

Nutrapoison

by Alex Constantine

"I recognized my two selves: a crusading idealist
and a cold, granitic believer in the law of the jungle.
Edgar Monsanto Queeny, Monsanto chairman, 1943-63,
"The Spirit of Enterprise", 1934."

The FDA is ever mindful to refer to aspartame, widely known as NutraSweet, as a "food additive"-never a "drug." A "drug" on the label of a Diet Coke might discourage the consumer. And because aspartame is classified a food additive, adverse reactions are not reported to a federal agency, nor is continued safety monitoring required by law.¹ NutraSweet is a non-nutritive sweetener. The brand name is misnomer. Try Non-NutraSweet.

Food additives seldom cause brain lesions, headaches, mood alterations, skin polyps, blindness, brain tumors, insomnia and depression, or erode intelligence and short-term memory. Aspartame, according to some of the most capable scientists in the country, does. In 1991 the National Institutes of Health, a branch of the Department of Health and Human Services, published a bibliography, **Adverse Effects of Aspartame**, listing not less than 167 reasons to avoid it.²

Aspartame is an rDNA derivative, a combination of two amino acids (long supplied by a pair of Maryland biotechnology firms: Genex Corp. of Rockville and Purification Engineering in Baltimore.)³ The Pentagon once listed it in an inventory of prospective biochemical warfare weapons submitted to Congress.⁴ But instead of poisoning enemy populations, the "food additive" is currently marketed as a sweetening agent in some 1200 food products.

In light of the chemo-warfare implications, the pasts of G.D. Searle and aspartame are ominous. Established in 1888 on the north side of Chicago, G.D. Searle has long been a fixture of the medical establishment. The company manufactures everything from prescription drugs to nuclear imaging optical equipment.⁵

Directors of G.D. Searle include such geopolitical heavy-hitters as Andre M. de Staercke, Reagan's ambassador to Belgium and Reuben Richards, an executive vice president at Citibank. Also Arthur Wood, the retired CEO of Sears, Roebuck & C disgorged by the clan of General Robert E. Wood, wartime chairman of the America First Committee.⁶ America Firsters, organized by native Nazis cloaked as isolationists, were quietly financed by the likes of Sullivan & Cromwell's Allen Dulles and Edwin Webster of Kidder, Peabody.⁷

Until the acquisition by Monsanto in 1985, the firm's chairman was William L. Searle, a Harvard graduate, Naval reservist and-a grim irony in view of aspartame's adverse effects-an officer in the Army Chemical Corps in the early 1950s, when the same division tested LSD on groups of human subjects in concert with the CIA.⁸ The chief of the Chemical Warfare Division at this time was Dr. Laurence Laird Layton, whose son Larry was convicted for the murder of Congressman Leo Ryan at Jonestown ("Come to the pavilion! What a legacy! "). Jonestown, of

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course, bore a remarkable likeness to a concentration camp, and kept a full store of pharmaceutical drugs. (The Jonestown pharmacy was stocked with a variety of behavior control drugs: qualudes, valium, morphine, demerol and 11,000 doses of thorazine—a better supply, in fact, than the Guyanese government's own, not to mention a surfeit of cyanide.⁹)

Dr. Layton was married to the daughter of Hugo Phillip, a German banker and stockbroker representing the likes of Siemens & Halske, the makers of cyanide for the Final Solution, and I.G. Farben, the manufacturer of a lethal nerve gas put to the same purpose.¹⁰ Dr. Layton, a Quaker, developed a form of purified uranium used to set off the Manhattan Project's first self-sustaining chain reaction at the University of Chicago in 1942 by his wife's German-born Uncle, Dr. James Franck. At Dugway Proving Ground in Utah, Dr. Layton concentrated his efforts, as did I.G. Farben, on the development of nerve gasses.¹¹

Dr. Layton later defended his participation in the Army's chemical warfare section: "You can blow people to bits with bombs, you can shoot them with shells, you can atomize them with atomic bombs, but the same people think there's something terrible about poisoning the air and letting people breathe it. Anything having to do with gas warfare, chemical warfare, has this taint of horror on it, even if you only make people vomit."¹²

Nazis and chemical warfare are recurring themes in the aspartame story. Currently, the chief patent holder of the sweetener is the Monsanto Co., based in St. Louis. In 1967, Monsanto entered into a joint venture with I.G. Farbenfabriken, the aforementioned financial core of the Hitler regime and the key supplier of poison gas to the Nazi racial extermination program. After the Holocaust, the German chemical firm joined with American counterparts in the development of chemical warfare agents and founded the "Chemagrow Corporation" in Kansas City, Missouri, a front that employed German and American specialists on behalf of the U.S. Army Chemical Corps.¹³

Dr. Otto Bayer, I.G.'s research director, had a binding relationship with Monsanto chemists.¹⁴ In the post-war period, Dr. Bayer developed and tested chemical warfare agents with Dr. Gerhard Schrader, the Nazi concocter of Tabun, the preferred nerve gas of the SS. Schrader was also an organophosphate pioneer, and tested the poison on populated areas of West Germany under the guise of killing insects.¹⁵ Schrader's experiments reek suspiciously of the ongoing aerial application of malathion—developed by Dr. Schrader, a recruit of the U.S. Chemical Warfare Service when Germany surrendered—in present-day Southern California.¹⁶

Another bridge to I.G. Farben was Monsanto's acquisition of American Viscose, long owned by the England's Courtauld family. As early as 1928, the U.S. Commerce Department issued a report critical of the Courtauld's ties to I.G. Farben and the Nazi party.¹⁷ Incredibly, George Courtauld was handed an appointment as director of personnel for England's Special Operations Executive, the wartime intelligence service, in 1940.¹⁸ A year later, with the exhaustion of British military financial reserves, American Viscose, worth \$120 million was put on the block in New York. The desperate British treasury received less than half that amount from the sale, brokered by Siegmund Warburg, among others. ¹⁹ Monsanto acquired the company in 1949.²⁰

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The Nazi connection to Monsanto crops up again on the board of directors with John Reed, a former crony of "Putzi" Hanfstangl, a Harvard-bred emigre to Germany who talked Hitler out of committing suicide in 1924 and contributed to the financing of *Mein Kampf*. 21 Reed is also chairman of Citibank and long a confederate of the CIA. According to a lawsuit filed by San Francisco attorney Melvin Belli, Reed was an instigator, with Ronald Reagan, James Baker and Margaret Thatcher, of the "Purple Ink Document," a plan to finance CIA covert operations with wartime Japanese gold stolen from a buried Philippine hoard.22

Other covert military connections to Monsanto include Dr. Charles Allen Thomas, chairman of the Monsanto Board, 1965[?]. Dr. Thomas directed a group of scientists during WW II in the refinement of plutonium for use in the atomic bomb. In the postwar period Monsanto operated Tennessee's Oak Ridge National Laboratories for the Manhattan Project.23 (Manhattan gestated with the Oak Ridge Institute for Nuclear Studies, where Lethal doses of radiation were tested on 200 unwary cancer patients, turning them into "nuclear calibration devices" gratis the AEC and NASA, until 1974. 24) Nazi scientists and a 7,000 ton stockpile of uranium were delivered to the Project by its security and counter-intelligence director, Col. Boris Pash, a G2 designate to the CIA's Bloodstone program-and the *eminence grise* of PB/7, a clandestine Nazi unit that, according to State Department records, conducted a regimen of political assassinations and kidnappings in Europe and the Eastern bloc.25

Monsanto Director William Ruckelshaus was an acting director of the FBI under Richard Nixon, a period in the Bureau's history marred by COINTELPRO outrages, including assassinations. Nixon subsequently appointed Ruckelshaus to the position of EPA director, a nagging irony given his ties to industry (Browning Ferris and Cummins Engine Co.). CIA counterintelligence on the Monsanto board include Stansfield Turner, a former Director of Central Intelligence, and Earle H. Harbison, an Agency information specialist for nineteen years.

Harbison is also a director of Merrill Lynch, and thus raises the spectre of CIA drug dealing. In 1984 President Ronald Reagan's Commission on Organized Crime concluded that Merrill Lynch employed couriers "observed transferring enormous amounts of cash through investment houses and banks in New York City to Italy and Switzerland. Tens of millions of dollars in heroin sales in this country were transferred over seas." Merrill Lynch invested the drug proceeds in the New bullion market before making the offshore transfers. 26

As might be expected in view of Monsanto's Nazi, chemical warfare and CIA ties, NutraSweet is a can of worms unprecedented in the American food industry. The history of the product is laden with flawed and fabricated research findings and, when necessary to further the product along, blatant lies-the basis of FDA approval and the incredulity of independent medical researchers.

Senator Metzenbaum described the FDA as "the handmaiden" of the drug industry in 1985, but she comports under all regimes. In the Clinton administration for example, Mike Taylor was graced with the position of deputy director of the FDA. Taylor is a cousin of Tipper Gore, Vice President Albert Gore's wife, and once an outside counsel to Monsanto. (Gore voted with Senate conservatives in 1985 against aspartame labelling.)

Under the tutelage of the Clinton administration, one Chicago reporter quipped, the FDA strictly enforces one "unwritten" violation of law-failure to bribe.

Granitic Believers

G.D. Searle, the pharmaceutical firm that introduced NutraSweet, worked symbiotically with federal and congressional officials, bribed investigators when violations of law were exposed, *anything* to move aspartame to market. As far back as 1969, an internal Searle "strategy memo" concluded the company must obtain FDA approval to outpace firms competing for the artificial sweetener market. Another memo in December 1970 urged that FDA officials were to be "brought into a subconscious spirit of participation" with Searle.²⁷ To that end, with enormous profits at stake, the pharmaceutical house set out on a long struggle to transform the Pentagon's biochemical warfare agent into "the taste Mother Nature intended.

The official story is that aspartame was discovered in 1966 by a scientist developing an ulcer drug (not a "food additive"). Supposedly he discovered, upon carelessly licking his fingers that they tasted sweet. Thus was the chemicals industry blessed with a successor to saccharine, the coal-tar derivative that foundered eight years later under the pressure of cancer concerns.

Aspartame found early opposition in consumer attorney James Turner, author of *The Chemical Feast* and a former Nader's Raider. At his own expense, Turner fought approval for ten years, basing his argument on aspartame's potential side effects, particularly on children. His concern was shared by Dr. John Olney, Professor of neuropathology and psychiatry at Washington School of Medicine in St. Louis. Dr. Olney found that aspartame, combined with MSG seasoning, increased the odds of brain damage in children.

Other studies have found that children are especially vulnerable to its toxic effects, a measure of the relation between consumption and body weight. The FDA determined in 1981, when the sweetener was approved, that the maximum projected intake of Aspartame is 50 milligrams a day per kilogram of body weight. A child of 66 pounds would consume about 23 milligrams by imbibing four cans of Diet Coke. The child might also conceivably down an aspartame-flavored snack or two, nearing the FDA's projected maximum daily intake.²⁹ Dr. William Partridge, a professor of neuroendocrine regulation at MIT, told *Common Cause* in August 1984 that it wouldn't be surprising if a child-"confronted with aspartame contained in iced tea chocolate milk, milk shakes, chocolate pudding pie, Jello, ice cream and numerous other products" - consumed 50 milligrams per kilogram in a day.

Internally, aspartame breaks down into its constituent amino acids and methanol, which degrades into formaldehyde. The FDA announced in 1984 that "no evidence" has been found to establish that the methanol byproduct reaches toxic levels, claiming that "many fruit juices contain higher levels of the natural compound."³⁰ But the Medical World News had already reported in 1978 that the methanol content of aspartame is 1,000 times greater than most foods under FDA control.³¹

NutraSweet, the "good stuff" of sentimental adverts, is a truly insidious product. According to independent trials, aspartame intake is shown by animal studies to alter brain chemicals affecting behavior. Aspartame's effects on the brain led Richard Wurtman, an MIT neuroscientist, to the discovery, as recorded in The New England Journal of Medicine (No. 309, 1983), that the sweetener defeats its purpose as a diet aid, since high doses may instill a craving for calorie-laden carbohydrates. One of his pilot studies found that the NutraSweet-

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carbohydrate combination increases the "sweetener's effect on brain composition." Searle officials denigrated Wurtman 's findings, but the American Cancer Society has since confirmed the irony-after tracking 80,000 women for six years-that "among women who gained weight, artificial sweetener users gained more than those who didn't use the products," as reported in Medical Self-Care (387). (Since his battle with G.D. Searle, Wurtman founded Interneuron Pharmaceuticals, Inc., the producer of a sports drink that enhances athletic performance, and a weight loss drug marketed in over 40 countries. Wurtman's share of the company, established in 1989, was worth \$10 million by 1992. 32

Even more daunting are the findings of Dr. Paul Spiers, a neuropsychologist at Boston's Beth Israel Hospital, that aspartame use can depress intelligence. For this reason, he selected experimental subjects with a history of consuming it but unaware that they might be suffering ill effects. The subjects were given NutraSweet in capsules of the FDA's allowable limit. Spiers was alarmed to discover that they developed "cognitive deficits." One of the tests required recall of square patterns and alphabetical sequences, becoming increasingly more difficult. The test is challenging, but most people improve as they learn how it is done. The aspartame users, however, did not improve.

"Some frankly showed a reverse pattern," said Spiers."33

Aspartame has been shown to erode short-term memory. At the May, 1985 hearings on NutraSweet, Louisiana Senator Russell Long related a bizarre anecdote: SENATOR LONG: I have received a letter recently from a person who is well known to me and whose word is impeccable, as far as I am concerned. This person told me that she had been dieting and she had been using diet drinks with aspartame in it. She said she found her memory was going. She seemed to be completely losing her memory. When she would meet people whom she knew intimately, she could not recall what their name was, or even who they were. She could not recall a good bit of that which was going on about her to the extent that she was afraid she was losing her mind. . . In due course, someone suggested that it might be this NutraSweet, so she stopped using it and her memory came back and her mind was restored. Senator Howard Metzenbaum replied that he had received "a number of letters from doctors reporting similar developments. . . There have been hundreds of incidents of people who have suffered loss of memory, headaches, dizziness, and other neurological symptoms which they feel are related to aspartame."34 Senator Orrin Hatch, a hidebound archconservative and NutraSweet advocate, downplayed criticism of the sugar substitute. "Some people have lost their memory after drinking a variety of things," he argued. "The bottom line is this: The studies supporting aspartame's approval have been examined and reexamined. More than enough sound, valid studies exist to demonstrate aspartame's safety."

Hatch of Utah, reports the Wall Street Journal, has "given his strong support of the pharmaceutical industries."35 So have the "Hatchlings." David Kessler, FDA Commissioner under presidents Bush and Clinton, was once an aide to Orrin Hatch. Hatch's former campaign manager and aide, C. McClain Haddow, was sentenced to prison for conflict-of-interest charges arising from his work as a Reagan administration health official. And Thomas Parry, Hatch's former chief of staff, has carved a sumptuous life for himself as a Republican fund-raiser and lobbyist with clients in the pharmaceutical industry. All told, Parry represents 30 clients,

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including Eli Lilly, Warner-Lambert, and Johnson & Johnson, not to mention ranking defense firms and the Bahamas government. Parry's pharmaceutical clients have enriched Senator Hatch's campaign coffers, and in turn Hatch lavishes his attentions on them.

By the time Orrin Hatch was stumping for NutraSweet in the U.S. Senate, the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta had received 600 letters complaining of NutraSweet's adverse effects. The National Soft Drink Association (NSDA) had them too. "There have been hundreds of reports from around the country suggesting a possible relationship between their consumption of NutraSweet and subsequent symptoms including headaches, aberrational behavior, slurred speech, etc." FDA Commissioner Arthur Hull Hayes, appointed by Ronald Reagan in April, 1981 (moving the New York Times to observe that "some industry officials consider Dr. Hayes more sympathetic to their viewpoints than past holders of the office"), considered such complaints "anecdotal."

Of course, like scores of other conservatives roaming the executive branch in the 1980s, the ethics of Arthur Hull Hayes were entirely malleable-not only did he approve a product based on studies that were "scientifically lacking in design and execution," according to a report issued by Science Times in February 1985, but upon leaving the FDA he took the post of senior medical consultant for Burson-Marsteller, the public relations firm retained by G.D. Searle.³⁷

Burson-Marsteller, a huge public relations conglomerate, swelled in the 1980s by leveraging smaller competitors -including Black, Manafort, Stone & Kelley, a lobbying firm best known for influence peddling along the Beltway-presently outsizing even the Hill & Knowlton empire. Typical in the aspartame story are Burson-Marsteller's links to the intelligence community and rightwing operatives of the GOP. Thomas Devereaux Bell, Jr., an executive officer of the firm, is the former chairman of the Center for naval Analysis in Alexandria, Virginia. Bell was also the executive director of Ronald Reagan's Inaugural Ball Committee (in which capacity he ushered in the likes of Licio Gelli, head of P2, the notorious Italian secret society). Bell's career in Washington began in 1971 as a deputy director of Richard Nixon's Committee to ReElect the President. He went on to serve as an administrative aide to Senator William Brock and the Reagan transition team.³⁸

At the FDA, Hayes used aspartame as a political statement that the Reagan administration was embarking on a grand voyage of conservative "regulatory reform," sluicing through treasonous liberal constraints on "free enterprise." Despite what one FDA scientist described as 'very serious' questions concerning pivotal brain tumor tests, Hayes eagerly approved aspartame for use in dry foods in July 1981.³⁹ Three FDA scientists advised against the approval of aspartame, citing G.D. Searle's own brain tumor tests, because there was no proof that "aspartame is safe for use as a food additive under its intended conditions of use." ⁴⁰

Hayes has since declined to answer any questions about his decision, which ignored the recommendations of the FDA's own board of inquiry. He relied instead on a study conducted by Japan's Ajinomoto, Inc.-a licensee of G.D. Searle. Hayes acknowledged in his 1981 decision that he had only consulted a preliminary report of the Japanese evaluation, and only *skimmed* it. More serious, Hayes violated federal law by basing approval on the test, as it had not been reviewed by the FDA board.⁴¹

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Who is Arthur Hull Hayes? He was no disinterested bureaucrat. True to the biochemical theme of the aspartame story, Dr. Hayes served in the Army Medical Corps in the 1960s. According to the Washington Post, Hayes was assigned to Edgewood Arsenal at Fort Detrick, Maryland, the Army's chemical warfare base of operations, "one of a number of doctors who conducted drug tests for the Army on volunteers . . . to determine the effect of a mind-disorienting drug called CAR 301,060." According to a declassified 1976 report prepared by the Army Inspector General, Hayes had planned a research study to develop the mind-altering CAR 301,060 as a *crowd control agent.* In 1972, Hayes left Edgewood Arsenal, and a new plan for the experiments was drawn up by Edgewood physicians. The 1976 report notes that similar tests had been conducted before Hayes took charge. 42

Also at the center of the effort to land FDA approval of NutraSweet stood Donald Rumsfeld - "Rummy" to his friends - chairman of G.D. Searle upon leaving the Ford administration in 1977. Rumsfeld, the product of a wealthy Chicago suburb, was a Princeton graduate and a Navy pilot during the Korean conflict. He entered politics as a Congressional House aide attending night classes at Georgetown University Law School, which is closely aligned with the CIA.43

Rumsfeld campaigned ambitiously for Richard Nixon, who drafted him to direct the Office of Equal Opportunity on May 26, 1969. He quickly established an office to spy on his employees in a holy crusade to flush out "revolutionaries" said to be granting federal funds to politically subversive organizations—a throwback to McCarthy's tantrums.44 Rumsfeld also figured in Nixon's notorious Power Control Group, spearheaded by Charles Colson and John Ehrlichman.45 Gerald Ford named Rumsfeld executive chief of staff upon the resignation of Al Haig. In 1986 he was named chairman of the Institute for Contemporary Studies, a neoconservative "think tank" (read: propaganda mill) established in 1972 by Edwin Meese and Caspar Weinberger. ICS has sponsored such opinion-shaping projects as a study of expansions in "entitlement programs" and their erosive effects on the economy, and a book on the uses of coercion by Communist regimes.46 Rumsfeld, at 43, became the county's youngest secretary of defense. For many years he has been a vocal proponent of chemical weapons.47 He is chairman of the Rand Corp.48 In 1988, he dropped a presidential bid, and was named a v.p. of Westmark Systems, led by past NSA Director Bobby Ray Inman. Rumsfeld was one of Westmark's founding directors, sharing the board with Joseph Amato, a former vice president at TRW (and a colleague of Inman's at the National Security Agency), and Dale Frey, chairman of the General Electric Investment Corp.49

Rumsfeld, a veteran political operative, was an adept at the vulgar art of public relations. He was recruited by G.D. Searle because he had "a Boy Scout image," according to one company official.50 A house politician was precisely what Searle needed to compensate for the damage done by independent researchers concerned about the toxic effects of aspartame. In March 1976, an FDA task force brought into question *all* of the company's testing procedures between 1967 and 1975. The task force described "serious deficiencies in Searle's operations and practices which undermine the basis for reliance on Searle's integrity." The final report of the FDA task force noted faulty and fraudulent product testing, knowingly misrepresented findings, and instances of "irrelevant or unproductive animal research where experiments have been poorly conceived, carelessly executed or inaccurately analyzed."51

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Richard Merrill, the FDA's chief counsel, petitioned Samuel K. Skinner U.S. Attorney for the northern district of Illinois, for a grand jury investigation of Searle's "willful and knowing failure" to submit required test reports, and for "concealing material facts and making false statements" in reports on aspartame submitted to the agency.⁵² Yet industry analysts, interviewed by the Wall Street Journal six months after Rumsfeld's appointment as chairman, noted a rapid turnabout in Searle's fortunes as a result of his direction.⁵³

Searle denies that Chairman Rumsfeld ever had any contact with the FDA, or the Carter and Reagan administrations, to lobby for aspartame.⁵⁴ But the Wall Street Journal article reported in 1977 that Rumsfeld "keenly understands the importance of a public image. So he has been mending fences with the FDA by personally asking top agency officials what Searle should do to straighten out its reputation." Westley M. Dixon, Searle's vice chairman, told the Journal that without Rumsfeld "we wouldn't have gotten approval for Norpace," a drug investigated by the FDA in 1975.⁵⁵

The grand jury investigation of Searle disintegrated in January, 1977 when the FDA formally requested that Samuel Skinner, U.S. attorney and a protege of Illinois Governor James Thompson, investigate the firm for falsifying and withholding aspartame test data. A month later, Skinner met with attorneys from Searle's Chicago law firm, Sidley & Austin. Jimmy Carter ascended to The presidency a few weeks later. He announced that Skinner would not be asked to remain in office, but the outgoing Republican wasn't found wanting for employment. He informed reporters that he had already begun "preliminary discussions" with Sidley & Austin.⁵⁶

G.D. Searle and Sidley & Austin are Siamese Twins. Edwin Austin, a senior partner in the law firm, was appointed to the Illinois Supreme Court in 1969. The Searle family drew upon his services extensively, and he taught Sunday school in Wilmette, a Chicago suburb, as did Dr. Claude Howard Searle, whose father cofounded the pharmaceutical house.

The firm is grafted to the beating heart of the Republican party. Morris Leibman of Sidley & Austin was for many years chairman of the American Bar Association's "Standing Committee on Law and National Security," a position that won him Reagan's Medal of Freedom in 1981.⁵⁷

John E. Robson, head of Sidley & Austin's Washington office, was appointed executive vice-president of Searle & Co. in 1977, the same year Skinner was named a partner in the law firm. Robson, too, was active in Republican politics. He was the first General Counsel of the Department of Transportation, and at the behest of Gerald Ford in 1975, chairman of the Civil Aeronautics Board.⁵⁸ He moved on to Searle, and stayed with the company until it was bought outright by Monsanto in 1985. Howard Trienens, a law clerk to the late chief Justice Vinson in the early 1950s, was a G.D. Searle director and worked for Sidley & Austin since 1949.⁵⁹ Archconservative California Governor George Deukmejian joined Sidley & Austin's Los Angeles branch upon leaving office in 1991, and is reportedly making a "very comfortable" living. He has a keen "sense" for bringing in corporate clients, a partner in the firm told the Los Angeles Times, many of them past contributors to his campaign fund. Deukmejian's business connections have given him a reputation as a Sidley & Austin "rainmaker," but the L.A. City Council has questioned his ethics in promoting a contract with Sumitomo Corp. on a metropolitan railway project.⁶⁰ Searle aside, Sidley & Austin has served some of the most

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notorious special interests in the country. The firm lobbied overtime, for instance, on behalf of Charles Keating's Lincoln Savings & Loan, and provided counsel on tax issues and dealing with federal authorities. The firm assisted Keating when Lincoln was foundering, and curried political favor to keep the S&L operating despite massive debts. As a result, the firm was forced to settle with Lincoln depositors in 1991, agreeing to cover an excess of \$40 million in claims.⁶¹ Sidley & Austin also represented the AMA when a group of drugstore chains sued seven drug makers-including Searle-for price fixing and antitrust violations. The lawsuit, filed in October 1993, amounts to billions of dollars in compensation.⁶²

Skinner recused himself from the Searle prosecution four months before leaving office-asking, in a memo to subordinates, that the matter be kept "confidential to avoid any undo embarrassment"-a stall that nearly allowed the statute of limitations to expire. William Conlon, a senior U.S. attorney, inherited the case. He eased off, citing case load pressures, and gave a deaf ear to complaints of delays from the Justice Department, which urged that a grand jury be convened to prosecute Searle for falsifying NutraSweet test data. In January, 1979, Conlon too joined Sidley & Austin.⁶³

The 33-page letter from Merrill to Skinner charged Searle with criminal fraud in its animal test results. In 1984 Common Cause asked Dan Reidy of the U. S. attorney's office how the investigation had stalled. Reidy replied that because it was a grand jury investigation, he was "bound by law to secrecy." A Searle spokesman exploited the demise of the grand jury claim that there was "no validity to the charges, that the company had been "exonerated." Philip Brodsky, an investigator for the FDA, expressed surprise that Searle hadn't been indicted. "I thought surely they would prosecute them," he said.⁶⁴

Eleven years later Senator Metzenbaum issued a press release charging Skinner with stalling the criminal investigation as he prepared to decamp from office. Metzenbaum and his staff demanded an FBI investigation of Skinner's mishandling of the case. In December 1988, the conflict-of-interest bombshell blew up in the face of newly elected George Bush, who was about to appoint Skinner to the position of Transportation Secretary.⁶⁵

Like most of the Machiavellians in the NutraSweet story, Samuel Knox Skinner kept company with hardright Republicans. He entered politics as a campaign volunteer for Barry Goldwater. ⁶⁶ In 1975, he was appointed to Federal Prosecutor in Chicago by President Ford. Sidley & Austin promoted him to senior partner after only one year with the firm. Skinner was the director of George Bush's presidential campaign in Illinois. On occasion he was berated for his involvement with the state's Republican apparatus: In 1987, for instance, the Chicago SunTimes linked him with a clutch of lawyers close to Governor Thompson, who were awarded lucrative assignments handling the affairs of financially crippled insurance companies. Skinner was a leading light of the Illinois Fraud Prevention Commission -he targeted welfare cheats (as opposed to white-collar criminals in the drug industry)-and President Reagan's Commission on Organized Crime. In December 1991, he left Transportation to take the position of President Bush's Chief of Staff.⁶⁷

"A Shocking Story"

Had Skinner pressed on with the investigation, aspartame's manufacturer would have been forced to explain a long history of fabricated laboratory tests and slippery dealings with federal regulators, not to mention the public. Dr. Alexander Schmidt, a former FDA commissioner, said of the original Aspartame Task Force investigation: "What was discovered was reprehensible. . .incredibly sloppy science." A 1980 public board of inquiry opined that the company's testing procedures were "bizarre."⁶⁸

Searle's decision to market aspartame culminated with the falsification of test results to obtain FDA approval . In November 1969, officials of the firm hired Dr. Harry Waisman, a researcher for the University of Wisconsin, to test for brain damage in rhesus monkeys. Seven monkeys were fed aspartame for periods up to one year. In the end, though, the evaluation flopped because the technicians failed to perform the intelligence tests and autopsies required to determine brain damage. When questioned about the false data by the FDA, Searle officials claimed to have had no direct control over the study. But the protocol for the study was written by a Searle pathologist *after* it had begun. And, according to Dr. Gross, "Frequent high-level communications took place between Searle executives and Dr. Waisman prior to and during the study." ⁶⁹

To make matters worse, Dr. Waisman died in March, 1971, in mid-study.

Searle submitted the toxicity test to the FDA on October 12, 1972. It bore Dr. Waisman's name as coauthor. Richard Merrill noted: "Dr. Waisman was the expert in the field and his name would carry great weight," but complained to Skinner that Searle took "great literary license" in drafting the report, "which *covers up* the admitted inadequacy of the design, control and documentation of this study." ⁷⁰

Searle submitted some 150 test reports, yet Dr. Martha Freeman of the FDA Bureau of Drugs noted in a 1973 memo, "the information provided is inadequate to permit an evaluation of the potential toxicity of aspartame." ⁷¹ The FDA task force set up by Dr. Schmidt in 1975 reviewed 25 studies on seven products manufactured by G.D. Searle, a total of 500 pages and 15,000 exhibits.⁷² Searle was held to be the author of "reports that the FDA believes contain false information" and "concealed facts resulting from having drafted Dr. Waisman's 'pilot' monkey study so that it would *appear* to be a valid, thorough scientific study," and not a forgery.

In 1975 Searle submitted a battery of cancer test results entitled "The Willigan Report, which contained a statistical table that excluded four malignant mammary tumors detected by Dr. Willigan and incorporated in his data. The malignancies were made to appear benign. Searle dismissed the misrepresentation as a computer "programming error" undetected by supervising statisticians. Dr. Gross interviewed all concerned with the tests. He concluded in a statement to Metzenbaum's committee in August, 1985, that "to accept the Searle explanation is to believe that the unfavorable mammary malignancy data were innocently omitted from the summary table four separate times by three different individuals."⁷⁴

The Waisman and Willigan Reports were prepared by Searle Labs, as were 88% of the safety evaluations conducted by 1981.⁷⁵ They are typical of the shoddy documentation upon which FDA Commissioner Hayes based his decision that aspartame does not constitute a public health

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risk. Although two members of the 1975 task force considered the tests to be criminal frauds, Hayes and Searle declared the results valid. In an appeal to Hayes' decision, James Turner said: "The entire argument that since the studies are no longer considered fraudulent *by FDA* they are therefore scientifically valid is an example of a rhetorical shell game that, if successful, can only bring discredit and ridicule on the FDA."⁷⁶

Dr. Gross, the chief scientist on the FDA task force, told the CBS *Nightly News* staff in January, 1984, that Searle made "*deliberate* decisions" to cloak the toxic effects of aspartame. "They took great pains to camouflage these shortcomings of the study," Gross said, "as I say, filter and just present to the FDA what they wished the FDA to know. And they did other *terrible* things. For instance, animals would develop tumors while they were under study-well, G.D. Searle would *remove these tumors from the animals*," surgically masking the cancerous effects of aspartame.⁷⁷ Yet one 1986 New England Journal of Medicine article claimed that noncompulsive aspartame intake has "no sinister effects."

Dr. Woodrow Monte told CBS, "Every time a truly impartial team of scientists have looked at NutraSweet, it has been turned down." Dr. Monte, director of the nutrition laboratory at Arizona State University, held that these studies "show *extreme* dangers over the long term."⁷⁸

Dr. Monte was rewarded for his comments by a fusillade from the press. On February 23, Dan Dorfman, a business news reporter for WCBS in New York, broke a story that several CBS employees had invested in options on NutraSweet that pay off if the stock price drops.⁷⁹ Dr. Monte and his attorney had purchased the options as well. It emerged that the CBS staffers had purchased the options on the advice of stock market newsletters printed prior to the nightly news report. The investments were not illegal, nor did they reap a profit. Searle's stock was not affected by the publicity, and the investors took a loss.

Nevertheless, the Wall Street Journal ran a front-page story condemning the "inside trading." Reed Irvine's Accuracy in Media picked up the cudgel against Dr. Monte and the CBS employees as if they'd committed a shocking Wall Street swindle.⁸⁰ Accuracy in Media, formed in 1969, is an intelligence operation abetted by the CIA. The rabidly right-wing organization was co-founded by Bernard Yoh, a counter-insurgency adviser under the notorious Edward Landsdale in Vietnam, and a fount of CIA funds to military intelligence units in the Delta region. Board member Elbridge Durbrow was once a foreign service "diplomat," and advised commanders of Maxwell Air Force Base in Alabama. Another AIM board member, Frank Trager, has conducted research for the Pentagon and CIA, and churns out pamphlets on international business and intelligence operations. Major financial contributors to AIM include Richard Nixon, "Bebe" Rebozo, Edward Scripps, the wretched Dr. Edward Teller and former Treasury Secretary William E. Simon.⁸¹

Accuracy in Media is a strident advocate of the chemical industry, which provides it with generous funding. The media "watchdog" has long waged a campaign on behalf of dioxin, denouncing the "Agent Orange scare" as the creation of delirious, anti-business liberals. Among the leading manufacturers of Agent Orange for the Vietnam war effort was Monsanto, preparing-at the very moment AIM took aim at detractors of NutraSweet[™]- to buy G.D. Searle.

The Good Stuff

Dr. Monte cautioned in 1987 that he didn't want to sound like a "conspiracy theory" hound, but the aspartame chronology clarifies its commercial emergence. The FDA Board of Inquiry advised against the sweetener on September 30, 1980. On January 21, 1981—the day after Reagan's inauguration—Searle submitted "ten new studies." Dr. Monte was skeptical. "It is impossible that they could have conducted those studies in four months," he said. "Obviously they'd previously done those studies but hadn't officially submitted them, although much of the information in those studies was informally presented to the board of inquiry." With the "new tests" in hand, Hayes acted as though critical, overriding evidence had proven the safety of aspartame.⁸²

James Turner, representing the Community Nutrition Institute in Washington, D.C., said that Arthur Hull Hayes, to arrive at his decision that aspartame is safe, fire walked a path "through a mass of scientific mismanagement, improper procedures, wrong conclusions and general scientific inexactness." Two FDA officials declared in 1985 that Hayes was determined to clear all obstacles to NutraSweet approval. One FDA bureaucrat reported that "people at the top" were closed to questions concerning the quality of the tests submitted by Searle.⁸³

In July, 1984 a broad investigation of NutraSweet's adverse effects was conducted by the FDA and the Centers for Disease Control. Federal health officials said at the outset that they believed no harm would emerge from the data to indict aspartame. Robert McQuate, Ph.D., science director of the National Soft Drink Association, predicted with mystical confidence that the study would "provide further evidence that aspartame is a safe ingredient."⁸⁴

Dr. McQuate didn't fret the goading of his biochemical ox. In November the CDC announced that no "serious, widespread" side effects had been found.⁸⁵ It was "unlikely," said CDC officials, that "complainers" could establish a link between NutraSweet and their maladies—the same bromide once tossed to victims of radiation experiments. The reported side-effects of aspartame fell into two distinct categories: central nervous system (65%) and gastrointestinal disorders (24%).⁸⁶ Yet the CDC claimed erroneously that no consistent reaction pattern had been found. ⁸⁷ Robert Shapiro, then president of Nutrasweet, used the occasion to enthuse that the survey "clearly established the safety" of the sugar substitute.⁸⁸ Nevertheless, the CDC recommended a new set of studies because aspartame users continued to complain of ill effects.

Based on the ersatz assurances of the CDC report, PepsiCo announced that it would drop saccharine and begin sweetening its diet drinks entirely with aspartame. The decision would have been approved by Wayne Calloway, then CEO of PepsiCo and director of the multinationals Citicorp, General Electric and Exxon. In 1983 soda bottlers, organized around Pepsi had petitioned the FDA for a delay in approval of NutraSweet for soft drinks until further evaluation verified its safety—interpreted by market analysts as a ploy to drive down the price of the sweetener. They soon abandoned the effort to block approval (and all health concerns they might have had). "We believe saccharine is safe," Pepsi USA President Roger Enrico lied, but "we wanted the taste improvement." PepsiCo, already drawing on a tenth of Searle's 7.5 million pound annual production of aspartame, signed an agreement with G.D. Searle to boost purchases 500 percent.⁸⁹ (Like other corporate pushers of aspartame, Pepsi has long

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maintained ties to the intelligence community. One product of the relationship was a Pepsi plant in Vientiane, Laos with a laboratory outfitted for heroin production. Alfred McCoy, in **The Politics of Heroin in Southeast Asia** documents the efforts of Richard Nixon to promote the plant's construction in 1965, and the CIA's continuing subsidization of the plant. McCoy complained to Pepsi officials that the facilities were but a cover for the importation and refinement of morphine, but it continued to operate unhindered.)

Yet another report was filed by Reagan's General Accounting Office in July 1987, this one on the FDA's handling of aspartame. The GAO concluded that the agency had followed proper procedures and conducted valid studies. But the report noted that the FDA had followed guidelines for food -not drug- testing, despite the recommendation of the agency's own biologists favoring **drug** tests, which are considerably more stringent. This recommendation was overruled by FDA officials.⁹⁰

Another blemish in the study was bared by Dr. Louis Elsas, director of medical genetics at Emory University in Atlanta. "They never asked the right questions about what it does to brain function in humans," he told the *_Washington Post_*. Half of the scientists polled expressed reservations about the safety of NutraSweet. One-fifth reported "major concerns." Monsanto quibbled in a press release that these critics had themselves never conducted aspartame research. A score of independent scientists have. They found side effects.

Senator Metzenbaum berated Searle's flawed and fabricated tests at the August 1, 1985 Senate hearings. "The FDA," he said, "is content to have the manufacturer of aspartame, G.D. Searle, conduct these studies. How **absurd**."

He also faulted the AMA:

The *_Journal of the American Medical Association_* recently published a report on aspartame which, with some significant disclaimers, stated it was safe for most people. I wish that this report could ease my concerns. It does not. It merely restates the FDA position which relies solely on the tests conducted by G.D. Searle. As I have indicated these tests are under a cloud. In addition, the concerns raised recently by the scientists ... were not even included in the report.

In defense of the tests, executives of G.D. Searle argued that the sweetener has been approved by foreign regulatory agencies and the World Health Organization. But H.J. Roberts, an internal medicine specialist in West Palm Beach, Florida, reviewed the foreign studies and found that "the vast majority of these agencies accepted company-sponsored research without ever having done independent confirmatory studies."⁹¹

Deficiencies in testing were aggravated by a lack of laboratory training at Searle. One of the pivotal safety studies involved fetal damage, but the FDA task force found that the medical researcher in charge was "inexperienced in conducting studies of this nature and yet given full responsibility." They were appalled to discover that his sole credential was a field study of the cottontail rabbit for the Illinois Wildlife Service, yet at Searle he'd been assigned to laboratory training and supervision. When asked about his **curriculum vitae** in fetal research, he replied that he'd once attended a seminar on the subject, and the company had provided him with a

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stack of reference works.⁹² (Yet J.D. Searle, in its 1981 Annual Report, billed itself as "a research based pharmaceutical company.")

Corporate control of NutraSweet testing continues at Monsanto, torturing the ethics of academic medicine. In August 1987 the University of Illinois, a recipient of Monsanto's largess, issued a study exonerating aspartame of causing seizures in laboratory animals. Dave Hattan, a safety regulator for the FDA, responded that the study only confirmed the need for testing on humans. At independent labs, he insisted, aspartame provoked seizures.

Industrial support tends to contaminate test data. Dr. Elsas, in a 1988 letter to the New England Journal of Medicine, advocates unbiased review of clinical research. "The NutraSweet Co.," he said, "may have had an interest in protocols that would find that their product had no untoward effects." ⁹⁴ Monsanto reportedly granted one NutraSweet researcher a \$1.3 million honorarium.⁹⁵ The same hired gun willing to manipulate lab results will have no qualms publicly defending a tainted pharmaceutical, like the diabetic specialist who objected that a Senate hearing on aspartame, which called him as a witness, might arouse groundless public anxiety.⁹⁶

Victims and health activists have attempted in the courts to put a stop to the marketing of NutraSweet, to no avail. In 1985 a coalition of consumer groups were handed a ruling by the federal Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia that the FDA had followed proper procedures in approving aspartame for soft drinks. A year later the Washington Post reported that the Supreme Court again refused to consider the case "despite critics' arguments that the product, sold under the brand name NutraSweet, may cause brain damage."⁹⁷

Likewise, the medical establishment has thrown up an impenetrable wall to aspartame critics. Dr. Roberts, author of a brief study, "Aspartame-Associated Confusion and Memory Loss: A Possible Human Model for Early Alzheimer's Disease," found it impossible to publish the article in a peer review medical journal. This was peculiar, he thought, "considering the increasing magnitude of Alzheimer's disease, and the relevance of my observations to newer biochemical findings and avenues of research." He can "personally vouch for the *enormous* difficulty in getting published articles concerning reactions to aspartame products," a trend in censorship with "ominous overtones." The options, Dr. Roberts says, are "generally limited to 'burying' the findings in a small-circulation journal (such as the bulletin of a county medical society), reporting the results as a letter to the editor, or (unfortunately, most often) discarding the project."⁹⁸

Silence surrounds the most odious conspiracies.

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24. "Radiation and the Guinea Pigs," Guardian, March 3, 1994, p. 3. Also see, "Nuclear Scientists Irradiated People in Secret Research," New York Times, December 17, 1993, p. A1.
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- of the Russian Civil War. Monsanto's Clinton Engineering Works in Oak Ridge became the Manhattan Project's headquarters in 1943, and was "manned almost entirely by experienced officers and agents of the CIC." See Ian Sayer and Douglas Botting, **America's Secret Army: The Untold Story of the Counter intelligence Corps**, Franklin Watts (New York: 1989), pp. 71ff.,346.
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NO HOAX, CRIME OF THE CENTURY

By Carol Guilford

Question: How long can a corporate, organized crime syndicate keep a plague a secret?
Answer: Nineteen years and counting if they own the media and pay off Congress.

There is a plague among us. A man-made epidemic that destroys the central nervous system is caused by aspartame (Equal, NutraSweet), manufactured by Monsanto of St. Louis, Mo. U.S.A.

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Aspartame (Equal, NutraSweet) is an artificial sweetener added to 9,000 food and drink products around the world. Half the population of the United States, 100 million people 'eat' aspartame.

Aspartame (Equal, NutraSweet) is not just in diet soda and little blue packets, but this poison invades children's vitamins.

In 1995, the FDA released under the Freedom of Information Act, 92 symptoms caused by aspartame including blindness and death.

What is aspartame? Two synthetic amino acids, phenylalanine (50%) and aspartic acid (40%) are bound in methanol (10%)

In early testing of phenylalanine (1970), on Rhesus monkeys one died and 5 had grand mal seizures. When the aspartame was stopped, the seizures stopped. Searle Pharmaceuticals, 'discoverers' of NutraSweet hid this study to gain FDA approval.

Twenty years later, in 1992, "Flying Safety" the U.S Air Force official publication formally warned all pilots to abstain from consuming diet drinks. Pilots were having grand mal seizures in the cockpit just like the monkeys in the lab.

Phenylalanine also breaks down into DKP, a tumor-causing agent. Results from a two-year test on experimental rats produced disastrous results for Searle—brain tumors, gross mammary tumors, atrophied testes, birth defects.

Although the tests were sabotaged (tumors were removed and the animals returned to the study), Searle scientists left a tissue trail a mile long, uncovered by a FDA Task Force and recorded in the Bressler Report.

Experimental animals predict human results. In 1998, there were 14,000 astrocytomas (seven hundred children) the exact kind of brain tumor found in the aspartame dosed rats. Since the 1981 approval of NutraSweet, breast cancer has doubled from 90,000 to 180,000, and 300,000 cases of prostate cancer are expected in 1999.

Aspartic acid is an 'excitotoxin'. Dr. Russell Blaylock explains in "Excitotoxins: The Taste That Kills", that compounds such as aspartame and MSG actually 'excite' the cells to death. So, for lunch a diet coke and a bowl of Campbell Soup is definitely, Hmm, hmm, bad..

The NutraSweet Company circulates misinformation about aspartame, asserting that the methanol in aspartame is less than in a glass of tomato juice. However, in NutraSweet, the methanol is 'free', appearing without ethanol, the antidote for methanol toxicity always present in natural food such as tomato juice.

In addition, the methanol breaks down into formaldehyde and formic acid. The latest studies on formaldehyde show that it accumulates in the cells and causes changes in DNA. Commercially, formic acid is used in paint stripper; in humans, is it any wonder it destroys the optic nerve, The media, including all major newspapers remains silent. Ramsey Clark in "The Fire This Time" writes:

The TV networks monopolize public access to the events that make the news. Television's intimate financial relationships with the military and weapons industries, its dependence on

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major corporate advertising, its political campaign contributions, its close alliances with political parties and leaders, the celebrity status of the major TV news readers ... made the American media virtually one with the government.

Two reporters have a pending lawsuit against a Tampa, Florida Fox affiliate for pulling, at the last minute, a segment critical of Monsanto's bovine growth hormone. The station admits that Monsanto lawyers called and promised trouble.

The Pepsi generation is ill. Aspartame poisoning mimics MS and rheumatoid arthritis. Fibromyalgia is a catchall term for the excruciating joint pain endured when aspartame dries up the lubricating synovial fluid and turns the joints into plastic. (Dr. H.J. Roberts, F.A.C.P. and Dr. James Bowen)

45 million Americans tolerate recurrent headaches, the No. 1 complaint about aspartame on the FDA list-- 1,862 out of 10,000 citizen reports.

NutraSweet produces mood swings, depression and anxiety attacks because the poison suppresses serotonin necessary for good mental health. NutraSweet is also highly addictive because methanol is wood alcohol.

Fetal tissue cannot tolerate methanol. "Aspartame 'babies' have symptoms of autism and attention deficit disorder. NutraSweet breaks down faster in heat. In 5 years, 280 federally funded scientists have not discovered that Gulf War veterans who have offspring with rare diseases (ABDC) drank diet soda metamorphosed by the 120 degree Arabian sun into a 'toxic cocktail'".

The unkindest fact of all is that NutraSweet makes you fatter. Dr. Sandra Cabot, author of "The Liver Cleansing Diet," explains that aspartame causes unstable blood sugar levels which increase the appetite and cause a craving for sweets, a puffy, bloated appearance and increased cellulite.

"You got the wrong one, baby, uh huh."

The approval process for NutraSweet unfolds like 'The Invasion of the Body Snatchers.' Searle pharmaceuticals (bought by Monsanto in 1985) made pod people of scientists, senators, prosecutors and the FDA.

Prosecutors that were told by the Justice Department to convene a grand jury to investigate Searle crime instead went to work for Searle's own law firm.

A former Congressman and White House Chief of Staff, Donald Rumsfeld went to work for Searle and bragged he would "call in all his markers" to get aspartame approved.

Orrin Hatch, senator from Utah, took money from and lobbied for Searle. The whitewash was complete when President Reagan hired Dr. Arthur Hull Hayes as FDA Commissioner. Hayes approved NutraSweet despite the negative findings of three Boards of Inquiry. Soon after the signing, Hayes went to work as a consultant to Searle's public relations firm.

David Kessler who approved aspartame for use in hot foods in 1993, and in 1996 authorized blanket approval for NutraSweet is now Dean of the Yale School of Medicine.

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The National Soft Drink Association wrote a 30-page protest before the 1983 approval of NutraSweet in carbonated beverages. The soft drink companies knew aspartame was unstable in heat, but they never filed the protest. (dorway.com).

In a 1986 letter to Orrin Hatch, former Senator Howard Metzenbaum of Ohio writes: "I urge you, Orrin, to hold oversight hearings... about NutraSweet." "...how in good conscience can you say, 'no'?" Hatch killed the hearings in committee.

I went to Atlanta to meet Betty Martini; founder of Mission Possible, an international organization dedicated to informing the world population about the dangers of aspartame (Equal, NutraSweet).

I sorted two thousand letters by disease. My thickest stacks were memory loss and diabetes/vision loss with the return of sight after abstention from NutraSweet. Coca-cola wouldn't do this to us. PepsiCo either. Well, they are.

A high hope appeared this year as an uncanny Paul Revere in cyberspace fired an e-mail shot heard 'round the world, heralding the festering facts of NutraSweet poisoning.

An anonymous humanitarian calling herself Nancy Markle cadged from the Web a lecture Betty Martini gave at a World Environmental Conference. NutraSweet users recognized their ailments, as described by Betty. Now, more phone calls and e-mail pour into Mission Possible headquarters.

Truly, it is impossible for thousands of people to make up matching stories of symptoms and descriptions of the rough detox when NutraSweet is discontinued.

The NutraSweet Company assures us aspartame is safe while it wages a molecular holocaust. .

An Associated Press release labels anti-aspartame consumer activists, toxic terrorists without even checking their side of the story. What kind of unbiased reporting is that?

Time Magazine's 'health reporter' calls the revealed truth about NutraSweet a hoax and the Internet a "Web of Deceit." In truth, the Web via e-mail is the last refuge of free communication. .

For 1500 years, a natural sweetener from a shrub, stevia, has been used safely in South America. Stevia is sold under strict FDA (Monsanto's Storm Troopers) regulation at health food stores as a food supplement, not as a sweetener.

Here is a win/win situation. The chemical companies give up all interest in the food industry. When the people's court rules, (some suggest the evildoers eat a diet rich in NutraSweet) the guilty may choose to live on farms, work in the fields and return the good earth to 'we the people.'

Carol Guilford is the author of The New Cook's Cookbook; The Diet Book; Carol Guilford's Main Course Cookbook; The Easiest Cookbook; Artificial Sweetener, Aspartame (Equal, NutraSweet) Linked To Breast Cancer And Gulf War Syndrome.

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April 16, 1995

I had used Equal/NutraSweet/aspartame for 4 or 5 years with no idea that it's poisonous, as I assumed that FDA approval means it's perfectly safe for us. I used about 12 packs of Equal in hot coffee each day.

The first symptoms were depression and vertigo, but I didn't connect them with Equal. My legs cramped constantly and pained at night, and I had insomnia and terrible nightmares and memory loss. My vision deteriorated until I expected to go blind, but my eye doctor couldn't explain why. My life became a nightmare, and I turned to prayer.

It worked! I received a NUTRASWEET IS A NEUROTOXIN flyer listing all my symptoms, so I abandoned aspartame in any form. My vision returned, the cramps disappeared, and I could sleep without nightmares. The depression and vertigo vanished. It was a miracle because I had thought I was dying and had Multiple Sclerosis.

If you have a serious problem, it's natural to investigate it. Often the "Experts" are publicity mills funded by the pirates that make the stuff. It's like asking the Mafia about the crime rate. Both the American Dietetics and American Diabetic Associations get big bucks from NutraSweet. Such organizations propagandize physicians on how safe it is, so doctors are often aware of the danger.

Much research confirms aspartame toxicity as do 80% of complaints the FDA has received on food additives. Heated aspartame is the most hazardous. My 12 packs/day in coffee almost cost my health, sanity and life. Now FDA has approved its use in baked goods, 350 degrees!

Before Equal I used saccharin without a problem. It looks like we have no protector, so we must warn each other. In this spirit I attest to the nightmare Equal made of my life. I urge you to take the "no aspartame" test and discover if your health problems are the results of continuous daily poisoning.

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November 18, 1994

I'm a 29 year old athletic female victim of deadly NutraSweet poisoning. I began to use it in the spring of 1990, and soon afterwards my condition began to deteriorate. I never imagined my strange symptoms were from a chemical, after all it's approved by the FDA and on restaurant tables.

My eyesight began to fade until I was almost blind in one eye. Next my hearing became dull and my legs, feet and torso lost sensation and became numb. I was dizzy most of the time, irritable and depressed and had constant terrible headaches. I became very clumsy, dropped and bumped into things. I used to skate but having lost my balance, I had to give it up. My mind was

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affected, and I thought I had a brain tumor. Reading comprehension and memory drastically decreased. I thought I was dying.

Two different doctors made the diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis. One was an eye specialist I saw about my vision loss.

This spring a friend explained to me that all my symptoms were coming from aspartame (NutraSweet) and that I had methanol toxicity which mimics Multiple Sclerosis. I was only drinking three Diet Cokes a day. I could hardly believe the horrible nightmare I was living was sold in 6 packs at the grocery store, but I would try anything so I stopped. Right away I began to feel better, and today most of my symptoms have completely disappeared. My friend, Betty, was right, I was suffering from methanol toxicity. My hearing and vision have returned and so has my memory. I'm no longer clumsy and have regained my balance, and feeling has returned to my lower extremities.

How can a poison like NutraSweet be sold to an entire population? How could it ever be approved by the FDA? I learned that I had the classic symptoms, and if I had not been warned in time it may have killed me. There is no doubt that the NutraSweet was responsible. One day a hostess gave me a Diet Pepsi, and not wanting to hurt her feelings, I accepted. Sure enough the next day my numbness returned, and I began to feel ill.

This poison must be removed from the market. I'm writing to help others in the hope that they can avoid the terror, confusion and helplessness NutraSweet brought into my life!
Sincerely,

Alecia Morris

Article written by Nancy Markle (1120197)

I have spent several days lecturing at the WORLD ENVIRONMENTAL CONFERENCE on "ASPARTAME marketed as 'NutraSweet', 'Equal', and 'Spoonful'". In the keynote address by the EPA, they announced that there was an epidemic of multiple sclerosis and systemic lupus, and they did not understand what toxin was causing this to be rampant across the United States. I explained that I was there to lecture on exactly that subject.

When the temperature of Aspartame exceeds 86 degrees F, the wood alcohol in ASPARTAME converts to formaldehyde and then to formic acid, which in turn, causes metabolic acidosis. (Formic acid is the poison found in the sting of fire ants). The methanol toxicity mimics multiple sclerosis; thus people were being diagnosed with having multiple sclerosis in error. The multiple sclerosis is not a death sentence, where methanol toxicity is.

In the case of systemic lupus, we are finding it has become almost as rampant as multiple sclerosis, especially in Diet Coke and Diet Pepsi drinkers. Also, with methanol toxicity, the victims usually drink three to four 12 oz. Cans of them per day, some even more. In the cases of systemic lupus, which is triggered by ASPARTAME, the victim usually does not know that the aspartame is the culprit. The victim continues its use, aggravating the lupus to such a degree, that sometimes it becomes life threatening. When we get people off the aspartame, those

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with systemic lupus usually become asymptomatic. Unfortunately, we can not reverse this disease.

On the other hand, in the case of those diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis, (when in reality, the disease is methanol toxicity), most of the symptoms disappear. We have seen cases where their vision has returned and even their hearing has returned. This also applies to cases of tinnitus.

During a lecture I said "If you are using ASPARTAME ((NutraSweet, Equal, Spoonful, etc.), and you suffer from fibromyalgia symptoms, spasms, shooting pains, numbness in your legs, cramps, vertigo, dizziness, headaches, tinnitus, joint pain, depression, anxiety attacks, slurred speech, blurred vision, or memory loss -- you probably have ASPARTAME DISEASE!" People were jumping up during the lecture saying, "I've got this, is it reversible?" It is rampant. Some of the speakers at my lecture even were suffering from these symptoms. In one lecture attended by the Ambassador of Uganda, he told us that their sugar industry is adding aspartame! He continued by saying that one of the industry leader's son could no longer walk - due in part by product usage!

We have a very serious problem. Even a stranger came up to Dr. Espisto (one of my speakers) and myself and said, "Could you tell me why so many people seem to be coming down with MS? During a visit to a hospice, a nurse said that six of her friends, who were heavy Diet Coke addicts, had all been diagnosed with MS. This is beyond coincidence.

Here is the problem. There were Congressional Hearings in which aspartame was included in 100 different products. Since this initial hearing, there have been two subsequent hearings, but to no avail. Nothing has been done. The drug and chemical lobbies have very deep pockets. Now there are over 5,000 products containing this chemical, and the PATENT HAS EXPIRED!!!! At the time of this first hearing, people were going blind. The methanol in the aspartame converts to formaldehyde in the retina of the eye. Formaldehyde is grouped in the same class of drugs as cyanide and arsenic--DEADLY POISONS!!! Unfortunately, it just takes longer to quietly kill, but it is killing people and causing all kinds of neurological problems.

Aspartame changes the brain's chemistry. It is the reason for severe seizures. This drug changes the dopamine level in the brain. Imagine what this drug does to patients suffering from Parkinson's Disease. This drug also causes Birth Defects. There is absolutely no reason to take this product. It is NOT A DIET PRODUCT!!! The Congressional record said, "It makes you crave carbohydrates and will make you FAT". Dr. Roberts stated that when he got patients off aspartame, their average weight loss was 19 pounds per person. The formaldehyde stores in the fat cells, particularly in the hips and thighs.

Aspartame is especially deadly for diabetics. All physicians know what wood alcohol will do to a diabetic. We find that physicians believe that they have patients with retinopathy, when in fact, it is caused by the aspartame. The aspartame keeps the blood sugar level out of control, causing many patients to go into a coma. Unfortunately, many have died. People were telling us at the Conference of the American College of Physicians, that they had relatives that switched from saccharin to an aspartame product and how that relative had eventually gone

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into a coma. Their physicians could not get the blood sugar levels under control. Thus, the patients suffered acute memory loss and eventually coma and death.

Memory loss is due to the fact that aspartic acid and phenylalanine are neurotoxic without the other amino acids found in protein. Thus it goes past the blood brain barrier and deteriorates the neurons of the brain. Dr. Russell Blaylock, neurosurgeon, said, "The ingredients stimulates the neurons of the brain to death, causing brain damage of varying degrees. Dr. Blaylock has written a book entitled "EXCITOTOXINS: THE TASTE THAT KILLS" (Health Press 1-800-643-2665). Dr. H.J. Roberts, diabetic specialist and world expert on aspartame poisoning, has also written a book entitled "DEFENSE AGAINST ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE" (1-800-814-9800). Dr. Roberts tells how aspartame poisoning is escalating Alzheimer's Disease, and indeed it is. As the hospice nurse told me, women are being admitted at 30 years of age with Alzheimer's Disease. Dr. Blaylock and Dr. Roberts will be writing a position paper with some case histories and will post it on the Internet. According to the Conference of the American College of Physicians, 'We are talking about a plague of neurological diseases caused by this deadly poison'.

Dr. Roberts realized what was happening when aspartame was first marketed. He said, "his diabetic patients presented memory loss, confusion, and severe vision loss". At the Conference of the American College of Physicians, doctors admitted that they did not know. They had wondered why seizures were rampant (the phenylalanine in aspartame breaks down the seizure threshold and depletes serotonin, which causes manic depression, panic attacks, rage and violence).

Just before the Conference, I received a FAX from Norway, asking for a possible antidote for this poison because they are experiencing so many problems in their country. This poison is now available in 90 PLUS countries worldwide. Fortunately, we had speakers and ambassadors at the Conference from different nations who have pledged their help. We ask that you help too. Print this article out and warn everyone you know. Take anything that contains aspartame back to the store. Take the "NO ASPARTAME TEST" and send us your case history.

I assure you that MONSANTO, the creator of aspartame, knows how deadly it is. They fund the American Diabetes Association, American Dietetic Association, Congress, and the Conference of the American College of Physicians. The New York Times, on November 15, 1996, ran an article on how the American Dietetic Association takes money from the food industry to endorse their products. Therefore, they cannot criticize any additives or tell about their link to MONSANTO. How bad is this? We told a mother who had a child on NutraSweet to get off the product. The child was having grand mal seizures every day. The mother called her physician, who called the ADA, who told the doctor not to take the child off the NutraSweet. We are still trying to convince the mother that the aspartame is causing the seizures. Every time we get someone off of aspartame, the seizures stop. If the baby dies, you know whose fault it is, and what we are up against. There are 92 documented symptoms of aspartame, from coma to death. The majority of them are all neurological, because the aspartame destroys the nervous system.

Aspartame Disease is partially the cause to what is behind some of the mystery of the Desert Storm health problems. The burning tongue and other problems

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discussed in over 60 cases can be directly related to the consumption of an aspartame product. Several thousand pallets of diet drinks were shipped to the Desert Storm troops. (Remember heat can liberate the methanol from the aspartame at 86 degrees F). Diet drinks sat in the 120 degree F. Arabian sun for weeks at a time on pallets. The service men and women drank them all day long. All of their symptoms are identical to aspartame poisoning. Dr. Roberts says "consuming aspartame at the time of conception can cause birth defects". The phenylalanine concentrates in the placenta, causing mental retardation, according to Dr. Louis Elsas, Pediatrician Professor - Genetics, at Emory University in his testimony before Congress.

In the original lab tests, animals developed brain tumors (phenylalanine breaks down into DXP, a brain tumor agent). When Dr. Espisto was lecturing on aspartame, one physician in the audience, a neurosurgeon, said, "when they remove brain tumors, they have found high levels of aspartame in them".

Stevia, a sweet food, NOT AN ADDITIVE, which helps in the metabolism of sugar, which would be ideal for diabetics, has now been approved as a dietary supplement by the F.D.A. For years, the F.D.A. has outlawed this sweet food because of their loyalty to MONSANTO.

If it says "SUGAR FREE" on the label-- DO NOT EVEN THINK ABOUT IT!!!!!! Senator Howard Metzenbaum wrote a bill that would have warned all infants, pregnant mothers and children of the dangers of aspartame. The bill would have also instituted independent studies on the problems existing in the population (seizures, changes in brain chemistry, changes in neurological and behavioral symptoms). It was killed by the powerful drug and chemical lobbies, letting loose the hounds of disease and death on an unsuspecting public. Since the Conference of the American College of Physicians, we hope to have the help of some world leaders. Again, please help us too. There are a lot of people out there who must be warned, please let them know this information.