chains like Walmart and Starbucks. The NGOs realized that anticorporate campaigns could be far more powerful than antigovernment campaigns. Global Exchange's attack on Nike for sweatshop labor conditions in the 1990s, for example, was one of the most highly publicized and also one of the most successful antibusiness campaigns by an NGO.

CENTER FOR SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENT

The CSE, an NGO, was established in India in 1980 by a group of engineers, scientists, journalists, and environmentalists to "catalyze the growth of public awareness on vital issues in science, technology, environment, and development."[49] Led by Sumita Narain, a former schoolmate of Coke India CEO Gupta, the CSE's efforts included communication for awareness, research and advocacy, education and training, documentation, and pollution monitoring.

Spurred by the February 2003 report on bottled water and questions such as, "if what we found in bottled water was correct, then what about soft drinks?" the CSE's August 2003 report claimed that soft drinks were extremely dangerous to Indian citizens, according to tests conducted at the Pollution Monitoring Laboratory (PML). All samples contained residues of lindane, DDT, malathion, and chlorpyrifos, toxic pesticides and insecticides known to cause serious long-term health issues. Total pesticides in all Coca-Cola brands averaged 0.0150 mg/l, or 30 times higher than the European Economic Commission (EEC) limit. PML also tested samples of Coke and Pepsi products sold in the United States to see if they contained pesticides; they did not.

The CSE report called on the government to put in place legally enforceable water standards and chastised the multinationals for taking advantage of the situation at the expense of consumer health and well-being.

[49] http://www.cseindia.org.

INDIAN REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT[50]

The main law governing food safety in India was the 1954 Prevention of Food Alteration Act (PFA), which contained a rule regulating pesticides in foods but did not include beverages. The Food Processing Order (1955) required that the main ingredient used in soft drinks be "potable water," but the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) had no prescribed standards for pesticides in water. One BIS directive stated that pesticides must be absent and set a limit of 0.001 part per million, but the Health Secretary admitted, "There are lapses in PFA regarding carbonated drinks."[51]

Indian law enforcement was minimal, with virtually no convictions under PFA. In the absence of national standards, NGOs such as the CSE turned to the United States and the European Union for "international norms." The appropriateness and feasibility of these standards for developing nations, however, remained a question for many. Under EU food laws, for example, milk, fruit, and basic staples such as rice and wheat would need to be imported into India to satisfy safety standards.

THE INITIAL RESPONSE

The day after the CSE's announcement, Coke and Pepsi came together in a rare show of solidarity at a joint press conference. The companies attacked the credibility of the CSE and their lab results, citing regular testing at independent laboratories proving the safety of their products. They promised to provide these data to the public, threatened legal action against the CSE while seeking a gag order, and contacted the U.S. Embassy in India for assistance.

[50] "Coke & Pepsi in India," p. 3.

[51] Supriya Bezbaruat and Malini Goyal, "The Gulp War," *India Today*, August 25, 2003, pp. 50–53.