



WAKE UP! WAKE UP! IT'S YER BALL BREAKING BLUE GENES

SchNEWS

FROM HERE TO THERE EVERY WEEK



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Issue 171 Free/Donation

MONSTER MERGER

"Through food, chemicals and drugs this malignant tumour of a company seeks to control and pervert our genetic code. The invasion of the gene snatchers has begun". Corporate Watch

In their quest to control the world (literally) Monsanto have agreed to merge with pharmaceuticals group American Home Products (AHP). The deal is the sixth largest in American corporate history. With a market value of \$96 billion, they now command majority control of the life-sciences industry, from maize seed gene patents to genetically mutated soya. Dubbed the, 'Microsoft of bio-technology,' Monsanto run the world's largest agricultural research and development body, with their main man Robert Shapiro being described as a 'deal a day man',

NAMING NAMES SHOCK

Monsanto are now embarking on an open discussion campaign in an effort to appear 'consumer friendly'. They have already been slagging anti-Gen groups in adverts and on billboards across Europe, now in an attempt to persuade us that they have nothing to hide they have taken out ads in the 'liberal' press. Here are some excerpts from a press release published in last Sunday's Observer:

"Genetically modified food is the subject of much heated debate. As a biotechnology company, we firmly believe in it. Of course, we're a business and aim for our shareholders to profit from this technology... our excitement and commitment to food biotechnology stems from the real benefits it provides for both consumers and the environment.

There are others with less supportive views. Some are openly hostile. It is only fair that you appreciate the spectrum of opinions before making an informed decision. We're about to run an advertising campaign...As well as our views, we will be publishing the addresses and phone numbers of those with different views, including some of our most vocal critics, encouraging you to contact them. This may sound unusual, but we believe that food is so fundamentally important everyone should know all they want to about it.

Besides the advertising, there are leaflets in many supermarkets and you can call us free on 0800 092 0401 if you have any questions or would like further literature". (SchNews warns all readers NOT to continuously use this freephone number and then leave the receiver off the hook, they only have four operators and you would cost Monsanto a lot of money).

The press release then goes on to say; "The world grows its food at great cost to the environment. Insecticides, fertilizers and herbicides used in agriculture require scarce resources processed in eco-taxing industrial plants. We believe plant biotechnology can limit industrial and chemical impact on the earth. For instance, we have developed crops that are insect resistant, in some cases eliminating the need to apply insecticides altogether. (We also want you to know that we produce the world's top selling herbicide, Roundup.)" **The release ends- MONSANTO Food.Health.Hope**

SchNEWS, like Monsanto, believe in providing 'information for action', so to save you waiting for their advertising, here are the numbers we think they should be printing, (probably).

*Genetic Engineering Network, PO BOX 9656, London N4 4JY 0181 374 9516 (this no is for Genetics info)

*For genetics action info on the web check out: <http://www.dmac.co.uk/gen.html>

<http://www.envirolink.org/orgs/shag/genetix.html>

*Genetix Update PO Box 9656 London N4 4JY 0181 374 0516

*<genetics@gn.apc.org>.

CRAP JOB OF THE WEEK

Part Time Sales Assistant in Oxford - four hours on a Saturday @ £2.27 per hour - a whole £9.08 a week!

FAB JOB OF THE WEEK

World Development Movement (WDM) are looking for a Campaigns Officer to plan and manage popular campaigns, build public support and target key decision makers, working with UK activists and international partners. Salary £19,086 - £20,316. Write to Personnel, WDM, 25 Beehive Place, London SW9 7QR, tel: 0171 7376215

"The opportunity is just enormous, we see the value that we can create as several billion dollars". Monsanto's president.

A fortnight ago, consultants acting for Monsanto, wrote to some of Africa's most prominent academics and politicians, inviting them to sign a stirring public statement called "Let the Harvest Begin". It went on to say "Many of our needs have an ally in biotechnology and the promising advances it offers for our future, with these advances, we prosper; without them, we cannot thrive. Slowing its acceptance is a luxury our hungry world cannot afford."

While some responded with outrage, others signed up. Monsanto's name appears in such small print readers could think that the statement is from the the signatories, rather than Monsanto. Monsanto's suggestion that the continent's freedom from famine depends upon it would be hilarious, were it not so sinister. Monsanto's operations can now be numbered among the continent's greatest threats.

The leading edge of Monsanto's new work is not the production of food, but the production of feed: crops, in other words, grown not for humans but for animals. Last month, the company announced a joint venture with the gigantic multinational grain merchant Cargill, to produce and market the seeds of genetically engineered fodder plants, particularly maize. Feed production is a growing component of Third World agriculture, supplying the ever-increasing consumption of meat, eggs and dairy produce in the First World. Growing animal fodder for McCrap food is also one of the reasons for African famine, as land previously used to grow food for local people has been 'acquired' to supply the rich world's luxuries. Much of Africa's most fertile territory is ideal for growing the new, more profitable strains of maize fodder being developed by Cargill and Monsanto.

But this is the least of the ways in which Monsanto threatens Africa. Three months ago, America's Delta and Pine Land Company patented a gene called "Terminator", which ensures that the plants which contain it produce only sterile seeds.: Farmers planting these crops, in other words, will be forced to buy new stock every year. The new technology's "primary targets", are, according to the original patent holders, "Second and Third World" countries. Four weeks ago, Monsanto bought the company. If it succeeds in inserting the Terminator into its seed varieties, farmers will be presented with little choice but to buy its non-reproducing seed, Monsanto, in other words, threatens to become the hunger merchant of the third millennium.

Where they go, famine will follow.

RECLAIM THE STREETS

Report backs from North and South London BRIXTON An orange flare signalled to the gathered 1000's the start of another successful 'avin-it' historic street party. Having turned up in relatively small force 'The Old Bill' seemed content to stand back and let it happen. Perhaps this had something to do with the sensitive nature of the locale!

Although the main police CCTV had been skillfully covered-up, by an activist shimmying up a 60-80foot pole and placing a plastic bag over it The CCTV unit on McMUCK'S frenetically swivelled around filming anything it could. McMoney were also forced to shut their toilets as the celebrants took the piss big stylee. For hours a largish swathe of Brixton's streets were given over to fun, jollity and car free space as the RTS red, black and green 'flag' on top of McMurder fluttered in the cooling breeze, making their (McMuck's) Union Jack look grey tattered and from a bygone age. Of course the usual PC Plod 'snatch-squad' lurking about in Brixton tube station made a determined effort to ruin someones day by arresting people getting on the trains to go home.

Meanwhile a concurrent NORTH LONDON street party was in full swing in Tottenham, closing down every single road junction at some point during the day, between Euston and Seven Sisters as 2,000 made their way to the party. Euston tube was closed, so 1,500 people left for Kings Cross and a pig was overheard saying "We're doomed!" ha ha ha. Greater London Radio advised people not to enter north-east London as the Reclaim the Streets movement had taken control of it!!! 5,000 people well and truly reclaimed Tottenham High Road to the tunes of 3 soundsystems which entered and left the party without being pulled. Critical Mass cyclists initially took the site whilst partygoers following multi-coloured flags came forth in their thousands to celebrate the reclamation of what is rightfully theirs, "Freedom is there for the taking...so lets take it!" Local people joyfully joined in the festivities as the high road was taken over with music, laughter, performance, football and kids playing. Local residents said, "I saw this van pull up with lots of people running after it...the next thing we knew they had blocked the road, started playing music and thousands of people started arriving!" Another said "It's great! When we came out of the tube and saw all these people we were completely entranced...I think it's fantastic!" At the end of the day two cars used for barricades were set alight and the police baton charged the remaining people making 11 arrests for public order offences. The police were totally out-witted all day. PS. Thanks to the intelligent bods who erected toilets over the drains and the litterpickers. Nicely done!!

Hunt SchNEWS

Three sabs wrongly fingered for damaging Hursley Hambleton Hunters' cars in Dec '97 are now subject to pressure to remand them.

In retaliation Ashford sabs have been hassling the police to prosecute members of Ashford Valley Hunt after evidence of a vicious assault on one of their number has been ignored. Neil McIvor was held down and beaten with an iron bar while a hunts woman took photographs (!). He identified his attackers and several present gave statements, but no-one was questioned or arrested. Neil has been told that this case has been dropped due to lack of evidence and he is due in court accused of attacking the Hunt Master who sustained no injuries and has no witnesses! Another member was ambushed by hunters, who smashed his car up, police arrested him for cruelty to a horse on the word of a hunter. You can contact Ashford sabs on 01233 620985.

Subscribe!

Keep SchNEWS FREE! Just send 1st Class stamps (e.g. 20 for next 20 issues) or donations (payable to Justice?) Ask for "Originals" if you can make copies. Post free to all prisoners. SchNEWS, c/o on-the-fiddle, P.O. Box 2600, Brighton, East Sussex, BN2 2DX.

Tel/Autofax: +44 (0)1273 685913 GET IT EVERY WEEK BY E-MAIL: schnews@brighton.co.uk

Please, Please, send us your old but REUSABLE A4 envelopes.***** If your going on the South Downs Mass Trespass, Shut that gate!

SCHNEWS IN BRIEF

West Country Activist Newsletter is out and is essential reading to anyone in the South West and a darn good read for everyone else. You can acquire your copy on paper - for 5 issues send 10 2nd class stamps to WCA, PO Box 426, Bath, BA1 2ZD - or by email - send a message entitled 'subscribe' to WCA@conk.com *** WCA are also staging a 3-day Gathering Fri 7th - Sun 9th Aug, possibly in South Devon, but if you've any better ideas let them know! The event will focus on workshops: direct action, sustainable lifestyle etc., but will also feature lots of entertainment, a healing area, a creche and a vegan cafe (£1 a meal) by Kebele. For more info/to offer your services in any area, call 01626 363844, for liftsharing call 01225 425284 *** For those of you who get this in time, a last minute call for the A-SEED Mount Pirin activist gathering at Bulgaria, 5-12th July. The gathering will renew the Hot Spring '98 campaign against globalisation and corporate rule, plan the way forward until the millennium and improve networks between groups. Places are limited and you need to get to Sofia by the 5th but help can be found with travel costs (provided you don't fly!) The deadline is 14th June so get cracking Tel Netherlands: 31-20-6682236, fax: 31-20-6650166, email: aseedur@antenna.nl or drop in: <http://www.antenna.nl/aseed/> *** Another Dance Parade UK gig is coming up in Brighton in collaboration with Fringe Festival: Metalheadz, feat. Hidden Agenda and DJ Clarky on two floors of the Escape, Marine Parade, Thurs 2nd July, 10 till late. Tickets £5 on the door or advance from Rounder Records *** Good News from Barking - UEL students who have been occupying the campus finance department since around 20th May (see SchNEWS 168) have achieved a management U-turn and agreed to open the Learning Resources Centre. Direct Action works. SchNEWS says Congratulations!!! *** VIVA! has just produced a Guide to Vegetarian Brighton, having nominated the town the best in Europe for animal-free eating. Containing 150 fully cross-referenced entries it's an essential buy and you can get your copy for only £2.99 direct from Viva!, 12 Queen Square, Brighton, BN1 3FD *** SURVIVAL, who campaign for indigenous peoples' rights, are holding an 'ethnic beats and global grooves' benefit gig on 21 June, 6pm-midnight @ Cross Bar, 257-9 Pentonville Road, London N1. Tribal For Survival features Earthtribe, DJ Nelson Dilation etc. and costs £4 (£3 b4 8pm) *** Worthing's own campaign newsletter The Pork-Bolter is jointly 'celebrating' Big Brother's (well, George Orwell's) birthday (25 June 1903) and the anniversary of the town CCTV system (1 July 1996) with an as yet undisclosed event taking place at 12noon on Sat 27 June @ New South St pedestrian area, nr Lloyds, Worthing town centre. The town centre crime rate in Worthing has gone up by 19% since the system's installation. Said a spokesman: "The CCTV experiment in Worthing has been running for two years and has failed. The cameras must now come down." ***

KEBELE KULTURE

is a project based in a squatted building in Bristol since December 1995 which hosts exhibitions, talks, parties, workshops, meetings, music, a library and a cafe. BUT it needs to raise a well-bargained £20k to buy the building from owners Lloyds Bank by the end of July, after the first eviction order was served last September. Basically, please donate some money! But you can still support them by attending events - the next is a Full Monty video evening on Wed 23rd June @ 8pm (vegan pop-corn available) and meetings - every Tuesday @ 8pm. Find/write to Kebele @ 14 Robertson Rd, Eastville, Bristol, BS5 6JY/0117 939 9469

INSIDE SCHNEWS

The Campsfield Nine would love to get cards of support (they are especially keen on anything connected to the World Cup). They were not allowed to take back to prison a World Cup magazine one of the solicitors gave to them in court, but we can send cards. Please send to: Lucky Agbebaoku, Enahoro Esemuze, Stanley Nwadike and John Quaquah at HMP Bullingdon, PO Box 50, Bicester, OX6 0PR and Sambou Merong and Harrison Tubman at HMYOI Remand Centre Reading, HMP, 4 Forbury Road, Reading, RG1 3HY (Sunny and Edward are out on bail)

SENSIBLE JURY RULING SHOCK

Colin Davies of Stockport who fell 60ft from a bridge in 1994 and now smokes to relieve pain after conventional painkillers saw him hospitalised, was last week cleared of cultivating cannabis in just 40 minutes. The 8-woman 4-man jury "thinks the law is an ass" according to Matthew Atha of the Independent Drugs Monitoring Unit, called as a witness by self-representing Davies. Following the verdict, Davies asked if he could have his 18 cannabis plants back. Meanwhile thousands of scientists, writers, former Heads of State, judges, former DS officers etc. have signed a letter to the UN denouncing the current war on drugs and calling for a policy reappraisal and stating "we believe that the global war on drugs is now causing more harm than drug abuse itself".

OUTSIDE SchNEWS

Lastly, some good news. Ten sabs convicted of aggravated trespass because they interrupted a hunt, achieved a landmark decision, during a High Court appeal, in having recognised that since the hunt was illegally on a railway line at the time, it had itself committed an offence. Unfortunately, convictions were upheld on the facts, but their case established that if a hunt is on local authority land when it is disrupted, no offence exists, a fact often ignored by the lower courts.

*Were you out side the Robinson Crusoe pub way back in May 18th 1994? (Hackney Homeless Festic) Hickman and Rose Solicitors are taking on the claims against Stoke Newington Police including one for a girl whose arm they broke. Get in touch with Rhona 0171 700 2211

...and finally...

In an outburst that said more about the decline of royal genetic mutation, one product of hundreds of years of selective breeding this week attacked the selective breeders of the future. Bony Prince Charlie, spawner of the tragic princes explains to us why genetics is bad. The man who would be King says that genetic engineering "takes mankind into realms that belong to God and to God alone... Apart from certain highly beneficial and specific medical applications, do we have the right to experiment with and commercialise the building blocks of life? We live in an age of rights - and it seems to me that it is time that our Creator had some rights too." In the article for The Daily Telegraph, he continues: "We simply do not know the long-term consequences for human health and the wider environment of releasing plants bred in this way... The lesson of BSE and other entirely man-made disasters on the road to 'cheap food' is surely that it is the unforeseen consequences which present the greatest cause for concern. Even the best science cannot predict the unpredictable."

ye olde disclaimer

The SchNEWS warns all readers not to attend any illegal gatherings or take part in any criminal activities. Always stay within the law. In fact please just sit in, watch TV and go on endless shopping sprees, filling your house and lives with endless consumer crap. Then you will feel content. Honest.