

Meanwhile Back at the Farm...October 27, 2001

Howdy,

Oh oh. The news today is that the US is running out of "military" targets in Afghanistan already. My, my, hardly a satisfying little war was it? I guess Afghanistan was already bombed back into the stone-age.

Now comes the ground troops. To avenge 6000 worker bees we'll kill or maim another bunch of Americans. This won't sell well at home. Not too many people will see the sense in killing a lot of other Americans to avenge the already dead Americans. So will we have to avenge them too?

Looking into the crystal ball and reading between the lines of Ashworth's press statements we can expect sometime soon a rash of terrorist acts around the country. It sure would be convenient for the military industrialists if there were a rash of events right about now. It would make people think that there were lots of terrorists all over the world that needed to be neutralized. We are being prepared by the media everyday to think just how risky everything could be. Just like the military government of Argentina panicked its people into giving up their rights.

I was once asked by a person considering going into business if they should consult a lawyer to determine what possible risks they'd be facing. I warned them that under no circumstances should they do that. Because a lawyer is trained to think through all the possible ways to attack, any halfway thorough rendition of all the things that COULD go wrong with a business would scare the most resolute person half to death. Going into business requires a person to assume that the world has an organizing principle, which prevents most of the worst things from happening. You have to act, knowing that there are a thousand things that could kill your business, and still forge ahead to create something out of nothing with little more than ideas and a little capital.

The ability to destroy is always much greater than the ability to create. To function in our inherently unsafe world, we need to compartmentalize and confine our fears and worries or become paralyzed by them. By focussing the population on the myriad of ways that people could be hurt or killed releases the fear from the box we keep it in, creates a kind of terror that begs for relief. This is the true terrorism. The military industrialists are more than happy to offer relief of that fear if you'd only be willing to pay the price by surrendering of all your civil rights.

In my farmer's newspaper, the Capital Press, there suddenly are a plethora of articles about "agriterrorism." In it ag officials are suddenly admitting many things in the context of terrorism, that ecologists have been saying for years but have been resolutely denied by those in control.

How about the issue of pesticides being safe? Ag officials drone on and on about how regulated and safe pesticides are. They kill bugs not people they say. If they were dangerous would we regulators let them be used? People have been eating them for years, do you see anyone dropping dead? I have gone on at length about how these pesticides are no different than World War II nerve gas, which is how they were first developed.

Well now the government is telling a different tale. The government has grounded all 3500 crop dusters since they could be used as a weapon of mass destruction by "terrorists" if they sprayed pesticides over populated areas. Nooo, not our safe and sane pesticides; say it isn't so.

The cattle industry has been criticized by those of us in sustainable agriculture for its basic practices. Crowding thousands of cattle together in feedlots where they have no access to fresh forage and literally wading through their own manure makes for ideal conditions for epidemics. For decades however the beef industry has defended its practices even though it virtually guarantees carcasses infested with outrageous quantities of bacteria. What has the government done in response? Permit irradiation of meat to kill the bacteria and reclassifying open lesions and cancers as "cosmetic" defects in meat so diseased cattle can be sold into the food supply. By the way, Mad Cow has now been detected for the first time in Sweden and Japan.

Oh, but now these livestock raising conditions are touted as grave risks to national security since "terrorists" could infect feedlots with hoof and mouth disease which kills cattle quickly but not humans. Further fears about anthrax or other human diseases (read Mad Cow) which could be quickly distributed throughout the food supply and kill millions of people before detection have surfaced.

What are terrorism "experts" using as their example of how this might happen? The Starlink scandal, in which illegal genetically engineered corn spread so quickly through the food distribution system that it has cost many billions of dollars to try and put the genie back in the bottle by recalling contaminated batches.

You could get really dizzy trying to reconcile all the spin going on right now.

The Food

Genovese Basil: Make your winter pesto now and the next couple of weeks. Basil won't go on much longer.

Arugula: One of the most interesting of the greens.

Lettuce: A second cutting from our Pescadero patch. New lettuce is sizing up for a cutting in a couple of weeks.

Bell Peppers: Just about the last of the season. Everything is slowing way down.

Summer squash: These plants are still producing.

Cucumbers: Various types-Both lemon and normal types.

Tomatoes: More Mortgage Lifters and other heirloom tomatoes.

Don't refrigerate tomatoes. Leave them on your counter not touching each other for best storage.

Turnips: These purple top turnips are an heirloom variety, which have been produced for over 75 years.