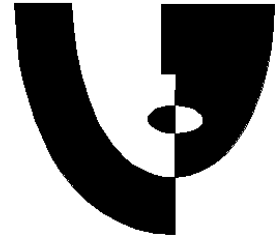


# BOYCOTT NEWS



## Nestlé shamed at World Sustainable Development summit



An award ceremony at the World Sustainable Development summit in Johannesburg presented Green Oscars for companies which falsely portray themselves as being ethical. Nestlé picked up the Best Blue Actor Award for *"daring to show its face at the United Nations"* despite having *"one of the worst corporate reputations out there."* However, Nestlé's efforts seem to have paid off with the UN. At a Nestlé co-sponsored meeting with UN officials and the Swiss government on 29th October it was made clear that Nestlé has been accepted as a "partner" in the UN Global Compact. The awards in Johannesburg were organised by the EarthSummit.biz Academy (consisting of CorpWatch, Friends of the Earth International and groundWork, the South African organisation.)  
The Award was accepted by a stand-in (Tony Juniper of Friends of the Earth) - photo left.

### Perrier Award in trouble as organisers misuse the name of Comic Relief

Nestlé's attempts to put an ethical spin on its harmful marketing practices backfired once more at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in August. Organiser of the Perrier Awards, Nica Burns, was quoted as saying: *"this year's winner would be given the chance to go to Africa, under the auspices of Comic Relief, and visit the operation of Nestlé, Perrier's parent company."* Comic Relief has refuted this suggestion. In an unprecedented move it distanced itself from Nestlé in a letter to the Guardian (24th Aug). Liz Firth of Comic Relief wrote:

*"There is no connection between our trips and any plans Perrier may have for the winner of its prize to visit Nestlé's operations in Africa. Comic Relief has not worked with Nestlé and other infant formula manufacturers in the past because of concerns about the marketing of breastmilk substitutes. We are part of the Inter-agency Group on Breastfeeding Monitoring that is working to help make sure that breast milk substitutes are used safely throughout the world."*

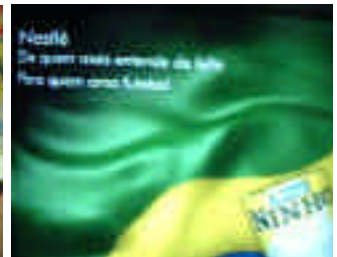
The corporate free alternative, the **Tap Water Awards** (backed by UNISON, the Fire Brigade Union and other unions) were held at a cultural extravaganza at the Bongo Club. There were two winners in the comedy section: Alan Francis and Des Bishop. Following last year's embarrassment, this year's Perrier Award ceremony on the same evening was not televised, possibly for fear that the winner, Daniel Kitson, would not even turn up. *The Times* (30th August 2002) reported him as saying: *"I think a lot of people were taking bets on the fact that I'd turn it down. I agree with the anti-Nestlé thing, but even that is loaded with contradictions. If you step into that arena and say 'this is what I think about it', then you leave yourself open to being a massive hypocrite."*

### Nestlé admits its auditors permit the promotion of whole milk in baby food sections

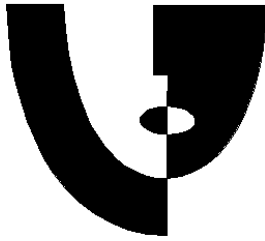
In *Boycott News 31* we questioned Nestlé's claim that its internal auditors ensure that baby food marketing standards are adhered to. In Nestlé's own *Sustainability Review* the auditors appear to be turning a blind eye to the whole milk *Nido* displayed in a pharmacy in a section clearly labelled *"baby food"*. The promotion of whole milks in this way is widespread and dangerous. For example, a study in Brazil found that amongst poor mothers who have decided, or been persuaded, not to breastfeed, 70% were using inappropriate powdered whole milk. Why do the auditors permit whole milk to be displayed in this way? Nestlé did not answer our letter, but has published a response on its website. Nestlé is well aware of the practice, but it claims that as whole milk is not infant formula, no marketing requirements apply. Aside from revealing Nestlé's disregard for the impact on health, this is untrue. Whole milk can be viewed as a complementary food and Resolution 49.16 calls for measures: *"to ensure that complementary foods are not marketed for or used in ways that undermine exclusive and sustained breastfeeding"*.

Ask Nestlé to take whole milk out of the infant feeding section. See the **Campaign for Ethical Marketing** action sheet on the reply form for a suggested letter.

**ACTION POINT**



(Left) If you can't afford the *Nan* and you feed your infant the *Ninho* whole milk (on display alongside in the infant food section) then it's your fault, appears to be Nestlé's argument. (Right) Adverts for *Ninho* during Brazil's world cup matches did not warn that it is unsuitable for infant feeding as required by law in Brazil.



## Mis-led by Nestlé's boycott trouble shooter?



Niels Christiansen - mis-led boycott groups

Niels Christiansen, Nestlé Vice President and cover star of *Update 31* provoked incredulity at several recent public meetings, such as the UN Civil Society Forum in Geneva in July and the Hay on Wye Festival in June. On stage Niels claims that he joined Nestlé to improve nutrition and lift people out of poverty. We examine this in the light of a few examples from his files.

### Ending the first boycott

Mr. Christiansen is credited within Nestlé for ending the first Nestlé boycott in 1984. His strategy was to make promises to boycott coordinators, which were not delivered, prompting the relaunch of the boycott in 1989.

### Betraying Syed Aamar Raza

Former employee from Pakistan, Syed Aamar Raza, has been targeted by senior Nestlé management since exposing malpractice, including the bribing of doctors. Mr. Christiansen commissioned an 'external' audit which was then used to attack Aamar. The auditors were forbidden from contacting Mr. Raza or investigating his documentary evidence of malpractice.

### Misrepresenting government letters

Mr. Christiansen is understood to be the brains behind a 180-page book, *Nestlé implementation of the WHO Code*, sent out around the world in 1999. The company had to apologise when it became apparent that some of the letters presented as "official government verification of compliance with the Code" were not.

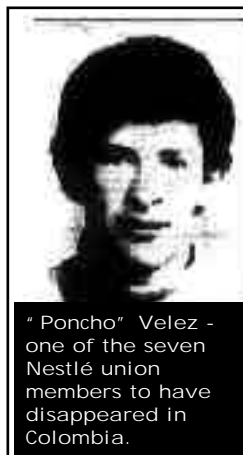
### Censoring public meetings

Nestlé's sponsorship of the Foreign Policy Centre fringe meetings at the Labour Party Conference in October gained Mr. Christiansen a seat on one of the panels. Niels also attempted to stop the recording of the event.

### An expert on Colombia?

Professing to know about Colombia, Niels has no answer to questions about Nestlé's record of oppressing trade union members in that country (see right).

Order 'Nice Design - Shame about the Text' on the Reply Form, a full colour exposé of Nestlé's claims.



"Poncho" Velez - one of the seven Nestlé union members to have disappeared in Colombia.

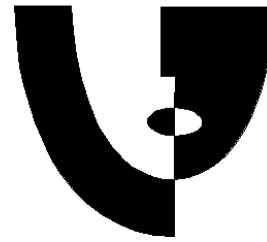
### Coffee crisis

Oxfam has launched a campaign to try to get a fairer deal for 25 million coffee growers (see [www.oxfam.org](http://www.oxfam.org)). While Nestlé receives 26% profit on a jar of Nescafé, growers are not receiving enough to cover the production costs of the coffee beans as prices are at a 30-year low. At an Oxfam public meeting on 29 October 2002, Fatima Ismael Espinoza, who works with small coffee producers in northern Nicaragua, spoke of the

suffering this causes and how buying Fair Trade brands, such as CafeDirect, benefits growers in cooperatives which she helps to set up. Nestlé's Hilary Parsons blamed the low prices paid to growers on over-supply. Oxfam's Phil Bloomer explained that, in part, over-supply is due to coffee processors purchasing coffee that does not meet quality standards. Nestlé claims to support the campaign, but does not want independent monitoring of its activities. Processors are also being asked to pay a fair price to growers and to source at least 2% of coffee beans from Fair Trade schemes.

Nestlé attempted to convince the meeting that it is improving the life of growers, but had no answer when questioned on Nestlé's union-busting activities in Colombia.

• Andy Higginbottom of the Colombian Solidarity Campaign wrote in the September 2002 issue of *Corporate Watch*:  
*"SINALTRAINAL, the Colombian Foodworkers Union, reports widespread practices and policies contradicting Nestlé's claims to fully support and ensure labour and human rights. Ever since Nestlé arrived in Colombia 50 years ago the workers have battled to form a union... According to SINALTRAINAL seven of its members working at Nestlé have been assassinated... Although there is no evidence connecting Nestlé with these murders, the logic of the human rights violations, to remove trade unions and other social movements, corresponds with the company's own aggressive stance. There are at least three cases that indicate a policy drive direct from Nestlé itself to liquidate the union's presence from its Colombia operation. For example, in the final weeks of 2001, management at Nestlé subsidiary 'Comestibles La Rosa' threatened workers that they must either renounce union membership or lose their jobs. Nestlé subsidiary Cicolac also tried to break a collective agreement covering 400 workers..."*  
See <http://www.humanrights.de/c/colombia/csc.html> Colombia Solidarity Campaign, PO Box 8446, London, N17 6NZ.



## Nestlé provokes new campaigning initiatives

In May 1999 Nestlé was named and shamed by the UK Advertising Standards Authority for falsely claiming to market infant formula *'ethically and responsibly'*. Nestlé took the advice of Saatchi and Saatchi and went on the offensive, attempting to portray itself as a good 'corporate citizen'. It has offered ever more funding to good causes and spends a fortune on glossy booklets. But without the necessary changes to its baby food marketing malpractice, Nestlé is only drawing more attention to the issue and presenting new opportunities for campaigners to keep up the pressure.

### Baby Milk Action student network

Beth Brockett, Baby Milk Action's new student campaigns volunteer writes:

*"With over eighty student unions across the UK boycotting Nestlé products and hundreds of student groups campaigning for corporate responsibility, students are a big thorn in Nestlé's side.*

*Our new Student Network, launched at the Shared Planet Conference in Warwick, will help co-ordinate and support student groups. It will provide campaigning ideas, strengthen coalitions with other like-minded groups (e.g. fair trade promoters) and build on the cohesion that student campaigning is excellent at promoting.*

*Student union boycotts are usually subject to a referendum every couple of years and it is important that Baby Milk Action's voice is heard on campus. Although Nestlé dropped its opposition to debating with Baby Milk Action last March, it attempts to set up presentations on campus without Baby Milk Action being there, so keep alert. As well as a product boycott we will aim to have a protest group at the graduate recruitment fairs that Nestlé attends, so graduates know the*

*truth about Nestlé's record.*

*The Student Network will be offering speaker tours, campaign packs and resources and the opportunity to learn from other student groups directly and through a newsletter. It doesn't stop at universities either; we will also be looking for contacts from sixth forms and from other higher education establishments.*

*For details about the Student Network and how you can get involved please contact Beth Brockett via the Cambridge office, or email her at: [students@babymilkaction.org](mailto:students@babymilkaction.org)*

### Wooing 6th formers

• Nestlé is offering to renovate Sixth Form common rooms in schools. We have been told of three cases where this has been refused. Many more schools are refusing Nestlé's Box Top fundraising scheme. (See *Update* 32 Page 10 for the story about Nestlé's website for schools).

### Nestlé sponsorship on the web

The *Take Action* section on Baby Milk Action's website now has a special section on Nestlé sponsorship, giving information on the deals, contact information, and appeals to organisations to reconsider.

[www.babymilkaction.org](http://www.babymilkaction.org)

### Nestlé out of hospitals

Following the launch in August of Nestlé *Nan* formula in the UK, Nescafé vending machines have started to appear in hospitals. Several contracts have been stopped or lost because of complaints from boycotters, causing a storm at Nestlé HQ. Janette Westman got one removed from her maternity ward:

*"The very next day I was contacted by Nestlé's Beverley Mirando (see *Boycott News* 31), who said she is from Sri Lanka and speaks as a mother and a person with knowledge of feeding practices in a developing country. She tried very hard to persuade me that Nestlé uses the Code as a minimum standard in countries where they do not have legislation in place and legislation in countries where they do. For over half an hour we debated umpteen reasons why I disagreed with her about Nestlé's conduct. Wow, was I ever so pleased to have 'Update' sat on my desk! Beverley is a very persuasive woman, who is obviously used to defending Nestlé and it was great to be able to use the articles to back up my argument – for instance Nestlé's dumping of free supplies in Bangkok (BN 31 P 7). I feel shocked, because if I hadn't been prepared this sort*

*of contact could have been quite intimidating. I have written this to make others aware that even a relatively small gesture, such as removing this vending machine, has an impact on Nestlé and to prepare others for this sort of response."*

### Labour Party Conference

Nestlé (along with cigarette & arms manufacturers) was profiled by *Friends of the Earth* in its booklet, *Who are the 10 worst corporations at the Labour Party Conference 2002 and why?* Nestlé claims that its stalls at the Labour Party and Trade Union Congress are evidence of good reputation.

### Trouble too in Austria

The prestigious European Health Forum held each year in Bad Gastein, Austria, was criticised by delegates this September for allowing Nestlé to be joint sponsor of the event. Consumer organisations at the conference complained that the company's record in undermining infant nutrition made it unwelcome in a conference on health concerns. Their views were raised in the formal concluding plenary session and the meeting's organisers promised to review their policies in regard to private sector sponsorship.

