

Statoil and The Tropic of Cancer

by Randy Naylor, Norway Stavanger Jan. 24, 2013

The Tropic of Cancer stretches across the vast Sahara Sand Sea Desert encompassing 8 African countries. Among these countries are Egypt, Mali, Niger, Mauritania, Chad Western Sahara, Libya and Algeria.

My task as an artist (painter) is through allegory, metaphor, paint a picture of a condition, a perception that might shed light on an event. Here in our Stavanger studio Statoil looms big today. How has Statoil entrapped itself in the Tropic of Cancer, In Amenas.

Would not any CEO, before going in there anyway, not ponder being lost in this endless sand sea, where one is more bound to hallucinate, dodge black scorpions and perhaps read Saint Exupery's Wind, Sand and Stars. His chronicle from flying and disappearing in this vast endless space. Then again there is another French Connection, INSEAD, where Helge Lund received his illustrious MBA. The boys of Fountainebleau are our new masters of the universe and under his leadership Statoil has become a finance/invest company wrapped in Oil and Gas jeans. Statoil buys and sells assets, asset management. It is about numbers and brands. Numbers first, brands second and in their due diligence, environmental ethics, totalitarian partners and indigenous cultures do not count in a linear MBA business plan.

So you buy into the Tropic of Cancer Zone. In Amenas, riding a camel with BP and DeepWater Horizon and a post-colonial French Algerian traumatized government. Let us not forget that the 8 year French occupation and the French invention of "counterterrorism operations," and the date is 1962. Yet here we are today, counter terrorism operations 2013. As a painter, from Hallucination, to Surrealism to Reality!

Actually we have never left any of these places, these wars, this hallucination: that we are invincible, that we can plunder the resources of the earth at our convenience, that our means pollute and malfeasance. None of my Harvard or INSEAD MBA friends are schooled in ethics, schooled in Eisenhower's Military Industrial Complex or are they occupied by climate change of their own making.

The difference now in this painting is that we have reached a threshold. The edge of the canvas. Before there were clear routes to governments in which one could twist or coup d-etat CIA style. In Amenas, out of that sand storm a new "enemy" appeared, invisible, not attached to any government, not top down, an al-Qaeda fractal that the Tropic produced and now viral. And it is a Big Game Changer because now nothing is safe or what is not safe is our Installations. Our Life Style.

A mother ship can simply appear out of the North Sea waves, launch a few motor boats, pirates of Somalia style and take over any one of the hundred platforms that are unguarded. In Amenas becomes In North Sea, surprise!. And there are not enough BlackWater or Striling Groups to cover these loop holes. Helge Lund has been forced

to change out his Hugo Boss suit to a camelflauged outfit of a 4 star general, from BOP to a BUP (Blow Up Preventer).

The Real Game Changer here is that we have to change our Life Style. Helge Lund and his MBA have to begin investment in Sustainable goods and services.

That we are not sitting ducks triggering and attracting Malice. The 21st century paradigm shift is the recognition that we have entered a post industrial canvas, the new painting is to clean up our act. The Clean up Act begins with recognizing that these things are evident: We cannot be dependent upon fossil fuels to carry us into the 21st century. These carbon incentive by products have polluted our atmosphere, poisoned our food chain, corrupted our education system, degraded our public health system; waged countless wars in the Middle East and soon Asia.

So!

Please StatOil MBA, lead us into the Sustainable future and not the addict fossil fueled past. (In) Amen(as)

Henry Miller, " I wrote Tropic of Cancer because to me the cancer symbolizes the disease of (Western) civilization, the end point of the wrong path, the necessity to change radically, to start completely over from scratch."

Randy Naylor