

Opinions



Destruction is child's play

Lucien Coleman

Things That Matter

We can't know for sure who has been sowing those mines in the Red Sea, but one Arab terrorist group claimed credit, saying they did it to show off their "power."

Such lunatic thinking overlooks the simple fact that it takes little power to destroy. Destruction is easy, compared to what it takes to build and create. Any child, including the children who inhabit adult bodies, can destroy.

Think how easy it was, for example, for some nut to contaminate those Tylenol capsules a couple of years ago. Did that require "power"? And what kind of "power" did it take for that crazy to shoot up the McDonald's restaurant in California, killing 21 innocent victims?

I remember with sadness the day our church building in Louisville was burned to the ground. Several generations of people had poured their time, energy, and financial resources into that building. It had

taken years to build. But it was destroyed in about three hours by a 20-year-old arsonist. Power? It required only a few matches and a twisted mind.

Actually, most of us learned in our earliest years that it's much harder to build up than to tear down. Two children can work for an hour or two, painstakingly building a house of wooden blocks or a sand-castle on the beach, only to see little brother come along and destroy it with a single kick.

The same principal applies in all human relationships. Some people are planners, builders, doers, willing to pay the price for creative accomplishment. Others, probably greater in number, are kickers. They seldom create anything. But they can knock holes in whatever anyone else tries to build. You see them in business life, committee meetings, public education, and, heaven help us, politics.

Unfortunately, our mass media tend to idolize the destroyers more than the builders. The heroes of film and television are often macho types who swagger about using powerful weapons, fast cars, big trucks, and explosive devices to blow up, burn down, demolish, and "waste" both things and people. Like those terrorists, they call attention to themselves; but they will never make this a better world.

Organic research is not folklore

By John Sledge

N.C. Farm Bureau Federation

Farmers generally are not very enthusiastic about organic farming, not if it means replacing the 200 pounds of nitrogen normally applied per acre of corn with 20 to 40 tons of animal manure. To do that, we need a lot more animals, and the public would have to accept an odor problem.

Organic farming means being away with chemical fertilizers and pesticides. It may be all right for a garden or specialty farm, but it's less productive for commercial farming. It's one thing to hand weed a garden and quite another to do it to acres of crops.

Gary Myers, president of the Fertilizer Institute, makes another point. Myers says it's been popular

to promote the use of organics as resulting in better, more nutritious food. "The fact is," Myers says, "plants cannot use nutrients in organic forms. The essential plant nutrients which man applies to crops as fertilizers enter the plant as inorganic ions, regardless of whether the application is animal manure, sewage sludge, green manure, or plant residues or commercial fertilizers."

Actually, we are headed toward the use of agricultural chemicals based on expensive petroleum products. But it won't be done in a back to nature way. Rather, it will be through genetic engineering which holds the promise of plants that are resistant to drought and pests and adapt better to soil conditions.



Letters Policy

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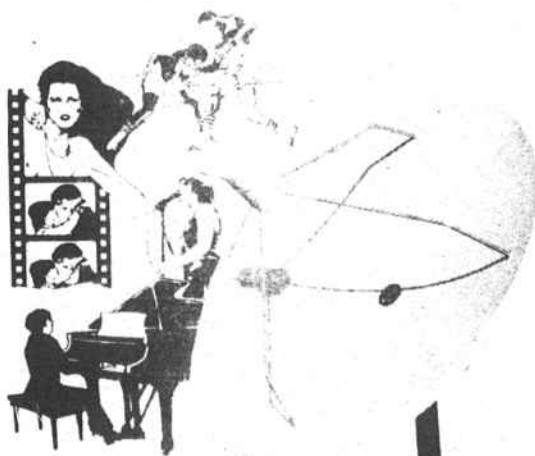
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