floating aboard the International Space Station, then promptly exclaimed, "No Shit?" in Russian.

"Ah space," mused Dave, who had evidently recovered consciousness. "And science. Yeah I really like science. But you know what I like even more? Mating. That's right, mating. And actually, if Chevron, Mobil, and Texaco don't mind, I'm actually just going to go mate right now. If you're into that kind of thing, you can watch it later on the Discovery Channel. I'm actually known around here as a big star, you know, like that "You and me baby ain't nothing but mammals..." song. OK. Bbye."

Added another passing caribou. "I mean, seriously, how would humans feel if we started drilling for oil or laying pipelines right through their mating grounds?"

A markedly devilish look immediately became embedded in Hypatia's face as she politely concluded the interview. It then seemed that some sort of telepathic communication took place between Hypatia and the still present, recently bowel-relieved, reindeer who seemed also to be having some sinus problems.

## UPDATE ON THE ENVIRONMENT



Upon waking the following morning, President and Mrs. Bush were no doubt surprised to find a 5 plus foot metallic segment that had a remarkable resemblance to oil pipeline, nestled cozily in their bed.

“Thank Jesus it’s not a horse head”, remarked Laura Bush, herself a film buff.

“Well it darn sure smells like horse”, remarked the President as the two reluctantly confirmed the nature of the suspected contents.

Despite the best efforts of the department of Homeland Security, Rudolf the red nosed reindeer could not be reached for comment.

**Author’s note:** In reality, as it was pointed out to me, the area in question is the caribou "calving" grounds, where they birth their kids, rather than simply their "mating" grounds, where they go to get it on. Nevertheless, the point that "It's just not cool to mess with the life cycles of animals for profit in a supposedly protected reserve", remains the same. In the end, since it's much easier to make jokes about mating grounds per se, one can also consider it artistic license.