

Opinions



US opened terrorism door

By Richard A. Viguere
What might have happened:
 WASHINGTON, D.C., Nov. 8, 1983 -- A powerful bomb exploded in the U.S. Capitol Building last night, claiming the lives of 14 Senators and seriously injuring 12 others.

The blast tore through a hallway adjacent to the U.S. Senate Chamber at 10:55 p.m., just as the Senate was adjourning.

A group calling itself the Armed Resistance Unit claimed responsibility for the bombing and said the action was taken in response to U.S. "military aggression" in Grenada and Lebanon...

That's the way the story could have read, had the Senate not cut short its planned late-night session by adjourning at 7:05 p.m. on November 7. As it was, the bomb went off after the building was deserted. There was more than \$250,000 in damage, but no one was hurt. If the Senate had stayed in session late -- as it did the night before -- the toll would have been much greater.

We should not be surprised when our nation's lawmakers become the target of such an attack. Since 1968, CIA files record over 8,000 terrorist incidents worldwide, and almost half of them were directed at U.S. citizens or property.

Some members of Congress have demanded courts martial for the military commanders caught by surprise when terrorists bombed the Marine headquarters in Lebanon. Yet by the same standard Congressional leaders could

be held accountable for allowing someone to bomb the Capitol! Indeed, it was Congress (along with various administrations) who, in the name of "civil liberties," restricted our intelligence agencies and damaged our ability to protect the national security.

In 1973, the Office of Management and Budget failed to allocate funds for the Subversive Activities Control Board, thus shutting it down.

In 1974, the Hughes-Ryan Amendment required the President to approve covert actions in advance and then report the actions to a congressional committee. The Privacy Act barred the FBI from keeping files on "First Amendment" activities. This meant that the FBI could no longer keep files of subversive newsletters or press reports on the statements of potentially violent subversives.

Also in 1974, the Freedom of Information Act gave the courts the power to decide whether documents were improperly classified. The act discouraged informants and foreign governments from giving information to the FBI and CIA.

Between 1974 and 1976, the CIA demanded the retirement of 2,000 officers.

In 1975, the House Internal Security Committee was abolished. The Rockefeller Commission and Senator Frank Church (D-Idaho) reported on CIA "wrongdoing," exposing many covert operations and demoralizing the agency.

In 1977, the files of the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee were ordered destroyed. Two years later, Senator Edward Kennedy

(D-Massachusetts) managed to abolish the subcommittee.

By 1978, no fewer than eight congressional committees had oversight of CIA and FBI funding. The Foreign Service Intelligence Act required a warrant before electronic surveillance could be used as a measure against foreign spies; before a tap could be placed, the FBI was obliged to prove that a terrorist group received "substantial" direction from abroad.

During the Carter Administration, the CIA director removed 820 officers from the agency's covert operation section (the section attempting to counter terrorism). President Carter de-emphasized Human Intelligence Gathering and relied more on technical methods like satellites -- methods nearly useless against terrorism.

The 1980 election reversed the trend toward the dismantling of our intelligence agencies, but we have a long way to go before our efforts are adequate against the threat we face. With the national political conventions and the Los Angeles Olympics set for this summer, we would do well to remember the words of Karl Marx: "There is only one way to shorten the murderous death agonies of the old society, only one way to shorten the bloody birth pangs of the new society... revolutionary terrorism" (in the newspaper *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, November 5, 1848).

But it was not the Marxists who crippled our intelligence agencies. It was our own national politicians, Democrat and Republican alike.

Farm best as free enterprise

By John Sledge
 N.C. Farm Bureau Federation

What country ranks first in wheat and rye production and is also first in hog numbers? Well, except for the rye, a good guess would be the United States, but it would be wrong. Few people would say Russia, but that would be right.

A criticism of Americans is that we don't know enough about the Soviet Union and some of these 1982 figures from USDA prove

this to be true. Did you know that the Soviets rank second in cattle numbers, fourth in corn production and ninth in soybean production?

But remember these are production figures. When it comes to yields it's a different story.

Then Russia is 48th in wheat, 22nd in rye, 23rd in corn and 16th in soybeans. The reason is that Russia lies mostly north of the 45th parallel, about in line with Augusta, Maine and their

agriculture is much more dependent on the weather than ours so they have to get large production by sowing large areas.

Most of Russia's agricultural production comes from huge state or collective farms, but the items that people want more of, like fresh vegetables, fruit and especially meat are coming from millions of private plots, less than an acre in size. The harvest from these plots is sold in city markets and represents about 25% of Soviet agricultural production.

Quality depends on management

By Lucien Coleman

What you see in the television commercials isn't necessarily what you get when you stay overnight in a big-name motel.

It wasn't long after I had checked in that I began to notice little things that added up to something less than quality. A leaky faucet in the lavatory. A bathtub stopper that wouldn't work. Wallpaper coming loose at the seams. A blurred picture on the TV. A lamp that wouldn't work. Little things. But, taken together, they spell "second-rate."

That wasn't the worst of it. Having gone for several hours without eating, I went to the dining room. There, "second-rate" would have been a compliment.

The tablecloth was decorated with an assortment of crumbs left by the last patron. The first two menu items I ordered were not available. Taking the line of least resistance, I finally said to the

Things That Matter

waitress, "Why don't you just tell me what you do have?" She thought there might be some chicken breasts in the freezer (yep, she actually said that), but allowed as how she would have to look. She did, and I ordered breast of chicken. That turned out to be a mistake.

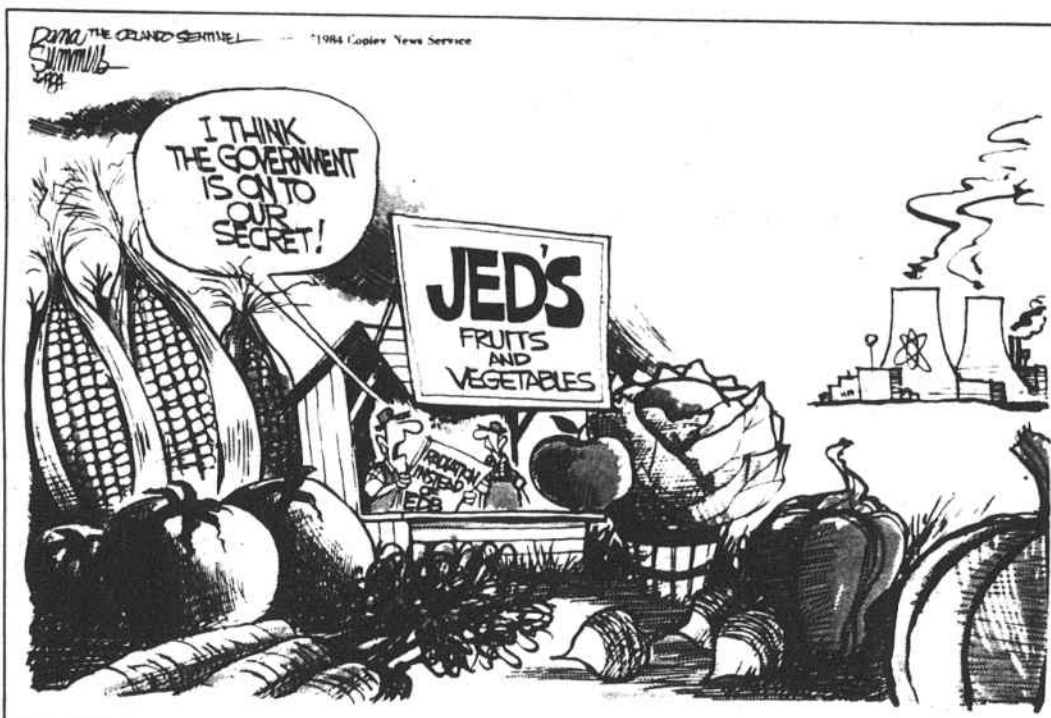
As I sat chewing on a piece of undercooked chicken breast, the thought struck me that the difference between excellence and mediocrity consists of little things.

Attention to details. That's what makes for quality. Go into a supermarket where you have to stumble over empty boxes sitting in narrow aisles, and you know you're in a second-rate place of business. Go to an auto garage where the mechanic leaves greasy smudges on your car, and you get the impression that mediocrity is the norm around there.

Have you noticed the difference between fast-food places? Even though they might have the same name on the sign out front, one place gives you clean, quick, friendly service, while another majors on slovenliness.

I stopped in a hamburger emporium in Florida, part of a well-known chain, and waited 18 minutes for my order. The tables were dirty. The trash bins were running over. The restrooms were filthy. It all added up to mediocre management. Management indifference to quality.

The point is, quality isn't guaranteed by showy buildings, expensive furnishings, or state-of-the-art technology. It finally comes down to people. People who care. People who give a rip about such things as crumbs on the table, spots on the floor, empty napkin containers, litter in the booths, leaking faucets, torn wallpaper. And gnats on the salad bar.



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