



WAKE UP!! IT'S YER UN-CONTAMINATED...

# SchNEWS

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Friday 28th May 2004

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Issue 455

WE'RE TEACHING THIS ONE TO JUMP FENCES



## MONSKANKO!

**"Under this ruling spreading GM pollution appears to be recognized as a viable corporate ownership strategy"**

**Pat Mooney ETC Group**

Imagine you're a gardener who likes to keep things neat and tidy, while you're next door neighbour's idea of paradise is a bit more on the wild side. Their weed seeds drift across the fence and plant themselves in your soil and start to germinate. You lose the plot, and threaten to call the Council to get them to issue an anti social gardening behaviour order. But before you know it, the neighbours take you to court for stealing their seed! Ridiculous? But that's just what's happened in Canada.

Last Friday the Canadian Supreme Court made a final ruling on a seven year legal battle between the worlds biggest baddest biotech firm, Monsanto, and Percy Schmeiser a Canadian farmer. The court ruled that Percy had infringed Monsanto's patent rights by growing genetically modified Round-up Ready Canola (oil seed rape) on his land. Forget the fact that Percy didn't plant any of Monsanto's seeds. That it was Percy's seeds that got contaminated by GM canola and that he didn't even know that his crop was contaminated! Forget all that, Percy was infringing Monsanto's "intellectual property rights"!

This strange twist of the law which persecutes people for having their own property polluted goes back to a Canadian Federal law passed in 1991 which ruled that patents have precedence over and above a farmer's rights. The ruling means that if a farmer has their crops contaminated with GM seeds then they could be potentially liable to pay Monsanto for "benefiting" from their technology. Terry Boehm, Vice-President of the Canadian National Farmers Union said "It moves us further along the path where corporations will control seed and farmers will lose the right to save seed."

It wasn't all good news for Monsanto. The Supreme Court overturned an earlier court ruling that said Percy should pay the profits of his 1998 crop - about \$20,000 Canadian dollars, because Percy didn't knowingly grow GM Canola. Also he doesn't have to pay one cent of court costs to Monsanto as he did not profit from using Monsanto's technology. Percy believes he won the moral victory and that Monsanto will "have a hard time in pursuing patent infringement against other farmers. They are now going to have to prove that a farmer profited from having RR canola in their field. The Court noted that my profits were the same whether I had conventional canola or

RR canola, so I find it hard to see how Monsanto can say in any future case that the farmer made more money because of their product. This decision may have removed the "teeth" from their patent. I also believe that Monsanto will face huge liability issues down the road. The Court determined that they have ownership to the plant and that I infringed by having it in my field. With ownership comes responsibility and I assume more lawsuits will be filed against them for the contamination of farmer's fields." But Monsanto is a splice and dice bully who like to reap and sow their wild oats against farmers, and they may just decide to take on any that speak out against them. Percy still has to pay his own legal fees and only managed to carry on fighting thanks to supporters donations and remortgaging his home; many farmers simply haven't got the time or money to fight a court case.

Percy has also lost a lifetimes work. For the past 50 years, he had been saving seeds from his best crops, something that farmers have been doing for millennia to produce a diverse range of high yielding crops suitable to local conditions. Now his work has been contaminated with GM. And if you have to buy some new seed, there is a high chance that you'll buy seed from Monsanto who after years of aggressively buying up seed companies are now the world's second biggest seed company!

### CHANGELING

Canola pollen can travel up to 26 km a year so this sort of genetic contamination is spreading. In Canada Monsanto now have their own "police force", many of them ex-Royal Canadian Mounted Police who walk onto a farmers land and take away some seeds of plants for testing to make sure that the farmer isn't using Monsanto's seeds. If a farmer catches them they just say "if you take us to court, we will drag you through the court system and you won't have a farm left." They also send threatening letters to anyone they think might have had their crops contaminated by Monsanto's crops, threatening to sue for \$100,000-\$150,000 compensation. The letters also stated that the farmers could also be sued for revealing the threats to anyone else!

**SchLIVE at The Albert Pub, Monday 31st.**

The comedy news show with films and news read live, plus live music.

Also see us performing at Cambridges Strawberry Fair next Saturday and check out our stall at Kingston Green Fair this Bank Holiday Monday.

### CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

**For making chips...**

Three German men are being charged with possession of firearms after they caught using homemade potato guns. They got the designs from the internet and tried them out by the side of a lake in Kirchhain-Niederwald. They drove away after showing the guns off to spectators, and were chased by police. The men were also in possession of 'a number of potatoes', which they claimed their gun could fire up to 300 yards. Potato guns are classed as a firearm, and none of the men had a permit to carry one.

This pleasant company are now turning its attention to weaker opponents, taking out newspaper ads in Mexico warning peasants that if they are found using GM seed illegally, they risk fines and even prison! Silvia Ribeiro of ETC Mexico says "This will come as shocking news to indigenous farmers in Mexico, whose maize fields have been contaminated with DNA from genetically modified plants, and to farmers everywhere who are fighting to prevent genetically modified organisms from trespassing in their fields."

One of the biotech companies long term strategies is that eventually GM contamination will be so widespread that eventually the public will have to accept GM is here to stay. The Canadian court ruling - ironically the day before International Biodiversity Day - says that Monsanto now have the rights over anything that its genes get into. Despite not managing to get money out of anyone whose crops are contaminated Monsanto welcomed the judgement and claim that the world needs GM crops: "Patent protection encourages innovations that will lead to the next generation of value-added products for Canadian farmers." Showing that obviously farmers can't be trusted with producing seeds and crops and we've all got to leave it to the experts to produce "value-added products", but just who is gaining the value? Monsanto pretty much admitted what it is really interested in by saying. "This ruling maintains Canada as an attractive investment opportunity."

SchNEWS reckons it's up to people everywhere to make sure through direct action and boycotts GM doesn't become an 'attractive investment opportunity' in their neck of the woods.

\* To read Percy's full statement [www.percyschmeiser.com/](http://www.percyschmeiser.com/)

\* To contact the excellent ETC [www.etcgroup.org](http://www.etcgroup.org)

\* Seedy Sundays take the old idea of gardeners swapping seeds, an idea that has spread through Canada and the US and is slowly gaining ground in the UK. [www.seedysunday.org](http://www.seedysunday.org)

## EDO-NISTIC

**"I highly recommend anyone with a local arms dealer get 10 mates together and shut them down for the day, it's easy and if done carefully non-chargable"** - one of the protesters who helped blockade and close down arms maker EDO MBM's premises in Brighton for the day last Thursday. This is a firm who manufacture bomb and missile components and 'proudly supports' the Iraq occupation.

The entrance at EDO was blockaded before six were arrested, while a group got onto the roof of their building - to enjoy the view of Brighton before being arrested. One of the roof climbers braved a broken ankle caused by the climb, and came down voluntarily only to be arrested in the ambulance, charged with aggravated trespass, but un-arrested later in hospital. Another stayed on the roof until late evening before being arrested.

And this wasn't the last EDO heard from those pesky kids; last weekend a few buckets of red paint hit the walls of their building, and there was a noise demo at the entrance last Wednesday.

\* There will be another NOISE DEMO at EDO MBM's premises at 7AM on the 10<sup>th</sup> June. Bring along yer pots and pans to make some noise. 07973228335 www.safp.org.uk

## MAKE MINE A DOUBLE!

Remember the New Kensington Pub in Brighon's North Laine? Well the ex-landlord came a step closer to seriously getting the beers in after a landmark ruling in the High Court last Friday (see SchNEWS 251). The battle has been raging for nearly a decade with hundreds going on rent strike and many of the landlords going bankrupt and homeless as they took on the big breweries.

But now a pub landlord from Staines was awarded £250,000 in damages after he and 600 other landlords took pub chain Intntrepreneur to court over their right to buy barrels of beer at cheaper prices. The ruling says that the landlord was forced to pay too much for the beer he purchased for his pub. The ruling - which the company have a month to appeal - may cost Intntrepreneur more than £100m and is believed to be the first award of damages in the UK for infringement of competition law.

So is cheap pub beer on the horizon? The Licensed Victuallers Association which represents many of the 25,000 licensees in Britain who are tied to four major firms, warned that pub chains may raise rents to compensate for charging less for beer.

\* Intntrepreneur is owned by Japanese venture capitalists Nomura whose asset stripping past is shrouded in mystery as it hides behind a large number of front and off-shore companies. Nomura must throw a good party because they also own First Quench - the country's largest off-licence chain that includes Thresher, Victoria Wine, Wine Rack and Bottoms Up. Nothing like good old freedom of choice in the High Street is there?

## Positive SchNEWS

Last week the Belgian Mininster of the Environment slapped a £35,000 fine on a waste disposal firm for illegally dumping rubbish at the D'Hoppe Forest landfill site which was the site of a protest camp (SchNEWS 433/411) until last July when it was evicted. The landfill site was due to be expanded but in another display of the power of direct action this was prevented, and the fines are down to the attention brought to the area, and the Euro-trashers who were destroying it.

The minister also promised more and higher fines were to come next week for the other illegal garbage dumpers.

## Subscribe!

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## SchNEWS in brief

There's a **National Day of Protest Against the BNP's party political broadcast today (28)** from 5pm London BBC Television Centre, BBC Manchester Office, Oxford Road and BBC Wales office, Cardiff. More details info@naar.org.uk 020 7247 9907 \*\* There's talk of another teknival this bank holiday so get your transport and shit-shovel sorted for the start of the summer. 07092 018200/07092 805720 \*\* There's a demo by **Walthamstow Anarchist Group** 11am-1pm this Saturday (29th) against the supermarket's announcement to trial a reduced sick pay policy in 20 stores. Tesco's a 10-15 minute walk down Hoe Street from Walthamstow Central. info@walthamstowanarchy.org.uk 07810 288 889 \*\* **Permaculture Woodland Gathering:** 3- 6 June, Hill Holt Wood, Lincolnshire, get-together on the subject of sustainable woodland management. 0845 458 1805 woods@permaculture.org.uk \*\* A day of workshops and speakers on **Oil, War and Climate Change** this Saturday (29) 10am - 6pm. Teviot Row House, Bristol Square Edinburgh. 0131 622 2297 www.sead.org.uk \*\* **End the Occupation: Why US-UK troops should leave Iraq now:** discussion 7pm, Wednesday, 9th June Mahatma Gandhi Room Indian YMCA 41 Fitzroy Square, London WC1 Speakers include Tariq Ali, Jeremy Hardy, Haifa Zangana and Ewa Jasiewicz \*\* **Reverend Billy Live!** The revivalist preacher who leads the Church of Stop-Shopping will be at Conway Hall 25 Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4RL on 9<sup>th</sup> June from 7pm. Bar, DJ, Organic Food and Stalls from 7pm. For tickets 0870 787 9871 www.theecologist.org/revbilly \*\* Campaigning by the **South Rusholme Residents Association** in Manchester has saved Platt Fields Park from plans to build a car park. To celebrate the return of Platt Fields Park, there will be a Picnic there on Sunday 13th June 2pm \*\* The world's largest company and employer, Wal-Mart will be facing **The Against The Wal Roadshow** at their shareholders convention in Arizona between June 4th and 5<sup>th</sup>. Employing Chinese doll makers at 13 cents per hour helped boss, S. Robson Walton become the World's richest man in 2001. But an alternative to the low wage high profit \$220 billion a year company is being offered by the coalition of labor, human rights, environmental and peace activists. They'll be running an **Alternatives to Wal-Mart Village** with DIY skill-sharing and strategy sessions for the emerging anti-Wal-Mart movement performances by musicians and artists all day long www.againstthewal.org \*\* Remember **Clem Turff**, an anarchist involved in DAM and Solidarity Federation, in the anti-poll tax movement; Hunt Sabbing and the fight against the Criminal Justice Act? Clem died last year and people are hoping to put a short pamphlet together of his life. If anyone has reminiscences or anecdotes please send them to svartfrosk@yahoo.co.uk \*\* Zoe Young will be talking about her book 'A New Green Order' all about the dodgy dealings of the World Bank, next Thursday (3 June) at the Cowley Club, 12 London Rd., Brighton 6pm \*\* 6th Annual Cannabis Festival, 5th June, Brockwell Park, Brixton. March from Kennington Park, opposite Oval tube station. Meet 12 noon. Festival from 1pm.

## Anti-War Briefs

\* In February 1991 Alex Izetto received nine vaccinations in 24 hours in preparation of the Gulf War but never went there because the war ended two days before his departure.

He now suffers from various illnesses and a judgment in May 2003 acknowledged the connection between the vaccinations and his bad health. Nevertheless he was only granted half of the war pension because "in December 2003, a war pension tribunal ruled that Mr Izett was only 50% disabled." Because of this he has been on hunger strike since 1 May 2004. If you want to support him: 020 209 4751 www.refusingtokill.net

\* On Monday (31) from 12 noon gather in Parliament Square for Brian Haw's 3<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of camping outside parliament in protest against the war on Iraq.

\* Last Friday Demonstrators stormed the Caterpillar Factory to campaign against its support for the Israeli army and the D9 bulldozers that they sell (see SchNEWS N.454).

12 protestors from the Tyneside Palestine Solidarity Campaign, invaded and blocked the entrance of Caterpillar in Peterlee, county Durham. Some protesters climbed on several of the firm's bulldozers, and others chained themselves to the main gates, and the workforce was leafleted.

Several police officers were called to the demonstration and cut the chains with bolt cutters, but no arrests were made and no-one was injured in the incident. Caterpillar refused to comment on the protest.

## Inside SchNEWS

**Jeff Luers** is serving an unbelievable 22 years for setting fire to 3 SUV vehicles in a car yard in Eugene, USA, to make a statement about global warming. This sentence is unbelievably harsh, seeing as his co-defendant got three years - a more average time for eco-inspired arson. There will be a global day of action on June 12<sup>th</sup> in his support - to find out what's going on your area to mark this day see www.freefreemow.org

Write to Jeff Luers, #13797671, OSP, 2605 State Street Salem, OR 97310 USA.

\* The Earth Liberation Support prisoner list has more than doubled in recent months. To get names and address's of prisoners you can write to see www.spiritoffreedom.org.uk

## ...and finally...

Hunting is a religion, and should be protected like all other religions. This is the novel new idea being promoted by a group calling themselves the Free Church of Country Sports, who are hoping to use the Human Rights Act to protect their cult status. Its 'founding fathers' claim that proposed legislation to ban hunting will infringe their rights as a religious minority.

Comparing the hunt to other religions, they reckon that new members are 'baptised' in the blood of the killed animal (this is 'no stranger than dressing them in white and submerging them in water' apparently), they blow a horn similar to that used in Jewish customs, and have their own language, art and customs. One of the founders maintained that the church *is* valid, adding 'We have plenty of headed note paper.'

They are currently looking to recruit 7000 members, and get official recognition as a religion. "As a church, we could not be attacked by a government. There would, of course, be a court case, which is what we want", said a spokesman.

Here at SchNEWS Towers we're praying for divine intervention.

## Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers we'll be back with more seedy goings on with the growth of Darwinian capitalism ... Honest!