



***AGAINST
THE
ENGINEERING
OF LIFE***

Venomous Butterfly Publications
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*Texts by René Riesel and the Society Against
Scientistic Obscurantism and Industrial
Terrorism/Association Against Scientistic
Obscurantism and Industrial Despotism against
genetic engineering and its false opposition*

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with the dismantling of the Millau McDonald's). That pantomime is over, but it has fulfilled its function, successfully obscuring the meaning of the practical critique that had begun to take shape thanks to the destruction of genetic monstrosities. Consumerist verbiage and "antiglobalist" rhetoric have managed to block any effective challenge to the universal artificialization of life and its irreversible subordination to industrial despotism (i.e. to capitalism in its reality, not to the fantasy capitalism portrayed by the simplistic image of a predatory and metanational financial globalization).

As René Riesel has made clear in a rectification printed (though in a much abbreviated form) by *Le Monde* of 24 November, he forbids anyone [and notably the Confédération Paysanne — *Trans.*] to promote the idea that he would be so lacking in firmness as to ask for any kind of pardon or allow one to be sought in his name by the citizenist crew or by the gravediggers of the old workers' movement.

It is precisely because René Riesel has not compromised himself with any demagogic strategy, any mass campaign devoid of principle, that he is not *alone* today. It behooves us to prove this by mobilizing in solidarity with the actions Riesel has taken and defended in his writings. This solidarity may be expressed immediately by helping him confront the devastating expenses that he is bound to incur, whatever the outcome concerning his last possibility of obtaining a reduced jail term. (By law, it should be noted, the fines themselves must be shouldered by the guilty party alone.)

Paris, 26 November 2002.

*Association contre l'Obscurantisme Scientiste et le Despotisme
Industriel*

52 rue Damrémont — 75018 Paris — France

Checks should be made payable to the Association COSEDI.

Publisher's Introduction

There are certain specific aspects of the ruling order, certain developments that very clearly expose its real nature to those who are willing to see. Biotechnology is one such reality. Within this sphere of technological development the extent of control that the ruling order of capital and the state intend to exercise over every aspect of existence is laid quite bare. Yet the depth of this reality is ignored even by the vast majority of those who question genetic engineering.

Biotechnology is in fact the absolutely logical outcome of capitalism and industrialism, the intertwined techno-economic system that requires domination and control over the whole of existence. The texts presented here are analyses of biotechnology as a manifestation of these systems that must, by their nature extinguish what is living in nature and what is human and individual in society. René Riesel was involved in a significant direct action campaign in France from about 1997 through 1999 involving the *Confédération Paysanne* (Small Farmers' Confederation). He considered his actions to be an active critique of the social order that makes biotechnology possible, and explains, in these texts, the nature of that critique and the reasons for choosing the particular targets. He broke with the Confederation and former accomplice in sabotage, José Bové, over their decision to embrace a reformist practice involving dialogue with those in power, thus undermining the force of the critique in practice of the direct action campaign.

A group of revolutionaries in Britain who publish under the name of *Combustion*, have pointed out that some choices Riesel has made could also weaken the force of this critique, and I think that their criticism is worth noting, without taking away from Riesel's critiques presented here. In "You Make Plans – We Make History", the comrades of *Combustion* say:

However, with the greatest respect to Riesel for continuing to fight with such generally lucid intransigence, we don't entirely agree with Riesel's stance. After his initial and mostly excellent "interview"

book (Declaration sur L'Agriculture Transgénique et Ceux Qui Pretendent S'y Opposer) with the Encyclopédie des Nuisances he too, like Bové, gives media interviews – in, for example, Liberation, and the right-wing Ecologist magazine [...] Though the content of Riesel's interviews is far more radical and profound than Bové's, such complicity reinforces an ideology of free speech without consequences, of dialogue with the ruling world, which undermines his intransigence. Contrary to the normal world of obnoxious control-freakery-cum-editing, practiced often as much by revolutionary autonomists as by the straight media, it might well be that in the case of Riesel he's ensured that they don't alter one word of what he's saying. Nevertheless it gives credence to these bankrupt ideological outfits [...] Though he imagines that this gets his ideas across to a wider audience, Riesel has forgotten that the media's seductive methods of coopting rebellion weakens [sic] and softens [sic] whatever radical perspective he tries to convey [...] The media is a pleasantly lit window onto the dominant world that constantly entices you in, and into polite dialogue with it round the apparently warm hearth of spectacular recognition. But refusing all that cynical shit is the only way to have some margin of dignity, some sense of self-worth and honesty, and some degree of clarity. If you want to be able to look at yourself in the mirror and not lie to yourself, then just say fuck off to all that flattering crap.

In no way does this critique undermine Riesel's lucid analysis of biotechnology and the society that produces it, but it does show that even someone with a generally lucid critique of the totality of this social order may have practical blind-spots that weaken that critique. One of the most common blind-spots that I have observed is precisely in relation to the media.

But despite this specific critique of Riesel's relation to the media, his analyses of biotechnology and of industrial, techno-

Support René Riesel !

By

The Association Against Scientific Obscurantism and Industrial Despotism

Assuming failure of the very last remaining judicial recourse, namely a request that the Nérac suspended sentence not be revoked, then the decision handed down on 19 December 2002 by the Appeals Court means that Joseph Bové and René Riesel will each, as expected, serve fourteen-month prison terms. In addition, they must each pay a fine of 7,622 euros and damages, interest and costs of 12,103 euros. The sentence is in accord with Articles 475-1 and 618-1 of the Code of Legal Procedure and Article 1018A of the General Tax Code. The crime was the organizing, on 5 June 1999, of the destruction of experimental transgenic rice at a state-run agronomic research facility, the CIRAD of Montpellier.

As was likewise to be expected, the only reaction of which the Confédération Paysanne [Farmers' Confederation] and its citizenist allies proved capable was to appeal for pardon to the President of the Republic, for consideration from the European Court of Justice, for solidarity from the moribund left, and for compassion from public opinion. What we can now see is the real alignment of forces, and the real worth of the "strategy" of watering down our critique in the mistaken belief that it would thus become more acceptable to progressives. At the end of the day nothing is left of the rejection of the technologies of death, and it becomes possible to cast aside every trace of shame and insult the sabotage we engaged in by characterizing it as nothing more than a legitimate exercise of "trade-union rights". This is yet another demonstration of the rule according to which the media will always hand the microphone to those who have nothing to say (and now that Bové has passed his sell-by date, it is the media people themselves who delight in telling us how he fell into the trap of media exposure).

We are witness to the ignominious collapse of the noisy sideshow that has been going on since August 1999 (beginning

Considering that specialized science's obliviousness perfectly corresponds to the historical unconsciousness of Political Economy, the other crucial element of the dominant ideology;

Considering as well that in the light of the intrinsic vulnerability of the industrial system, of the planet-wide social disintegration it has produced and the resulting chaos, we can expect the coming years to be a time of industrial terrorism and permanent war, under the aegis of the *Ministry of Fear*;

Considering, finally, that only by collectively exercising freedom of thought and critique will communities be formed which are in a position to practically oppose the material and *intellectual* ravages of this techno-industrial and commodity society;

...

The Society Against Scientific Obscurantism and Industrial Terrorism has as its goal, without neglecting the practical evaluation of the *results* of techno-scientific activity, to immediately reach the stage of questioning its reductionist principles. This, however, should not be taken as an outright condemnation of western experimental science. But insofar as it has come to organize itself in an absolute and exclusive manner as the crucible of all knowledge, forbidding any internal or external evaluation, it represents in no uncertain terms the dominant form of modern-day *obscurantism*.

[I chose to leave off the last paragraph, which merely announced a meeting that occurred over two years ago—publisher]

Translated by Bernard Cooper of the Mauvaise Herbe journal and Michael William.

scientific, capitalist society are among the most lucid. And this critique in words has also been expressed in action.

Riesel has also been involved with the Encyclopédie des Nuisances, which has carried on some of the most significant work in recent times in terms of developing a revolutionary critique of industrialism, (unfortunately, very little of their work has been translated into English) and with the Society Against Scientific Obscurantism and Industrial Terrorism/Association Against Scientific Obscurantism and Industrial Despotism, which is also developing such a critique. I have included a declaration and a statement about Riesel's current legal hassles relating to his participation in anti-GMO direct action by the last group after Riesel's writings.

Riesel has been sentenced to 14 months in prison (as of February, 2003 – the sentence could be increased) and approximately \$20,000 in fines for his acts of sabotage. He currently needs support and solidarity. The last piece in this pamphlet, "Support René Riesel" gives more information.

AGAINST THE ENGINEERING OF LIFE

(texts by René Riesel and the Society Against Scientistic Obscurantism and Industrial Terrorism/ Association Against Scientistic Obscurantism and Industrial Despotism against genetic engineering and its false opposition)

About the Authors

Born in 1950, René Riesel is a veteran of 1968 and sometime anarchist, *enragé* and situationist. Since 1973 he has lived in the country and for a dozen or so years he has been a sheep farmer. Invited to join the *Confédération Paysanne* (Farmers' Confederation) in 1991, he was on its national secretariat from 1995 and resigned from all his functions in March 1999. He has been involved in a number of acts of sabotage against transgenic corn and rice (a few of which were carried out along with José Bové and others). He is currently facing 14 months in prison, 7622 Euros in fines and 12,103 Euros in damages and expenses as punishment for these actions. Riesel has serious political differences with Bové, as will be apparent from the texts that follow.

René Riesel's writings are published in French by the Encyclopédie des Nuisances. The Association Against Scientistic Obscurantism and Industrial Despotism (originally called the Society Against Scientistic Obscurantism and Industrial Terrorism) is involved in the development of an anti-industrial critique and is acting as a contact for support/solidarity for René Riesel in his trials for anti-GMO actions.

innovations are, when in the form of chemical and nuclear poisoning of the planet, the consequences and cumulative results of less ambitious technologies are everywhere out of control, today and for centuries to come;

- that the science produced by industrial and commodity society has already contributed towards turning the planet's nature into chaos and making humanity *non-adapted* to its own world;
- that what today claims to be acceptable scientific activity consists solely of gauging tolerance thresholds, of weakening them and acclimatizing us, mentally and physiologically, to a truly inhospitable world, while mobilizing all the resources of electronics and industrial chemistry, and this even before raising the *promises* of gene-splicing fantasies;
- that this scientistic pretension to control all nature, humans and society manifestly results only in additional mutilations and aggravated disasters, and that the remaining function of this mercenary science only tends to accustom us to all the catastrophes in the making and equip the social order's protectors – police, army, psychological support groups, etc. – against those individuals or populations who might be recalcitrant;
- that catastrophes are already present in sufficient numbers and have been for such a long time that it's clear that unless adequate critical lucidity is directed at their *deeper causes*, these catastrophes will only bring more submission and the loss of the last shreds of autonomy, in other words the need and request for *protection*, dispensed solely by state power or with the help of its auxiliaries – citizen-lobbies and other “non-governmental” organizations;

Considering the reductionist atavism of modern science, its systematic neglect of consequences and its contempt for all non-scientific bodies of knowledge that have contributed towards humanization *in all its forms* and which continue as best they can to oppose this artificializing extremism;

Declaration of the Society Against Scientific Obscurantism and Industrial Terrorism

The following text was written in support of René Riesel, accused of sabotaging GMO rice experiments at the French agricultural research agency (CIRAD) in Montpellier, France. Riesel participated in the May '68 events in Paris and was also a member of the Situationist International. Two others were also accused of the CIRAD action, including José Bové, the anti-globalization activist. In a statement at the outset of the trial, Riesel dissociated himself from the reformist approach of Bové. A judgment in favor of the CIRAD went to appeal in December 2001. The text was published in the summer 2002 edition of *In Estrmis, Bulletin de liaison et de critique anti-industrielle (Anti-industrial Liaison and Critique Bulletin)*.

DECLARATION

Considering:

- that without fighting against the basis of the world that produces GMOs it is completely illusory to claim to oppose them, as do those adopting a supplicating citizenist approach which is respectful of the economy and the state;
- that media frenzy and confusion have until now managed (even during the February 8 lower court trial) to prevent the radical refusal of genetic engineering *as such* from clearly standing out as the only serious reason for the sabotage at the CIRAD as well as other actions known or covered up that followed;
- the function, crucial in all aspects to this concealment, of the citizen-lobby, behind-the-times *progressives* who dream of seeing states and techno-science – globally integrated in the arsenal and *the interests* of domination – continue to watch over developments;
- that there is no need to await the conclusions of experts of any sort to know how disastrous “biotechnological”

I. The First Direct Action Campaign in France against Genetic Engineering

by
René Riesel

Chronology

7 June 1997. St Georges d'Espéranthes (Isère). Destruction of a field of experimental Monsanto rapeseed by Confédération Paysanne and Green activists.

27 November 1997. Novartis Bt maize authorized by Jospin/Voynet government.

8 January 1998. Nérac (Lot-et-Garonne). Destruction of Novartis action. Riesel: “Declaration before the Agen Court.”

5 February 1998. Government decree formalizes authorization of 27 November 1997.

18 February 1998. Lightning occupation of Novartis premises at Rueil-Malmaison (Hauts-de-Seine) by about thirty unemployed people. Verdict at Agen trial: suspended sentences.

20-21 June 1998. Consensus Conference of “citizens”.

30 July 1998. Government authorizes new varieties of transgenic maize.

10 September 1998. Monbéqui (Tarn et Garonne). Destruction of experimental maize and soy plots, and the contents of a greenhouse, at a Monsanto site. Monsanto brings civil suit against Riesel and the Confédération Paysanne (FF 1.3m).

24 November 1998. Partial sabotage of a debate organized by the newspaper *Le Monde* at the *Cité des Sciences* (Paris), Participants bombarded with rotten eggs, etc. The pamphlet “*Rendez-Vous, Citoyens!*” [Give Yourselves Up, Citizens!] is

distributed by a group called A Few Enemies of the Transgenic Brave New World.

27 March 1999. Lyons. Blockade of the “Biovision Forum”.

April 1999. Publication by the *Encyclopédie des Nuisances* of their book “Remarks on Genetically Modified Agriculture and the Degradation of Species”.

30 May 1999 Inter-Continental Caravan. Bassane (Gironde). A half-hectare of AgrEvo transgenic rapeseed destroyed (by grinding).

2 June 1999. Inter-Continental Caravan. One hectare of transgenic rapeseed cut down and burnt at Gaudiès (Ariège). Banner: We are angry. We cut all down to start with.”

5 June 1999 Inter-Continental Caravan. Montpellier. CIRAD governmental research center broken into by about 150 people. Experimental rice plants destroyed. Posters left at the site say: “Expose the researchers! Close down the laboratories!” and “The experts are our friends. They have never ever lied to us.”

3 July 1999. Rodez (Aveyron). Confédération Paysanne action destroys a plot of Monsanto/RAGT-Semences maize.

6 July 1999. Lightning occupation of CIRAD headquarters by A Few Enemies of the Transgenic Brave New World.

10 July 1999. Porcaro (Morbihan). Confédération Paysanne and environmentalists destroy 600 square meters of Monsanto maize.

12 August 1999. Millau Aveyron). Dismantling of half-built McDonald’s Restaurant in protest against US import restrictions on Roquefort. Media circus. Bové and nine others charged. Bové sentenced to three months in prison.

The McDonald’s incident halted what is here defined as the first direct action campaign against GMOs (see below). Are the following later incidents perhaps harbingers of a second campaign?

prepares to colonize not just the body and the mind, but the most intimate reaches of all life.

It must be clear that there can be no “getting through” either genetic modification or any of the other biocidal technologies propagated by an unshackled economy until we have overcome our need to submit to the blandishments of technology and industry and the belief in scientific promises of uninterrupted progress. This is the only conceivable escape route. And it leads out of this society. Not that reform is impossible, far from it: it goes on every day as a way of staving off the catastrophe with which the society continually threatens us. The point is that the catastrophe is real. It is the normal *modus operandi* of an industrial world for which it has become profitable to announce that each of its advances precipitates *permanent* dislocation and collapse; and to stress that there is even worse to come, that we should fear unprecedented disasters, and be ready to cope with them. Be ready, above all, to keep taking it in the neck. This is why it would be especially illogical to reject the intra-economic crisis-theory of the mechanistic Marxists, with its boom-bust cycles so propitious for the final proletarian onslaught, only to embrace a socio-ecological messianism predicated on a general outbreak of peace and love on every level (technological, climactic, nuclear, financial, viral, etc.), which would suddenly ruin the prospects of the dominant system by launching the rag-tag remnants of humanity upon the reconquest of who knows what paradise lost. Since we know that the catastrophe lies within the realm of the possible, we have no choice but to refuse *in practice* to take it into account. Striving to put it off, even speculating on the opportunity it might offer – these are merely ways of collaborating with the effort already in hand to reach a final solution to the human question.

genetically modified foods in the home, the happy-go-lucky meddling with every living thing accelerates – and it speeds up all the more where knowledge of the spheres concerned is virtually nil: plants strictly for industrial use, strategic viruses, animals with human organs – the mind boggles. And medical research, all shame long forgotten at never admitting that its sole aim is to contrive our adaptation to a pathogenic society, now envisages the deployment of gene therapies to produce, on the model of the improved animals of industrialized husbandry, *new human beings* who will *demand* to be continually treated as sick because they will have been persuaded never to despair of being repaired through out their lengthy *survival*.

The Luddites and we are separated by an epoch, at times exhilarating for our side, during which the poor, gravitating en masse from the fields to the factories and the struggle against wage labor, came to believe – like many a millenarian movement before them – that the only problem was to burn down the castle, to expropriate the expropriators, that the world would promptly change its foundation if the economy were set right-side-up, if the means of production and their technical supports which “belonged to all”, were simply reappropriated: selection and reassessment of their use could safely be left for later.

Aside from the fact that it is happily no longer possible to bask in the messianic illusion of an ineluctable shift from the reign of necessity to the reign of freedom, we have also had to come to terms with the liberation in human beings of extremist tendencies toward submission as soon as totalitarian systems, well enough equipped ideologically and technically, could neutralize the old conditions of exploitation and domination which still allowed for humanizing tendencies. All the same, human communities antedating modern totalitarianism, or surviving on its fringes, cannot be said either to have fully realized themselves or to have ended up in an industrial universalism. They have been obliged, simply, to renounce the exploration of alternative avenues once open to them. The last historical opportunities to take such avenues become fewer when, the better to erase their memory, the superlatively well equipped totalitarianism of the democracy of commodities

Lightning occupation of INRA offices by a supposed support committee for José Bové (30 August 1999). Four or five public destructions claimed by the Confédération Paysanne. Nighttime destruction of an INRA greenhouse in Toulouse by a group calling themselves “Seekers in the Night” (26 June 2000). Clandestine destruction at Longué (Maine at Loire) of Biogemma transgenic maize the day before a “protest picnic” organized by the Confédération Paysanne at the site (9 September 2000).

**Extracts from *Declarations on Transgenic Agriculture and Those Who Claim to Oppose It* by René Riesel
(published by Editions de l'Encyclopédia des Nuisances,
Paris, 2000)**

From an interview with René Schwartz, conducted in February 2000 and first published in No Pasarán, special issue of March 2000 (Déclarations, pp 51-54, 56, 57)

The very first action in France against genetically modified organisms (GMOs) was carried out in the department of Isère, in June 1997 by the Confédération Paysanne (Farmers' Confederation)¹ and a number of ecological activists. The targeted crops were partly cut down and destroyed. A full salvo was not delivered until six months later, however, in January 1998; this was the sabotage at Nérac (Lot-et-Garonne). The final main actions of the series were in the Ariège department and in Montpellier, in June 1999, in the context of the Inter-Continental Caravan.² In the interim, or very shortly afterwards, eight experimental parcels were attacked and damaged in varying degrees (for one of these actions nobody claimed responsibility); three lightning occupations took place, one of a private company's premises (Novartis), two of State institutions (CIRAD [Center for International Cooperation in Agronomic research for Development] and INRA [National Institute of Agronomic Research]); and several acts of sabotage, some successful, some not, took aim at the range of seminars and symposia. All of which doesn't amount to much. And it was all very confused.

Prior to Nérac, the opposition to genetic engineering, which was organized by a variety of pressure groups (*associations*) and lobbies, limited its criticism essentially to the health related and

¹ [For the author's views on (and adventures in) the Confédération Paysanne, see *Déclarations*, pp 13 and following. *Translator*]

² [The Inter-Continental Caravan of May-June 1999 brought six hundred representatives of Southern people's movements to Europe to protest the dominant "developmental paradigm". Further information can be found easily on line (as for example at www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~firstcut/caravan.html). *Translator*]

since the Luddites and the *canuts* runs like a secret thread through the history of social struggles".²⁵ Nor, by extension, can they avoid saying why they see the sabotage of necro-technologies as a resurgence of the shearing-frame breakers, and why such action "finally provides the *canuts* [and Luddites] with the justification that they in their time were not quite able to conceive of".²⁶

In the crepuscular dawn of industrial society, the Luddites could hope in a material sense to halt the invasion of the machines that denied their craft and replaced it with the "shoddy work" of mass production: they could break them or threaten to do so. For our part, though we may enjoy the dubious advantage of two centuries of hindsight and clear knowledge of the industrial extremes to which workers were subjected for long years in the twentieth century, we cannot nourish any comparable hope with respect to genetically modified plants. Those who claim that it might be possible to "survive" genetic modification (in what condition one might ask) are lying, or fooling themselves, or don't know what they are talking about, or all of the above. We shall not survive genetic modification even in the way which some people still dream of surviving the ravages of nuclear power: by cohabiting for a few millennia with radioactive dumps, crumbling sarcophaguses, marine dead zones in the Baltic, and so forth. We had better get ready to keep an accounting – beginning forthwith and continuing until the end of time – of the mutagenic effects, direct and infinitely recombinable (and not confined to the plant world), of a genetic pollution of plants whose irreversibility is about the only thing certain that may be said about.

Even as the credulous are being entertained with precautionary "decisions" of the European parliament, or of the Cartagena Conference on biosafety and international trade, and assailed by government and corporate propaganda about the use of

²⁵ Encyclopédie des Nuisances. *Remarques sur l'agriculture génétiquement modifiée et la dégradation des espèces* (Paris: Editions de l'Encyclopédie des Nuisances, 1999), p.16.

²⁶ Riesel, Declaration before the Agen Court, February 3 1998, in *Déclarations*, p. 85. (See Part I, note 6 above).

gone unnoticed, just like most of the spectacle's public secrets, never so well kept as when they are made blindingly obvious. But for this very reason its revelation has to be counted one of the most eloquent *experimental findings* of the Luddite exactions and operations described above – those “commando actions” and “other combats” conducted by “a few Manichaean manipulators”²³ who make no bones about their inability to oppose genetically modified foods without opposing the world that produces them.

We live in a time when the triumphant industrialization of the world has largely persuaded our contemporaries that the entire future of the human race resides in the uninterrupted continuation of this process. There are those here or there who are busily convincing themselves that the transformations of wage labor, the filtration and recycling of industrial pollutants, the biologists' revenge upon the physicists, considered together with the swamping of the masses under information technology and any other conceivable means of making life artificial, are just so many harbingers of a *post-industrial era*. Carried to its inevitable logical conclusion, this attitude implies that humanity can be deprived of all rear support, and stultified to the point where of its own accord it abolishes the very last traces of any other conceptions of life. Careful scrutiny reveals that this is precisely the agenda of interactive submission concealed by the veils of the *economistic critique of the economy* as propagated, on a “precautionary” basis of course, by the boosters of anti-globalist speed-thinking. In reality there is no possible common ground between these mental contortionists jabbering about “commodification” while at the same time claiming to have discovered the economy's *universal* ambitions,²⁴ and those who firmly intend to revive reasons for overthrowing that economy.

These last can do no less than renew the connection with “the anti-industrial subversion of that *unknown revolution* which

²³ To quote Alan Weil of CIRAD.

²⁴ “The particular task of bourgeois society is the establishment of the world market, at least in outline, and of production based upon the world market. As the world is round, this seems to have been completed by the colonization of California and Australia and the opening up of China and Japan” (Marx to Engels, October 8, 1858).

environmental risks of agricultural applications. Confédération Paysanne added the issues of the headlong industrialization of agricultural modes of production and the increasing dependence of farmers on seed suppliers.

The direct action at Nérac, carried out by Confédération Paysanne members of the South and Southwest regions, went a good deal farther. By striking directly at *stocks* of genetically modified maize seed within the warehouses of Novartis, this act demonstrated, within the midst of a “virtual” strike of the unemployed,³ that the high tradition of sabotage could be aptly resuscitated. It constituted an exemplary practical rejoinder to two or three government lies then being cynically put about by a neo-ecological minister.⁴ And, perhaps without being aware of the fact, it harked back to the anti-technological, anti-industrial and anti-progressivist tradition of the Luddites, so effectively repressed by the old revolutionary movement. As though to prove this beyond doubt, the CFDT⁵ associated itself with the public prosecutor's legal sanctions.

It was of course to be feared that such a splendid warning signal would quickly be stifled by the industry lobbies, with an assist from the citizens/ecologists/consumers. The latter naturally disagreed with the illegality, and they certainly weren't about to miss this chance to whine on about the need for caution, transparency, traceability, social dialogue and all the rest of their claptrap. The clear intent was to fend off any closer examination of the impact of genetic engineering not just on farming, but on all other areas where new methods of control and domination, from therapeutic gene-splicing to eugenics, may be good prospects for the arsenal of dehumanization of market society.

³ This movement of a rather small number of unemployed received considerable media attention and was largely controlled by the unions and a few leftist and pre-citizenist “associations”. Its demands did not get beyond Christmas bonuses and “social minima”.

⁴ Dominique Voynet of the Greens became Minister of the Environment after the parliamentary victory of the “plural left” in 1997.

⁵ The CFDT, or Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail, a traditionally anti-stalinist French trade union, offers an updated version of old-fashioned class collaboration. (In the 1970's the union had gone so far as to declare itself in favor of workers' control).

For the trial to which the Nérac action gave rise, I wrote a declaration to the court in which I sought to respond in advance to such attempts at neutralization.⁶ Although tens of thousands of copies of this text were circulated (with no help from the media), this could naturally in no way compensate for the absence of a real movement capable of building on its conclusions. For several months thereafter we were immersed in the tepid bath of media-managed “public debate”; the State itself went so far as to organize a Citizens’ Conference that was hailed by a goodly number of numbskulls – and not only of the pressure-group sort – as a remarkable *breakthrough* for democracy⁷.

Against the backdrop of the mini-epidemic of anti-globalization that quickly overran these circles, which were only too delighted to have a new stick with which to beat the “transnationals”, the noisy self-boosting of state-funded researchers – not a little windy lest their genome studies come

⁶ “Déclaration devant le tribunal d’Agen” (3 February 1998). Reprinted in the [French] volume from which the present selections came, pp79-86. [The French text may also be found on Ken Knabb’s website at www.slip.net/~knabb along with an extract in English translation. The extract will be printed here as an appendix.—editor]

⁷ Consider the following definition of the “consensus conference” from Philippe Roqueplo, *Entre savoir et décision, l’expertise scientifique* (Paris: INRA, 1997): “This is a procedure designed to prepare the ground for parliamentary debate on technological choices by placing citizens at the center of the process of public and contentious evaluation. It takes the form of a dialogue between a panel of citizens and a panel of experts in the context of a conference lasting several days... One panel faces the other, the proceedings being coordinated and overseen by a chairperson... Eventually the citizen panel convenes and draws up the concluding document... On the final day this document is read, and the experts emend it as may be necessary where errors have been made... Such discussions foreshadow parliamentary debate and create the best conditions for the taking of decisions that are as consensual as possible... In any event, this procedure is an attempt to air the questions society wishes to ask the experts and at the same time to precipitate a confrontation between specialist wisdom and social values. In a broader way the intent is to inform citizens better on the matters in hand and encourage further reflection on their part. This is fantastically exciting.”

immoderate reliance on self-suggestion and apodictic or circular arguments.

They needn’t worry: it is plain enough that researchers are model citizens par excellence. It is not merely that, like all good consumer-actors, they take their citizenship for a walk at every possible legitimate opportunity, voting according to their convictions, informing themselves with that aim in mind, consuming in perfect lucidity, not to mention joining civic, cultural and athletic associations, entrusting the state with the education of their offspring as early as possible, and so on. They do better still, going so far in their laboratories, colloquia and publications, as to eschew all discussion of their *mission*, which by its very nature serves scientific and human progress, as well of course as the dissemination of the national scientific culture; for it should be borne in mind that this mission is assigned to them by a hierarchy all the more empowered to do so for having been appointed by a political class which – short of contesting the superiority of the democratic system itself – must be deemed a pure emanation of the sovereignty of the people. Furthermore, whenever perplexity assails this parliamentary representation or its executive arm in connection with some technological innovation or other, does it not fall as a matter of course to a researcher (or at least to a research director) to offer society a suitably multidisciplinary account of the benefits that may be expected to flow from it? And incidentally, in the controversy over genetically modified organisms, was this not the goal of the consensus conferences?

Notice that nothing in the pleadings of the experts – low as they are on the totem pole, and hardly steeled to the need not to let the cat out of the bag – nothing so much as hints at the notion, the indeed *perfectly absurd* notion, that one day the recommendation might be made, *by experts*, that the fertile field of research and specialization opened up by genetic engineering be closed; or that a single *decision-maker* could ever conceivably accept such a fanciful suggestion. That this should be so is itself information of capital importance, for it encapsulates *everything* that needs saying about all those technical, economic, ecological or ethical debates where *social questions* are allegedly being addressed. And, being of capital importance, it has, of course,

several years, “public agronomic research fulfilled its role by pursuing basic research on the possibility of using transgenic plants for agronomic and agro-alimentary purposes”. Lastly, a CFDT-INRA communiqué issued in connection with a promotional remake in April 2000 of the rapeseed destruction at Gaudiés, complete with schizophrenic Greens and State-decorated representatives of ATTAC²¹, declined “absolutely to condemn the use of GMOs” and added its voice to the denouncers of the “obstruction of the progress of a kind of knowledge sought in direct response to a social demand... despised by those who destroy these experiments...”²²

Our mummified government researchers are devalued in their own eyes, poorly remunerated for their expertise, and disqualified by their decisive contributions to the “silent revolution” – to the export of the green *counter-revolution* and to the result thereof, censured not only by their paymaster but also by their paymaster’s public opinion; and if they get hot under the collar about being *seen* to change masters, with the advent of the public-private consortia of the Génoplant variety, it is only because they have largely resigned themselves to the fact that their function, society itself, their boss, and even their illusions on all these have *already* had to change. Whence their

²¹ Present on this occasion were Jean-Luc Benhamias, national spokesperson for the Greens, and François Dufour, vice-president of ATTAC, recently enrolled in the Legion of Honor. [ATTAC: Action pour une Taxe Tobin d’Aide aux Citoyens/Action for a Tobin Tax in Aid of Citizens. Named of the American economist James Tobin, who proposed taxing speculative financial transactions, ATTAC sees itself as a citizens movement or *association* striving “to reconquer ground lost by democracy to the financial sphere” and opposing any further cession of state power to investors and business interests. *Trans.*]

²² See *Libération* for June 23 and July 8, 1999; CGT-INRA statement of July 6, 1999; CFDT-INRA statement of April 19, 2000. At the trial arising from the Nérac action, the CFDT of Lot-et-Garonne had gone much further, associating itself formally with the prosecution of those accused of “incontrovertible injury to the tools of the trade [and to] the exercise of the freedom to work of the employees of an enterprise”. The mystifying CGT-INRA statement of April 24, 2000 is also well worth a look.

under fire in turn and respect for their “expertise” be eroded – created a clear obligation to spotlight the responsibility of their boss, namely the state, and their individual responsibility, in the production of the technologies of death. And, beyond the incessant blurring of the line between public and private, to illuminate the social function of scientific research and its technical applications, state-funded or no. This was the context in which the transgenic rice in a hothouse of the Montpellier CIRAD was carefully chosen as a target. The target was hit without reference to any agent other than the Inter-Continental Caravan – the original decision having been taken at the outset of the Caravan project in France with a view to avoiding any possibility of cooptation. The action was blessed by the joyful participation of fifty Indian farmers eager to demonstrate just how they felt about the agenda that is being prepared for them.

Further interventions had been planned, but when the media-citizenist offensive was launched, with the McDonald’s incident at Millau, it was deemed wise to postpone these. They can only gain clarity by occurring, as they surely will, at the appropriate time.

...

Left currents opted for prudence with respect to the campaign against genetic modification: they were distinctly unsure of their footing, afraid of being accused of anti-scientific (or, worse, *anti-progressive*) deviations, and in need of reassurance that the genetic manipulation of food really was bad for the poor and for economic growth, that it really did scare consumers, and that a little more transparency, a few more studies and a spot more regulation would not put an end to all these concerns. When it came to McDonald’s, however, everything was served up on a plate: multinationals, Yankee imperialism, and kiss your traditional cassoulet goodbye. Not to mention police repression and, to top it all, trade union freedoms under threat! In short, a shameful onslaught on the French way of life, on *la France tranquille*, complete with the stirring participation of the soil-beret-baguette brigade and support from every last national-sovereignty nut and anti-globalizing Joe Citizen.

No one who clearheadedly examines the development of this society can avoid the conclusion that one of its greatest strengths is the ability to respond, in advance if need be, to the problems of management, regulation and social control created by its incontestable historical triumph. To all intents and purposes, every known form of resistance to its sway has been vanquished. It no longer has revolutionary opposition, even a mystified or spectacular one, and consequently can have no reformist opposition either. It has learned that it is always to its advantage to orchestrate spurious conflicts in which it allows fake adversaries of its own choosing to catalogue grievances and demand changes that are in fact already on its order of the day.

Every single prerequisite for the media machine to go into gear was now in place; it did no harm that José Bové ignored no microphone in his indefatigable guest to explain that for him, make no mistake, the purpose of direct action was to *remind the state of its duties*. Quite aside from the question of direct action, this was in a nutshell the programme of Bové's allies – i.e., the modernizing factions among the proponents of economic domination.

From the foreword to Déclarations (pp. 9-12)

This first campaign against genetic engineering must be said to have ended in failure. I am not referring to the lobbying and petitioning campaign run by cyberactivists who cry victory every time an agribusiness marketing genius decides that it might pay off to label some traditional (read: factory-made) biscuit “GMO-free”. Only a Jeremy Rifkin could see something like this as “one of the greatest defeats in the history of capitalism”, or crow over Monsanto's supposed abandonment of its “Terminator” technology when in reality the firm gave up its plans to acquire the seed-producer's Terminator patent solely because of United States anti-trust laws.⁸ Significantly, Rifkin has made those laws part of his strategy for preventing Monsanto from establishing a

⁸ [On October 4, 1999, Monsanto announced with much fanfare that in view of the controversy aroused it had decided not, after all, to commercialize technologies, such as “Terminator”, which rendered seeds sterile. *Translator*]

common with classic scientific method that it too seeks the practical verification of preformed hypotheses; and we had another, less, less naïve ambition, one deriving from more basic principles: to test the hypotheses that one cannot help formulating on the rising rate of illiteracy and false consciousness among research staff.¹⁹ In view of the apparatus that has been set up for the *teaching of ignorance*,²⁰ which has given rise among other wonders to the researchers of the genome industry, such testing of the situation was clearly in order.

As many as five hundred of the ranking researchers signed a collective “Open Letter to Citizens” whose drafters stated: “On the one hand we are asked to furnish data for the assessment of agro-environmental risks; on the other, our research in process is destroyed!!!” The text notes that “The researchers of the public sector have been assigned the task of gathering experimental data on the environmental impact of transgenic plants”, and concludes by asking, “Is there some misunderstanding?” A short time later a hundred and forty-two of the signatories' colleagues, “without presuming to impose their views on civil society,” claimed that they were nevertheless justified in saying that “It is certainly society that needs the findings of this kind of research if it is to frame the rules that it means to impose on the cultivation of transgenic plants.” A Confédération Général du Travail (CGT)-INRA statement darkly predicted “stormy weather ahead”, the time being now over when, as in the last

in the night”, would seem to suggest familiarity with the research milieu: “Even knee-deep in liquid manure, the researcher refuses to trust the evidence of his senses... He believes that if something can be done it must be done...” Repeated rebukes to private-sector funding (talk of “so-called public services”, etc.) tends to support this thesis, though the evidence is not conclusive. (See also the last paragraph of the Chronology above).

¹⁹ For authors as well acquainted with the subject as Bruno Latour and Jean-Marc Levy-Leblond this is not a hypothesis but an established fact, especially as far as illiteracy is concerned.

²⁰ If we may take the liberty of borrowing Jean-Claude Michéa's excellent formulation without sharing all his views; see, among other works, his *L'Enseignement de l'ignorance et ses conditions modernes* (Castelnau-le-Lez: Editions Climats, 1999).

America, that “what is in question in the United States are practices. Not scientific principles.”¹⁴

As a modern echo of the cry “Enoch made them, Enoch shall break them!”¹⁵ the profanatory CIRAD operation, no less than the Nérac action, took aim at a certain of *production* of genetic chimaeras. This time, however, the intervention took place upstream – at the *intellectual* stage of production, so to speak, if the word can be said to apply to the nature and conditions of CHSs¹⁶ and other menials of technoscience, be they specialists in agro-toxicology or not. Forcing the door of the laboratory strictly so called amounted to provisionally entrusting meal moths and leaf-rollers with sole responsibility for resisting that *intentional genetic pollution* which the necro-technological onslaught has already turned into a fact of life in the larger laboratory that our environment has been turned into, a laboratory to which – to borrow the dreadful words inspired in Gunther Anders by the nuclear industry – is “coextensive with the globe”.¹⁷

We deliberately chose a target that was a center of both material and ideological production. We were banking on the possibility that the resulting turbulence in the “research community” might prompt the odd defector to proclaim him or herself, and at least initiate a critique of the institutionalized confusion between research and development that would clarify the role of techno-scientific research in the lockstep forward march of hyper-industrialization and artificial over-socialization. In this hope we were disappointed.¹⁸ But direct action has in

¹⁴ *Libération*, 10 February 2000.

¹⁵ [“Great Enoch” was “the heavy hammer made by Enoch and James Taylor, who also made... shearing frames” (G.D.H. Cole and Raymond Postgate, *The Common People* {second edition, London: Methuen, 1946}, pp. 186-87). Trans.]

¹⁶ CHS: *chercheur hors statut*, researcher without a title. These aspiring researchers are the navies of government laboratories.

¹⁷ Anders, *De la bombe et de notre aveuglement face à l'apocalypse* (Marseilles: Titanic, 1995), note 15

¹⁸ [Note added July 2000] A first answer to our hopes may perhaps be detected in the night-time sabotage, on last July 26, of an INRA forcing-house in Toulouse. The phraseology of a pamphlet left behind at the site by the saboteurs, entitled “Scrupulum” and signed “Seekers

monopoly in transgenic seeds. It might reasonably be objected that condemning monopolies in the name of fair trade amounts to endorsing swarms of *small-time* poisoners on laissez-faire grounds. Rifkin would undoubtedly respond that all means are good when it comes to telling transnational giants, but this is a feeble defense indeed.

The campaign I do have in mind is the one in which I took part, and which partly succeeded in distinguishing itself from this mishmash by resorting to direct action. As we have seen this was not enough to prevent its being pressed into the service of *citizenist mobilization*. It did, however, manage to pick exemplary targets. By treating the two faces of Research, the public and the private, as simple clones, it contrived to contribute in an unprecedented way to the old debate on innate versus acquired characteristics. It had almost succeeded in raising the question of research’s function in industrial society when the pseudo-question Frankenfoods (*la malbouffe*) was tabled just in time to save the bacon of an already panic-stricken *research community*. Our embarrassment at this accounts for the decision to call a halt almost as much as the fragility of the alliances we struck in order to get as far as we did.

I say the first campaign advisedly, for nothing suggests to me that a second can somehow be avoided; it will surely resume hostilities where they were left off: on the battlefield of state-supported research. I have no doubt that those who venture back on to this risky terrain will be taken to task for demonstrating in this way how little they have understood what preconditions have to be met for “social dialogue” to continue in our democracies, and for disqualifying themselves no less than I am doing here by indulging in hopelessly dated invective. I don’t know what methods will be employed. Everything leads one to expect further reverses; yet why should we renounce all action just because we know, without drawing either pleasure or despair therefrom, that often we must settle for testing the validity of the least agreeable hypotheses concerning our contemporaries?

Giving short shrift to the trivialities so much chewed over by almost all opponents of genetic engineering, Jean-Pierre Berlan suggests that the so-called Terminator approach to plant sterilization represents “the greatest triumph yet for the project

of political economy: the manufacture of a sterile living organism". It is worth noting that before this objective could be attained in the plant kingdom it had to first be realized (albeit imperfectly) *vis-à-vis* all the not strictly biological aspects – all the *living* aspects in the non-scientific sense – of the existence of human beings.

Only after the industrial system has rendered human life so sterile that it serves merely to produce and reproduce the technology that enslaves it does the economy arm itself with the means of biological sterilization. One would have to abandon all clear thinking about a world henceforward utterly in thrall to the economy to accept that this departure embodies simply one more common-or-garden commodity, destined merely to increase the profits of the “transnational corporations, its impact confined solely to *markets*. That would be to take as axiomatic the claim that “The world is not a commodity” – a slogan that the professors at *Le Monde Diplomatique* have adopted as ideal for obscuring what their well-tempered progressivism papers over: the deepening “commodification” of *human beings*, of “citizens” of value only as consumers or wage-workers self-managing their servitude in an economy that no longer generates *social bonds*.

By acclimatizing us to survival in its ambit, the very *possibility* of “Terminator”, like the possibility of rival manipulative techniques ripe with the promise of human applications, is about to complete the colonization of whatever remains to us of the idea of a human meaning to our existences. Many parallels have already been drawn between the genetic technologies of death and the nuclear power industry. But we choose to forget that the *permanent innovation* of nuclear power owes its endurance – setting aside the bio-ethicists’ refusal to denounce anything much beyond the Dr. Mengeles of the world – to its ability to inaugurate at every instant the era of life’s intimacy with death unadorned.

Here we dwell – in a house where people marvel in the knowledge that an impossible suckling has been born of a woman’s corpse maintained for two months in a state of fake brooding, where it is thus already possible to manufacture life out of death, where it is accepted that the preparation of reasonable wars, and all the death and destruction that they

precautions in the future; to reinforce the institutions of modern democracy – stepsister to techno-science; to help governments take decisions; to assert one’s independence; and so on and so forth – with everything becoming more *participatory* by virtue of opinion polls, referendums and “consensus conferences”. In this way an end will be put to the aberrations of “neoliberalism”. Last but not least, “good” genetically modified organisms will thus become acceptable, however little they may be “public” in any sense of the word.

Apart from sporadic wrappings-up of the Pont-Neuf by Greenpeace commandos, tele-activism courtesy of Ecoropa, petitions from myriad pressure groups, and a few investigations, lawsuits and trials, nothing – no actual *movement* – followed in the wake of the aforesaid acts of sabotage. Two years went by before a few militants summoned up the courage to dress up as vegetables and go and *negotiate* with supermarket managers for permission to *inform consumers* by actually distributing leaflets among the shopping carts!

Nothing, meantime, had intruded upon the corporatist cackle of public-sector researchers, so safely ensconced behind their government seal of approval and forever bemoaning the Stalino-Gaullist golden age (whose return, as has of course been scientifically proven, depends solely on increased government funding for research). They realize of course, that in accordance with the wishes of the most modern voices they must accept the broadening of their role. This will naturally include consultation services to the decision makers, but above all it will involve the new functions of *valorization* and *communication* – related, obviously, to what used to be called vulgarization, but even more closely tied up with the *social acceptance* in the Telethon sense; consider the encores that greeted the sole known French and state-sponsored demonstration of the “immense promise held out by gene therapies”, as performed on two bubble-children by a medical team at Necker Hospital (Paris). A few weeks earlier, moreover, Axel Kahn, celebrated moral conscience of Aventis and of INSERM (French National Institute of Health and Medical Research), had been careful to stress, when the first scandals over this ever so promising discipline broke out in

against government research. Not the *intangible* sort of government research that some unique virtue sanctifies and absolves of all responsibility in the world as it is, but *real* government research caught with its hand in the cookie jar of what it actually produces. This had got off to a very good start in the CIRAD action, and in a distinctly more confused way in Ariège two days earlier, with the destruction of CETIOM-INRA rapeseed (*colza*) at Gaudiès.¹² At last the question of the status and function of research relative to the development of this society was beginning to be posed *directly* – and not just biological research either, although the biotechnologies of death are, it is true, particularly illuminating in this respect.

Up until now, we had done no more, at best, than denounce the mercenary character of government research, pointing the finger at a few ways in which this research works hand in glove with the mercantilism of the private-sphere poisoners. The method chosen, namely direct action, perturbed some. At bottom, though, the most vulgar boosters of the nanny state, of fair-play capitalism, or of the permanence of the industrial system could still feign not to understand or affect to believe that our *uncivil* behavior somehow lent support to their arguments. In a word, no tenet of progressivist dogma was so much as scratched – least of all infallible science still defying eternity from its dusty tomb.

All the “citizens”¹³ were still free to trot out their old saw according to which it is only the *use* to which some technical application is put that “causes the problem”, whether that application happens to be DDT, high-speed trains, river-polluting polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), agent orange, asbestos, cloning, Monsanto’s Round-Up herbicide, the Internet, cell-phones, nuclear power, or you-name-it. Once the alarm has been raised, all that is required is to take more security

¹² CETIOM: Centre Technique Interprofessionnel des Oléagineux Métropolitains (Interprofessional Technical Center for Oil-Producing Plants in Metropolitan France).

¹³ See “Des organismes génétiquement modifiés et du citoyen [Concerning Genetically Modified Organisms and the Citizens]”, by “A Few Enemies of the Transgenic Brave New World” (January 1999). Available from ACNM< BP 178, 75967 Paris cedex 20, France.

cause, all the planning and digging of fresh mass graves that they call for, are unabashedly one good business deal.. Should we be surprised, then, that what is dead may also be manufactured out of what is living, that we now *produce* pre-sterilized life? Surely not. Nothing can surprise us; we can only fear. And call for *precautionary measures* or more *transparency in risk management*.

To all this we have nothing to oppose save the will to rehumanize the world, to force the Economy, to force Industry – along with their science and their commodities – out of our lives. But we will have to find the trace of those lives beneath the ashes before even thinking of *re-enchanting* the territory that they may still delineate.

To perceive that the war is total, and that our positions are weak, is not the same thing as painting a black picture of the situation. It would be hard to paint a blacker picture than that offered by those who have nothing better to propose than the beautification of these ruins.

II. Biotechnology Public and Private

by
René Riesel

[Very slightly abridged version of an article that first appeared in *L'Ecologiste* 1 (Autumn 2000) under the title “OGM: ‘La Démocratie moderne, cette soeur de lait de la technoscience’”]

Some months ago, a team of French psychiatrists was asked to evaluate the motivations of the opponents of genetic engineering. Curiously, this reassuring news was not widely reported. Nor does anyone seem to have noticed the remarkable self-imposed discretion of the devotees of transgenetics with respect to the doings of their enemies. Only on the rarest of occasions do they let slip some faint condemnation of the over-sensitivity, the old-fogeyism or the obscurantism of the anti-GMO crew, or mutter under their breath that the dissenters’ virulent hatred of progress is really a matter for the psychiatrists. True enough the most exemplary aspect of the first campaign waged in France against genetic engineering – a campaign that began with the Nérac sabotage of January 1998 and ended with the Montpellier action of June 1999, and included ten or so destructions of experimental crops and brief occupations of premises of Novartis, of CIRAD (Center for International Cooperation in Agronomic Research and Development) and of INRA (National Institute of Agronomic Research) – lay in its renewal of the Luddite tradition. Considering that some participants are eager to downplay this aspect, no doubt because they need to forget the implications of what they have got caught up in, it is probably worth recalling the bases of this modern-day Luddite madness.

It may seem odd at first that the campaign came to an end without ever destroying *harvests*, but this is easy to explain. In Nérac a very small number of farmers found themselves at the forefront of one of the rare *practical* rejections in this country of plant necro-technology (which at that time, the genetic-industrial complex expected to impose easily, banking on ready acceptance by farmers). The aim was unambiguous from the start: to “denature” State-authorized transgenic seeds inside a *factory* and

so prevent their sale.⁹ At Montpellier, matters were even more clear-cut: the Inter-Continental Caravan of Indian farmers purely and simply destroyed experimental rice plants being grown in a facility belonging to CIRAD, a government research organization specializing in “cooperation” with countries considered developmentally backward. A fact unknown at the time of the operation is that the research was wholly or partly funded by the European Union. This is surely much more significant the anticipated co-production role of Hoechst-Rhône-Poulenc-Aventis, who are openly allied with CIRAD within Génoplante.¹⁰

During this time we envisaged not attacks on French silos containing harvested grain, but rather the monitoring of consignments of imported transgenic seeds. This was not out of some sort of protectionism, but because – as a positive result of the Nérac action – harvests had been restricted to a twenty-fifth of their planned size; at the same time crops were even harder to trace in that their locations, for which Novartis became responsible in 1998, were just as secret as the experimental parcels of the CGB.¹¹ This also explains why there was no destruction of “commercial transgenic crops.

We were not there yet. Given the balance of forces, two priorities imposed themselves: first, reducing our extreme isolation by trying to precipitate a snowball effect that would multiply acts of sabotage (success in this regard was extremely limited, as we have seen); secondly, taking what had been started to its logical conclusion by moving from guerrilla actions against private companies to the first, inevitably frontal offensives

⁹ The method used was the admixture of non-transgenic maize grains. Comically enough all the commentators, blinded by technophilia, parroted the word “denature” without noticing its paradoxical quality; unfortunately this is no laughing matter.

¹⁰ Génoplante is a plant genomics program set up in 1999 by a combination of public and private “scientific interest groups” in France. *Translator*

¹¹ CGB: Commission du Génie Biomoléculaire (Biomolecular Engineering Commission), responsible for monitoring – and concealing – these experiments. There is also a “biovigilance” committee whose job is to assess the risks of commercial cultivation.