

most likely to contain so-called ribosome-inactivating proteins, among the most deadly toxins known.

Winning the locals' trust and cooperation means sharing their meals—like cattle brains in Brazil and sheep's eyeballs in Fiji—and drinking what they drink. A Tongan villager once offered Chandler his most nubile daughter. Did Chandler oblige? He blushes and demurs: "In some places they'd kill you for trying. In others,

they'd be hurt if you didn't."

Chandler's Inland Labs now produces viruses, toxins and other proteins for 139 biotech outfits, pharmaceutical companies and university research labs. If one or more of his customers' products should make it to market one day, Chandler will probably become a very wealthy man. In theory, he already is: Give Inland a price/earnings multiple of 40—not unreasonable for a highly profitable,

fast-growing biotech firm, especially one in Inland's line of work—and Chandler's stock is worth nearly \$100 million.

Were his fortune to become monetized, how would Chandler amuse himself? He answers without hesitation: He'd lobby to be named U.S. Ambassador to Sweden. "They're nearly 9 million civil, well-educated people," he explains. "In another 10 or 20 years I'll be tired of all this." ■

## FOLLOW-THROUGH

## No pork barrel

PREREQUISITE FOR starting your own business: resiliency. Example: Deerfield, Ill.'s Mary Anne Jackson.

In 1986 Jackson, a former strategic planner at Beatrice, the big food company, started My Own Meals, Inc. to market shelf-stable meals for kids. The vacuum-sealed meals, which included chicken casseroles, remained fresh for up to a year with no refrigeration or preservatives. The concept was so good that by 1989 My Own Meals' revenues hit \$1 million, and big competitors were bullying Jackson off the supermarket shelves with similar products of their own.

Then, in 1990, Jackson got a lucky break from the Pentagon: The

U.S. Army asked her to supply shelf-stable kosher rations for observant Jewish soldiers serving in the Gulf. Jackson quickly refocused her business on the kosher niche and, last spring, convinced New York's Aron Streit Inc., a large matzoh manufacturer, to market her meals to grocery stores (FORBES, May 24, 1993).

Alas, only about a dozen grocers bit. So Jackson, who's now 40, developed a new strategy. Last summer she began selling kosher meals by mail to thousands of rabbis and Jewish groups such as the Aleph Institute and the Lubavitchers. A catalog, *Kosher Cornucopia*, now offers 3 of her 12 meals, including beef stew and chicken with black beans; retail price:

\$5. A Jewish tour group recently bought 100 meals to eat during a trip to Washington, D.C. to tour the Holocaust Museum.

To Jackson's surprise, her product has caught the attention of other religious groups. *God and Country*, a publication of the Seventh-Day Adventists, recommended that its readers try Jackson's vegetarian meals. And an official at the New York prison system recently asked for 17,000 turkey patties prepared according to Muslim dietary rules.

"It is painstakingly difficult, but putting all these groups together can add up to a decent business," says Jackson, who is hoping to turn a profit by 1996. —SUZANNE OLIVER



My Own Meals founder Mary Anne Jackson with her children, Joey and Katie  
**"It is painstakingly difficult."**