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UK's Blair Shifts Stance On Modified Crops

Monday, February 28, 2000

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In a "dramatic U-turn," British Prime Minister **Tony Blair** said yesterday that genetic crops poses risks to human health and the environment.

Blair, who a year ago expressed confidence in the safety of bioengineered foods, said [written for the London Independent](#) that there is cause for "legitimate public concern." I doubt that there is potential for harm, both in terms of human safety and in the diversity environment, from GM food and crops."

Blair's shift was hailed as "turning point both on GM policy and in the 'greening' of 1 **Charles Secrett** of **Friends of the Earth**: "This is a fantastic leap forward. For the first seems to be listening to people on these issues" (Geoffrey Lean, [London Independent](#), 2

But the prime minister's comments are expected to come under attack by leading sci meeting this week in Edinburgh for a conference on GM crops.

He was also criticized by **Ian Gibson**, a Labor member of parliament, who said Blair not backed by science. Gibson: "Unless Tony has been doing experiments in his spare time evidence, scientifically, that any GM food causes harm to human health" (Fran Abrams [Independent](#), 28 Feb).

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