



ST AGNES
LONGSIGHT

MISSION & ACTION GROUP

Meeting held on Wednesday 4th October 2006

Present: Doreen, Leah, Denzil

Apologies: Stephen

Discussed minutes of last meeting

Water Aid

Doreen will try and find the water fountain and bring it in for the service

Gold Mining

Showed the meeting the "Cards and Links" which people would be asked to sign. The four-page A5 insert which we were going to use in the November magazine is not available as such. Will discuss this with Fr Stephen and Colin.

Sharing the Light

This was not discussed further, as those present did not have any more details.

Inclusive Church

A leaflet containing the details which was circulated amongst the PCC is still missing, so no further discussion on this.

Suicide Seeds

Fr Stephen was sent a few details on the above, further information was down loaded from the Internet. The meeting was shocked by this and strongly felt that some form of action should be taken, but this involved sending an e-mail link to the articles. We recommended that this should be discussed at our next meeting. The pages of information discussed are printed overleaf.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday 8th November, 11.30pm

Who are the ETC Group?

The **Action Group on Erosion, Technology and Concentration** (ETC Group) is a small civil society organisation (CSO) that undertakes independent research and international advocacy work to make the world a better place. We work with civil society and social movements to explore how new technologies, hand in hand with corporate concentration, can erode rights and diversity. We also help develop strategies of resistance and resilience.

Erosion refers to not only genetic erosion and the erosion of species, ecosystems and the atmosphere -but also the loss of cultures, knowledge and human rights. We are losing both our diversity and our eco-specific understanding of it.

Technology refers to a Pandora's Box of techniques including biotechnology, nanotechnology, informatics and neurosciences. Without societal governance, these new tools - especially in their convergence - will become a technological tsunami that could swamp the poor.

Concentration describes the global convergence of major corporations and governments driven by the desire to manage and control markets and new technological waves.

You can learn more about ETC Group at www.etcgroup.org/about.asp.

In March of 1998, a seed company later to be purchased by Monsanto, Delta and Pine Land Company, in collaboration with the United States Department of Agriculture, was awarded U.S. Patent Number 5,723,765: Control of Plant Gene Expression. Although the patent is broad and covers many applications, one application favored by the patent's authors is a scheme to engineer crops to kill their own seeds in the second generation, thus making it impossible for farmers to save and replant seeds.

It takes millions of dollars and years of research to develop the biotech crops that deliver superior value to growers. And future investment in biotech research depends on companies'

Consider what happens if growers save and replant patented seed. First, there is less incentive for all companies to invest in future technology, such as the development of seeds with traits that produce higher-yielding, higher-value and drought-tolerant crops....In short, these few growers who save and replant patented seed jeopardize the future availability of innovative biotechnology for all growers

Ottawa, Canada — A document leaked to the ETC group reveals that Canada is going to the UN to promote "terminator" technology: genetically engineered (GE) seeds designed to grow crops which can't reproduce. These "suicide seeds," designed solely to protect the patents and profits of multinational corporations, are currently forbidden from being planted outside the lab. The secret instructions to Canada's delegation: block consensus on any other option than testing these seeds in the wild.

"Canada is about to launch a devastating kick in the stomach to the world's most vulnerable farmers - the 1.4 billion people who depend on farm saved seed," said ETC Group Executive Director Pat Mooney speaking from Ottawa. "The Canadian government is doing the dirty work for the multinational gene giants and the US government. Even Monsanto wasn't prepared to be this upfront and nasty."

Public outrage greeted "suicide seeds" when they were introduced in 1988. Monsanto, the company which developed the technology, was forced to back down when activists and scientists around the world warned of possible wild crop sterilisation through contamination.

We're concerned that this is an attempt by at least one person within at least one department of the Canadian government to use Canada's political leverage within a relatively unknown scientific and technical committee in order to open the door to Terminator technology's release into the wild.

We contacted Mr Stefan Yarrow, Director of the plant Biosafety office of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

Mr. Yarrow believes we should give this technology a chance. He emphasized that he was not aware of any current applications to use Terminator seeds and that his department would review carefully any such application that might be made in future.

Mr Yarrow said that he simply wants to test the safety of Terminator genes.

He thinks it's fine that this research will take place out of doors in large scale field trials.

He said that he had heard that some third world farmers were concerned that they wouldn't be able to save their seed.

The fact is, Terminator technology takes a massive risk with our food supply, puts poor farmers into a near-servitude relationship with seed salesmen, and benefits only the multinational corporations like Monsanto which promote it.

So who is really behind the Canadian move? Is this something that is being done in the name of Canadian citizens? Is it official Canadian government policy? Is Monsanto or any other genetic engineering company in any way providing Canadian officials incentives to promote their technology?

You can join us in asking these questions direct to Mr. Stefan Yarrow (We found him at telephone number +1 613 225 2342). You can also join in the online action by the ETC Group below.

Take action

[Click here to send an email](#) to to the Canadian Prime Minister, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, and the President of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.