

## Genetic Engineering

As a base, man should realize that genetic engineering has already been done, by nature, during evolution. Some of the things man struggles with, some of his diseases, are in fact protections from other problems, genetically selected to be passed forward only because they were benefit in prior ages.

Genetic engineering promises much in the fields, pharmaceuticals, animal husbandry, and food crops. If we take genetically modified foods, especially plants, we can improve crop yields, plant crops in areas where previously they could not grow. These are all the advantages but it is all too easy to get carried away and to forget the risks that are great. First of all I believe genetic engineering brings a lot of important and needed discoveries but on the other hand the progress in that field brings anxiety and laymen as myself are worried especially because of all the articles and polemics about genetic engineering that can be found. A statement written by Helena Paul says: »What little we know of genetic engineering so far teaches us that the only thing that can be predicted is that the impacts are unpredictable.« It sounds like a scenario for a scary movie or our nightmare where the large-scale release of transgenic organisms is much worse than nuclear weapons or radioactive nuclear wastes, as genes can replicate indefinitely, spread and recombine.

Furthermore two years after Dolly the Sheep came Cumalina and her Clones(two generations of cloned mice). The scientific world and commentators were ecstatic. Mass produced, identical mice for animal experimentation, cows with a human gene to produce human blood, pigs with human gene to produce human tissue and possibly human organs for transplant, a fusion of a cow and human embryo to produce an »almost human« for experimentation. And no one questioned the morality, asked whether the animals suffered.

To sum up genetic engineering is in its infancy. Despite the amassing of a wealth of knowledge, it's a world of ignorance. There is far too little the experts know and some even believe this is not the time to release genetically modified crops in the world. To do so is to conduct a gigantic experiment on the world's ecosystem. And what is even more I never imagined people would patent animals too. It's fundamentally immoral. To patent human material...to take human DNA and patent its products - that violates the integrity of life itself and our deepest sense of morality!

