

# THE ESACT NEWSLETTER

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## **Editorial**

### **Who will be next?**

Intimidation by picketing, demonstrations and even physical attacks are just some of the methods used by extremists attempting to impose their will on others. If they win, many more of us will be at risk.

Animal rights activists who have been targeting Huntingdon Life Sciences, the UK contract research laboratory group which includes animal testing among its services, firstly extended their attacks to British banks. The Royal Bank of Scotland and the National Westminster Bank as a result declined to extend a Euro 36 million loan facility which expired in January this year. Only additional financial backing from a major US shareholder, the Stephens Group and continued loans from two American banks, Comerica and Allfirst Financial pulled Huntingdon back from the brink of bankruptcy.

Next the two main market makers handling Huntingdon shares on the London Stock Exchange were also targeted by activists and eventually withdrew their services. Many of the UK-based shareholders, who also have been on the receiving end of pressures from Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC), have sold their shares, pushing the share price down to around .08 Euro each.

Although Jack Straw, UK's home (internal affairs) secretary has expressed concern over the threat to the scientific community and their families, and has issued security advice for employees of medical research companies who might be targeted by animal rights extremists, he has also criticised the financial sector for undermining Huntingdon's battle by their actions.

It is encouraging now to learn that Huntingdon is fighting back with a lawsuit filed by its US subsidiary under the RICO (Racketeer influenced and corrupt organisation) statute, citing physical attacks on employees, death threats, bomb threats, destruction of property, burglary, harassment and intimidation as well as interference with contractual relationships.

Brian Cass, Huntingdon cited the "appalling threats and intimidations from these extremists", adding that the defendants, SHAC and several US activist groups, are "involved in a campaign not just aimed at Huntingdon, but at all scientific animal

research".

The implication is that if SHAC and their associates are succesful, and Huntingdon is driven to extinction, many other researchers will move up into the front line. Once these activists scent blood, we could all potentially be at risk - so it behoves us to support in whatever way possible Huntingdon's fight against the extremists.

*The Editor*

## Chairman's Farewell

I am on my last leg as chairman of ESACT and those of you coming to Tylosand next June will bear witness to Otto Merten's enthroning. Helas! Sic Transit Gloria Mundi .....

It is our feeling at the Executive Committee, that only 10 to 20% of our members read the *Newsletter*, although we do not know whether these are the more cultured ones or the "bottom of the heap" (would we have enrolled such members? God forbid!). I will neither translate the French "Helas" nor the Latin "Sic transit gloria mundi" as all I am trying to prove is that I belong to the cultured ones (the 5000 year old Mediterrean-cultured-rooted-ones, that is). If you feel cross enough with my arrogance, you could pay me back by Emailing (mijtc@itqb.unl.pt) your disapproval - then, we would at least be able to confirm whether our 10 to 20% assessment is correct or whether 2% is the real number and we should save your money and our time and stop printing this wonderful, beautiful, beloved *Newsletter* ! (as they say in marketing "half our publicity goes down the drain, only we do not know which half").

These last three and a half years have been a great time for biotechnology and animal cell technology (ACT) and ESACT has profited from it. But we also feel, at the Executive Committee that, as a Society, we did something for it (and accomplished Pasteur's motto "luck strikes the aware mind"). Indeed, without losing track of our main constituency of "hard core" technologists going after bioproducts, we managed to open up into new fields where ACT became a key technology (gene therapy, tissues and organs, support to discovery ...). It is our belief that even more of this openness, always counting on the core nucleus and not spreading too thin, is needed to ensure we stay on the Virtuous Circle of "nothing succeeds like success".

To ensure this desideratum, you will note how well prepared and knowledgeable our new team of officers is, having weathered the hard course of an ESACT meeting (Otto Merten in Tours, Alain Bernard in Lugano, Elisabeth Linder-Olsson in Tylosand) or getting ready to (Franscesc Godia for Granada 2003). Not only are they true ESACTers, but you might also realise none of them has reached 50, so we have them in their prime to open up and broaden the future of ESACT. At the same time, since Bryan Griffiths, a founding member 25 years ago, has accepted to man the Secretariat for a few more years, the historic roots and wealth of personal knowledge and wisdom will still be available to the officers. Since Caroline MacDonald is not standing up for reelection, I want to publicly convey to her my friendly thanks for all her support while serving with me and, in the name of all members of ESACT, for her earlier work, from the Brighton meeting to her chairmanship, when most of the changes now being implemented were prepared.

But the new and expanding activities of ESACT need more than the Chairman and the Officers alone can provide; the other Committee members you will be electing in Tylosand will certainly ensure some of the required roles - links to other societies, editorial business and web.... but still we need more contributions from the members. I count it as one of my failures during the time I have been a chairman that no member outside the Executive Committee (XC) wrote a note to the *Newsletter* unless specifically requested; will you please send unsolicited notes/articles for the next issues? You will also note that, with this issue, we are saying farewell to Tom Clark, who determinedly kept this *Newsletter* going against all our procrastination for seven years and to whom we are most indebted.

Also, the web is getting ever more visitors but not yet contributors; the Job Information Network (JIN) on the web is slowly building up. We all know these things take time, but we need to keep pushing for it and thus ESACT's next XC needs you! Send your C.V., job advertisements, comments, requests to Christophe Losberger (webster@esact.org), who is doing a swell job!

I also feel we have not done enough to increase the amount of training being carried out throughout Europe in ACT. We know there are large, unfulfilled manpower needs in technology throughout Europe, but we can only be of value in our own area. At ESACT, we are giving all the

student grants we are requested at meetings since Vilamoura (1996); also, we are ready to support short training courses (of which there has been none over the last two years). How can we improve this situation?

I would be delighted to see all of you in Tylosand, although this will almost certainly be impossible. Traditionally, not much more than a third of our members attend the meetings (any comments on why this is so low?) and, in the case of Tylosand, Elisabeth Lindner-Olsson has almost 600 registered participants for an absolute maximum of 700 places; so, if you still want to ensure a place, move fast! It is while we are setting up a new meeting we see the other strengths of the ESACT constituency, the lower part of the iceberg of which the XC is only the tip. We get strong support from local organising committee and scientific committee members, many suggestions for key note and invited speakers, over two hundred submitted abstracts, over fifty companies filling our trade fair, many of which have been with us for years (although some of the faces change since this field is getting ever more dynamic); these strengths we need to nurture and expand upon.

As for me, I was honoured, happy and became wiser (yes, it is true!) to have served with so many different personalities who became friends since I first joined the XC in Würzburg in 1993. I enjoyed the presence and support of members and company sponsors throughout all these years. Since I got a lot more than I gave back, it is my duty to thank you all for this opportunity and to wish you the very best in your life and careers.

*Manuel Carrondo*

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF ESACT - TYLÖSAND, 12th June 2001

During each general meeting of ESACT the General Assembly of ESACT is organized. As you know, the 17th ESACT-Meeting will be organized in two months about in Tylösand/S (from the 10th to the 14th of June 2001). The biennial general assembly of ESACT will take place in the evening (18h30 - 19h30) of the 12th of June 2001. Although the definite agenda is not fixed up to now, it is possible to give a provisional one;

- Reports: M. Carrondo (chairman), B. Griffiths (treasurer), O.-W. Merten (secretary)

- Results of the elections for the new ESACT Executive Committee
- Subscription rate, new currency (EURO) adaptation of the subscription to the new currency
- Electronic votes via the ESACT web site
- Modification of the constitution for electing the honorary members of ESACT. The actual rule asking for 90% of the votes for getting elected an honorary member should be reduced to 2/3 of all votes and in this way adapted to the quorum necessary for changing the constitution
- (The ballot paper has to indicate this fact
  - and the vote on the modification of the constitution)
- Presentation of the 18th ESACT-Meeting (the Granada Meeting)
- Proposition for a new honorary member: W. Noé
- Any other business

It is evident that every ESACT member can take part in this assembly, however, in accordance to the rules only ordinary members can vote.

The sending of the present ESACT *Newsletters* contains also the voting form in order to elect the new committee and to vote for or against the nomination of Dr W. Noé for becoming honorary member of ESACT as well as for a slight modification of the constitution:

### The new committee: nominated officers:

O-W Merten (for chairman), A. Bernard (for secretary), E. Lindner-Olsson (for treasurer), F. Godia (meeting secretary of the 18th ESACT Meeting in Granada/E).

The candidates for the 4 open positions of the committee are: M. J. T. Carrondo (IBET, Oeiras/P), M. Fussenegger (ETH, Zurich/CH), S. Grammatikos (Boehringer Ingelheim, Biberach/D), V. Jäger (GBF, Braunschweig/D), Z Sümeghi (Novartis, Basel/CH), J. Tong (Lonza Biologics, Slough, UK), and F. Wurm (EPFL, Lausanne/CH)

**Nomination of W. Noé for honorary member:** It is not necessary to write more about W. Noé at this time because he is well known to practically all ESACT members as a past member of the ESACT Executive Committee and - this is of much greater

importance - he was core organizer of different ESACT Meetings (period: 1993-1999), for which he organized the trade fair in tight contact with the meeting chairman and the respective congress center's. More details on his professional activities and his special achievements for ESACT can be found in the CV joined to the voting form.

**Modification of the constitution of ESACT:** For the sake of consistency (The actual rule asking for 90% of the votes for electing an honorary member should be reduced to 2/3 of all votes -> adapting to the quorum necessary for changing the constitution), the text of point 4.5 of the ESACT constitution should be modified from: << Honorary Members of the Society shall not number more than ten per cent. Nominations for Honorary Membership shall be put forward by the Executive Committee and shall be circulated to members with the Agenda for the Biennial GM. Members who cannot attend the meeting shall be entitled to vote by post. To qualify for election, a nominee must be supported by nine tenths of the Members who take part in the voting>>. To: <<Honorary Members of the Society shall not number more than ten per cent. Nominations for Honorary Membership shall be put forward by the Executive Committee and shall be circulated to members with the Agenda for the Biennial GM. Members who cannot attend the shall entitled to vote by post. To qualify for election, a nominee must be supported by **two thirds** of the Members who take part in the voting>>.

As the committee as well as the nomination of W. Noé and the modification of the constitution are only legitimised by a large vote, I invite every ordinary ESACT member to make use of his/her right to vote by postal or by personal vote during the General Assembly. In order to increase the discussion during the assembly and the interaction between the committee and the members I invite every ESACT member staying in Tylösand to participate in the assembly. So, see you soon in Tylösand.

*Otto Merten*

## COLLABORATION PROTOCOL BETWEEN ESGT AND ESACT

### *ESACT*

European Society for Animal Cell Technology

### *ESGT*

European Society of Gene Therapy

The following protocol has been established:

### 1 - Meetings

1.1 - Continuing the experience of Munich and Stockholm, ESACT will put up a joint technological session at the ESGT meeting. There will be a maximum of one parallel session during the ESACT session in order to attract more people but also to give the participants of the ESGT-Meeting more chances to attend a technological session. To have access to abstracts coming to ESGT that may be promoted to oral presentations in the ESACT session; these should arrive at ESACT no later than 3 weeks after ESGT deadline for submission. All technology posters will be in the same area within the place where the posters are presented (to be discussed directly with the local organizers).

1.2 - similarly, one of the ESACT sessions in its biennial meetings will be carried out jointly with ESGT: there are no parallel sessions at ESACT; abstracts would be forwarded as above.

1.3 - ESGT establishes a scientific committee on animal cell technology (SCACT) where ESACT members (not necessarily Executive Committee members) participate, this SCACT might be responsible for both 1.1 and 1.2 (see point 2).

1.4 - At least one of the invited speakers for each session 1.1 and 1.2 will be paid (travel and local expenses) by the other society: registration fees will be waived for the invited oral speakers.

1.5 - There will be reciprocity of treatment for members of the visiting society; equivalent fees as members, advertisement in the web pages and *Newsletters* (while available with respect to ESACT)/J. Gene Medicine (official journal of ESGT), access to membership list.

### 2. - Scientific Committee on Animal Cell Technology (SCACT)

ESACT is willing to nominate members to the SCACT of ESGT; these members do not have to sit at the Executive Committee. When this SCACT is created with ESACT membership, it can also be accessed by ESACT for planning its own meetings (e.g. for the organisation of a session on gene therapy during the general meetings) or, eventually, to act as the interface and platform between the two societies.

### 3 - Executive Committee/Board meetings

Under specific situations (e.g. to discuss cooperative activities or propose joint efforts/opinions, etc.) ESGT might invite the ESACT chairman or its representative to attend its board meetings and, symmetrically ESACT invite

the presence of the President of ESGT or its representative at the ESACT executive committee meetings. In time, this might lead to an observer status in all meetings, subject to the evolution of both societies. Each Society will take care of the costs of the invited member from the other society present at its meeting

4 - This protocol will last indefinitely until it is proposed by one of the member societies to change or terminate it. Termination will only take place once ongoing activities are finished.

For ESACT: Otto-Wilhelm Merten  
Secretary

Manuel J. T. Carrondo  
Chairman

(Signed by all on the 14th of December 2000)

For ESGT: Olivier Danos  
Vice-President

Bernd Gänsbacher  
President

## **MEDICAL AND PHARMA BIOTECHNOLOGY SECTION (EFB)**

### **Meets in Madrid at ECB 10, July 8-11**

As indicated in the last *Newsletter*, ESACT was involved in putting up a Medical Biotechnology Section, within the European Federation of Biotechnology (EFB). A pharma component, mostly working on delivery, has been added under the leadership of Prof. Rainer Mueller, Freie University Berlin, who will most probably head the extended section if no one from ESACT has the time and commitment to do so.

This section will meet, for the first time, at the European Congress of Biotechnology to be held in Madrid, July 8-11. If some ESACT member intends to attend ECB 10 and is willing to present an oral (20 min. plus questions) on issues dealing with medical biotechnology I would be most thankful if you would contact me so that we can put up an appropriate programme. Even if you are not willing to present, I would still like to know whether you would be willing to attend the section's meeting while in Madrid to help us shape policy and further specify a clear cut intersection with ESACT's interest.

*Manuel Carrondo*

### **ESACT 17 June 10-14 2001 Tylösand, Sweden**

The next ESACT congress is almost with us and as Manuel Carrondo notes in his Chairman's Farewell, there are not many places left for participants. The theme of the meeting is "From Target to Market" and a first-class line-up of Keynote speakers has already accepted. So if you have not yet booked a place, do it now!

The meeting website is:  
<http://www.esact.org/esact2001/science.html>.  
Registration can be made on:  
<https://secure.tcp.co.uk/esact>

### **ESACT 18 mid-May 2003 Granada, Spain**

Francesc Godia has already laid the foundations for the following ESACT congress at the other end of Europe in two years time. The location is delightful and we may be sure that Francesc and his committee will assemble a scintillating programme as well. Watch this space for more news.

### **ESACT 19 Call for organising ESACT 2005**

ESACT organizes its General Meeting every two years in a European Country. As you know, previous meetings took place in Tours/F (1997) and in Lugano/CH (1999), and this year we will meet in Tylösand/S and in two years in Granada/E. The reason for the choice of the different places are various:

- ESACT needs a member willing to take over the task of organizing such a meeting, of course, with the help of the ESACT Executive Committee (as a group with the knowhow of organizing ESACT Meetings) and a professional congress organization (for organizing all non-scientific matters of an ESACT-Meeting),
- The choice of a nice, preferably new place/city for organizing the meeting
- A congress centre adapted to the needs of an ESACT-Meeting (it should have a place/auditorium for about 750 participants and space for the trade exhibition as well as for the

poster sessions (ideally about 2000  
m<sup>2</sup> altogether)

- The possibility to lodge all participants and exhibitors nearby to the congress centre, ideally at the same place

The next ESACT-Meeting for which ESACT is searching for an organizer is the ESACT 2005 Meeting. For those of you who are willing to organize this meeting, please, send a proposition containing a venue, the focus and the objectives of the meeting. As the domain of proteomics becomes more and more important, there might be a session, keynote lecture and/or invited lecture on this matter.

The proposition should be sent to the secretary (myself up to June 2001, Alain Bernard from June 2001 onwards) within the next six months.

Please, do not hesitate to send in your proposition, or contact me to discuss your ideas, all will be taken into consideration.

*Otto Merten*

## Other Meetings

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| July 15-1/8 | Glasgow, Scotland<br>Genomic regulation<br>and cancer                         |
| Sept 9-13   | Aix-les-Bains, France<br>Polarised trafficking in<br>epithelial cells         |
| Sept 22-26  | Heidelberg, Germany<br>Cell biology of virus<br>infections                    |
| Sept 23-27  | Aix-les-Bains, France<br>Neural stem cells: from<br>development to clinic     |
| Oct 9-11    | Hannover, Germany<br>Biotechnica 2001   |
| Oct 18-19   | Paris, France<br>Vaccines of the future                                       |
| Oct 26-28   | Costa Brava, Spain<br>2nd European Meeting in<br>cell engineering<br>Details: |

<http://www.bham.ac.uk/ChemEng/actg/ewce2.htm>

## Can any ESACT member help Igor Pasteur?

(This e-mail from Igor Pasteur reminds us that some ESACT members work under more difficult conditions. Can anyone help please?)

Our Tissue Culture Group of the Institute of Endocrinology and Metabolism of Ukraine is dealing with the study of endocrine organs problems (in particular, functional and morphological properties, tissue and cell culture, transplantation).

Together with other questions, we are interested in documents of culture terminology.

Unfortunately, the information source is not available in the libraries of Ukraine.

Therefore, I would be very much obliged to you for full and most current version of the Nomenclature, Terminology and Characteristics of Animal (Human) Tissue (Cell, Organ) Culture, Molecular Biology and Molecular Genetics (in particular, official documents of Committee on Terminology).

Thanking you much in advance, I remain,  
Yours sincerely

Dr Igor P. Pasteur, M.D., Ph.D.  
Head of Tissue Culture Group  
Institute of Endocrinology  
Vyshgorodska Street 69  
04114 Kyiv  
Ukraine  
E-mail: igor@pasteur.kiev.ua

## New Members

Since our last *Newsletter* in December we are happy to welcome the following new members:

Jorn Sondrup Anderson, Novo Nordisk, Denmark;  
Dan Andersson, BioInvent Production, Sweden;  
Thierry Battle, Serono Pharmaceutical Research, Switzerland;  
Karin Calles, KaroBio, Sweden;  
Bokhwan Chun Jeil, Biotech Services, Korea;  
Geert Deschamps, Innogenetics, Belgium;  
Mark-Andre Freyberg, Cyto Tools, Germany;  
Roland Grafstrom, Karolinska Institut, Sweden;  
Friedemann Hesse, German Res. Centre for Biotechnology, Germany;  
Peter Johansson, BioInvent Production, Sweden;  
Helena Johansson, BioInvent Production, Sweden;  
Dirk Kaiser, CytoTools, Germany;  
Heike Knoess, Maingen Biotechnology, Germany;  
Georg

Orberger, Arimedles Biotechnology, Germany;  
Jorn Meidahl Petersen, Novo Nordisk, Denmark;  
Andreas Richter, Newlab Bioquality, Germany;  
Sarbari Roy, BioInvent Production, Sweden;  
Bernard Selling, DuPont Pharmaceuticals, USA;  
Josephine Siddall, Novartis Animal Health, UK;  
Mark Simmonds, MRC Technology, UK; Moshe  
Smolarsky, Interpharm Laboratories, Israel; Zoltan  
Sumeghy, Novartis Pharma, Switzerland; Ulrich  
Valley, Aventis Pharma, Germany; Diana van der  
Linde, Diosynth, Netherlands; Kevin Zen, Astra  
Zeneca R + D, USA

## **Partir, c'est mourir un peu**

Putting down my editorial pen for the last time, it is difficult to accept that every 3 or 4 months I will no longer be preparing yet another ESACT *Newsletter*.

According to my records this latest series which I started editing in 1994 has been the third attempt to develop a means for ESACT members to keep in touch. After seven enjoyable years as editor I am making way for someone younger with new ideas.

Being editor has given me the chance to make many new friends, and hopefully has given ESACT members a continuing source of information, duplicated to some extent today of course by the ESACT WEBSITE.

I am old fashioned enough to feel that the printed word still has a part to play, and I look forward to seeing many more *Newsletters* in the future.

Thank you to everyone who over the years has made my job so easy and pleasant.

*Tom Clark*