



**Media release: October 10, 2003**

## **The Life Sciences Network guards the PM's postage**

Organisers of a postcard campaign asking the Prime Minister to 'Hang On Helen' and not lift the moratorium on GM crops say they are astounded that the pro-GM Life Sciences Network has issued a media statement claiming that the Prime Minister may not allow the postcards into her mail box by refusing them access to bulk funded mail that allows New Zealanders to send mail free of charge to their elected representatives.

"Is this pro-GM lobby group privy to the management of the Prime Minister's mail?" asked Econation2020 organiser Brendan Hoare.

Mr Hoare said he found it extraordinary that a pro-GM lobby group appeared to have inside knowledge that the PM might refuse the postcards to be admitted to her mail box by denying the use of Parliamentary bulk funding for elector postage.

"It is every citizen's right to communicate directly with our Prime Minister at no cost," he said. "New Zealand faces precisely the great risk it faces now because pro-GM lobbyists like the Life Sciences Network count as Beehive insiders. All we are doing is enabling ordinary Kiwis to have a say.

"Since when did the Life Sciences Network become the guardians of the Prime Minister's mail?" said Mr Hoare. "We completely respect the need not to abuse a system that enables citizens to communicate with their elected leaders. But this is a critical issue for the future of our country as we think our Prime Minister is more fair-minded than that."

Mr Hoare said that the Econation2020 Trust was not an 'activist group' as the Life Science Network media statement claimed, but a group with a vision for New Zealand as an ecologically sound nation.

The postcard campaign was a moderate, pro-democratic contribution to the debate and for a pro-GM lobby group to indicate that the Prime Minister would refuse to hear New Zealander's views via the postcard campaign was disturbing, said Mr Hoare.

Those who send a postcard to Helen Clark on the issue stand to receive a free CD, featuring some of New Zealand's top musicians, including Che Fu, Moana and Nesian Mystic. The artists donated their work in support of the Hang On Helen campaign.

Mr Hoare said he suspected the real concern of the Life Science Network was that the Hang On Helen campaign did not comprise easily-deflected naked protesters outside Parliament or other stunts, but reflected the views of a majority of ordinary Kiwis that do not want GM crops in their fields.

“So far the response shows that many fair-minded middle New Zealanders do want to send the PM a polite yet firm simple message,” said Mr Hoare.

The Hang On Helen campaign runs until October 30 at which time the first 5,000 respondents will be sent their free CD.

**For further information:**

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