

the games, reports the Sunday Times of the UK.

Sports fans with a soft drink other than one made by Coca-Cola will be required to leave their drink outside the event venue if they want to obtain entry, the Sunday Times reports.

Even bottled water must pass the endorsement test. Fans will be allowed entry if they bring Avra, a Greek mineral water owned by Coca-Cola, which paid \$60 million to become one of the main Olympics sponsors. Fans will not be able to enter with other brands of water unless the labels are removed from the bottle, according to the Sunday Times.

Food limits are designed to ensure only foods by McDonald's, two Greek dairy firms and other sponsors are consumed at the Olympics venues.

Under their "clean venue policy," Olympics officials will also be on the lookout for T-shirts, hats and bags displaying the logos of non-sponsors, according to the Sunday Times. The concern is with "ambush marketing" — an attempt to covertly advertise on television without paying sponsorship fees. If Olympics staff believe a t-shirt wearing fan is on an ambush marketing mission, they will order the person to wear the t-shirt inside out.

Corporate sponsors have paid more than \$1 billion to obtain exclusive advertising rights and privileges, including use of the Olympic rings in advertisements.

Kostas Giannis, a Greek sports fan, told the Sunday Times "I don't see why, after all the money that Greek taxpayers will end up paying to host the games, McDonald's should dictate what I can eat in my own city."

Acres Away

THE WORLD BANK IN JULY DEBARRED a company convicted of corruption on Africa's largest dam project, nearly two years after a Lesotho court issued a guilty verdict in a bribery case.

On July 23, the World Bank announced that it would debar from further Bank contracts the Canadian firm Acres International. The company had been convicted of bribing the head of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project in September 2002.

"This long overdue action on Acres is very much welcome and hopefully signals a more forceful World Bank approach to corruption on its projects," says Korinna Horta of the U.S.-based group Environmental Defense. "But the fact that a court case in Lesotho was decisive in the limited debarment of Acre appears to be a case of the tail wagging the dog. It remains to be seen if this will lead to more systemic changes in how the Bank approaches corruption."

Although World Bank President James Wolfensohn has said that fighting corruption is a top priority at the institution, the Bank has long avoided the tough step of debarring major multinationals that engaged in corrup-

tion on its projects. At least a dozen companies were found to have bribed the chief executive of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (now serving a 12-year jail sentence for taking bribes), and the Lesotho courts have managed to get convictions of four companies.

Since its conviction in Lesotho, Acres has received three contracts from the World Bank, according to Susan Hawley, a research consultant working on issues of corruption for the UK group The Corner House.

Critics say the Lesotho Highlands Water Project left tens of thousands of poor farming families even poorer, and has sold the nation's water to the highest bidder, leaving the nation vulnerable to drought [see "Making the Earth Rumble: The Lesotho-South Africa Water Connection," *Multinational Monitor*, May 1996]. An ongoing drought has necessitated emergency food assistance to a large part of Lesotho's population this year, according to the UN Food and Agriculture Program.

Conflicted Science

LEADING MEDICAL AND SCIENTIFIC JOURNALS, including the New England Journal of Medicine and the Journal of the American Medical Association, are failing to enforce their policies for disclosing financial conflicts of interests among contributing authors, according to a July study by the Center for Science in the Public Interest.

In one case, William Owens, a Procter & Gamble scientist, was only identified by Environmental Health Perspectives as an official of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

The article by Owens validated a toxicity test that would likely be used on various P&G products. There was no disclosure of Owen's Procter & Gamble connection, even though it was known to the editors of the journal.

In another case, Dr. John Shaughnessy, a University of Arkansas College of Medicine professor, published an article in the New England Journal of Medicine outlining the potential efficacy of a treatment of multiple myeloma. But Shaughnessy failed to disclose that he intended to apply for a patent on the underlying technology. Shaughnessy also failed to disclose that he was a paid consultant for drug companies developing vaccines for the condition.

"Published research that fails to disclose authors' ties to drug companies threatens the credibility of scientific journals and rightly undermines public confidence in studies about the safety or efficacy of various drugs or chemicals," says Merrill Goozner, the author of the study.

Goozner examined 163 articles in the New England Journal of Medicine, the Journal of the American Medical Association, Environmental Health Perspectives, and Toxicology and Applied Pharmacology.

He identified 13 articles where authors did not disclose relevant conflicts of interest that should have been disclosed according to the journals' policies. ■

Copyright of Multinational Monitor is the property of Corporate Accountability Research and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.