

## In a nuclear war who would survive?

Free the roach-three.

Three anti-nuclear protestors were arrested last week after releasing live cockroaches inside the White House.

They say if President Ronald Reagan's nuclear arms policies continue along the same lines, these creatures will run America; that is, roaches will be the only beings inhabiting the White House.

Some experts have said that after a nuclear war, one of the few creatures that would survive is the roach. Sure, Reagan and his cohorts could survive for a time in the isolated seclusion of the underground shelters that they've constructed for such use, but what kind of life would they have? Who could Nancy invite to dinner parties?

And as the bodies of America decay in nuclear graves, would roaches inhabit the White House? Or would they be content to be roaches, free without democracy and the U.S. Constitution.

Human beings seem to be the only creatures stupid enough to create the means of their own destruction.

Is it all the fault of the RUSSIANS? Or the roaches of Russia?

Or is it the fault of people who refuse to talk — both American and Russian — who refuse to compromise, who refuse to remove the threat of the destruction of the human race?

So, the next time you see a roach scamper across the floor, stop and think: do I want to surrender the earth to the roaches? The leaders of the world may do just that.

## Roaches helping expand knowledge

Universities serve two main functions: to educate the next generation, and to create an environment conducive to collecting, testing and expanding the pool of knowledge.

Arguments against research have been around since Plato. Too expensive, useless, and just plain ridiculous are some of the jabs hurled at researchers.

Many times the collecting of raw data, or the creation of certain experiments yield few tangible results. But the most bizarre theories sometimes reap the greatest dividends.

Take for example the discovery made by chemists at Yale University. A team of chemists led by Stuart Schreiber were able to produce a synthetic cockroach aphrodisiac.

The idea of having a cockroach aphrodisiac may seem ludicrous, but there are positive implications of this unusual discovery.

Already companies are negotiating with Yale for the commercial rights to the formula. The synthetic substance, called periplanone-B, has the ability to lure male cockroaches into traps treated with insecticides.

For the millions of homeowners who have to contend with cockroaches this will mean welcome relief from the expense of fumigating their homes four times a year only to watch in dismay as the roaches reappear.

Third World countries have a much more basic reason for showing interest in this development: famine. Roaches often diminish food stocks of countries that can ill-afford any food loss.

So even though this discovery may make our everyday lives a little easier and more comfortable, for some countries help could increase the percentage of citizens with full stomachs.

— The Battalion Editorial Board



"THE THIRD WORLD WAR STARTED WITH AN ACCIDENT. A MAN PROTESTING THE BUILDUP OF NUCLEAR ARMS, RELEASED ROACHES IN THE WHITE HOUSE. AFTER THE WAR, ONLY ROACHES WILL BE IN THE WHITE HOUSE," HE SAID. WHEN PRESIDENT REAGAN FOUND ONE ON HIS DESK, HE REACTED INSTINCTIVELY AND SMACKED IT WITH HIS SHOE. UNFORTUNATELY, IT WAS ON "THE BUTTON" AND WITHIN SECONDS, THE ENTIRE U.S. NUCLEAR ARSENAL WAS WHIZZING THROUGH THE STRATOSPHERE. THE SOVIETS, OF COURSE, RESPONDED AND TEN MINUTES LATER, WE THE MEEK OF THE EARTH, YES WE THE ROACHES, INHERITED THE EARTH!"

QUOTED FROM GENERAL JOHN SMACK IT'S BOOK THE THIRD WORLD WAR

LANE

## Jack and the modem?

# From seed to floppy disk

I used to believe in Jack and the Bean stalk. OK, I really didn't believe the whole thing — at least not like fundamentalist Christians believe the Bible — but I did hold faith in the important part, the horticultural part.

You know the part of the story I'm talking about, where Jack's mom — or was it his step-mother — took the magic seeds that he had traded for his family's cow — or was it a bull — and tossed them out the window. Well that old witch thought it was over for those magic seeds. Boy was she wrong.

A few days later, whammo. It was bean-stalk-city. Who knows how tall that stalk grew? Only Jack, cause he climbed it to the top.

And that brings us to the moral of Jack's story, the moral Mother-Jack should have learned. If you toss a handful of seeds in the general direction of dirt and there's an ample amount of moisture, after a while you're going to have a living, growing, honest-to-goodness plant. At least that's what I thought.

During the summer I received a small package in the mail. It came in an ordinary yellow envelope (didn't Jack's seeds come in a plain brown sack?). Tearing it open, I found a small package containing nine shirt-button-sized black and red striped seeds. The yellow card attached said:

"Billy Cornelius, a doctoral student at A&M University, says that he has been growing typewriters from seeds for several decades and that he may have found recently the secret to growing organic personal computers.

"He says that these computers, which sometimes cost as much as \$7,000, can be grown at home or in a



Donn Friedman

well-lighted window at work for as little as \$2.00. He says that he will know by Christmas if his experiments with computer mulching, planting floppy disc trees, transplanting modems, and debugging computer plants are successful.

"In the meantime, he is distributing the computer seeds for \$1.00 per package and asking to have immediate reports from customers who successfully grow their personal computers or who accidentally grow pocket calculators, microwaves, sewing machines, toasters, televisions, cassette recorders, telephones, walkie-talkies, stereos or sport cars."

Well being a busy cub reporter, I didn't have time to take proper care of my nine seeds. I placed them in the always growing pile of stuff to be taken care of. My growing pile of stuff certainly had a general direction of dirt and an ample amount of moisture; I expected soon to have a honest-to-goodness home-grown organic computer plant.

This weekend as I dug through the stuff to do — the two-month late gas bill, the letter to my aunt, the note about cleaning the bath-tub — I came across my organic personal computer seeds."

I picked up the package. There weren't any emergents sprouting IBM from the black and red stripes. There wasn't even a single sprout saying Commodore.

All that grew was fluffy white mold.

Is this a failure of Billy Cornelius' doctoral project? Will poor Billy be humiliated in front of his committee?

Or did I just miss the point of Jack and the Bean stalk?

Donn Friedman is a weekly columnist for The Battalion. His column appears on Wednesdays.

# Baseball fever continues year round

Sports — especially baseball — are important in my home. It doesn't matter if it's the baseball locker-room attendants of the American League playing the locker-room attendants of the National League. If it's televised or within driving distance of Houston, my brothers are watching.

My brothers, 23 and 13 are active in Little League baseball, my older brother coaching the younger one. They've always taken their baseball seriously, and it's begun to worry me.

The World Series and the Little League World Series are over for the year, but baseball fervor or fever as the Major League Baseball publicity calls it still continues.

The serious attitude of many adults concerning Little League raises the question: Is Little League ball an orga-

nized way for boys to play a man's sport or is major league baseball an organized way for men to play a boy's game?

The grave nature of Little League games was obvious during the Little League world series when a pitcher from Korea was taken out of the game for allowing one hit. One mistake and you hit the showers if you are from Korea and playing for all the marbles.

Little League is also serious on the local level in America.

Before each season, usually in the beginning of March, players must go to tryouts so coaches can watch the boys run, catch, throw and hit. Coaches make notes on each boy's performance and plan their draft choices.

This year I overheard my coach-brother and his assistant coach trying to decide if they could talk one particularly talented 13-year-old into putting a fake cast on his arm for tryouts so none of the other coaches would draft the potential star.

Parents take Little League ball seriously, too.

My brother was chosen this year to coach the all-star team. The players are chosen by votes from all the coaches in the league. The all-star coaches themselves are given two picks.

One parent, who thinks his boy is all-star material, called my brother at work and asked him why he did not choose his boy to be an all-star.

Many parents see Little League as more than a sporting event. It's also a social event of great importance.

A "typical" pre-game comment:

"Honey, do I look all right? I mean really, do you think the chiffon is too much for the game tonight? I don't think so. It is a night game, and Carol wore silk Monday."

My older brother is guilty of the worst case I have ever seen of placing too much importance on winning and not enough on fun.

His team was playing for the championship on Saturday morning. Friday night was the team swimming party. My other brother, then 11, was

scheduled to pitch Saturday, and he was not allowed to swim with the team because he would get tired and not be in par condition for the game the next day.

I have never seen a kid try harder to fight off tears and prove that he knew it was best for him not to swim and have fun with his friends.

Yes, I like to win when I play sports, and yes, I like for the team I am rooting for to win, but let's keep everything in perspective.

Major league players are professionals; they get paid for playing sports. If they can't play well, they deserve to be benched, but pushing kids too hard with too much emphasis on winning takes the fun out of sports played by amateur athletes, and after all, Little League is a boy's GAME.

Kellie Dworaczyk is an assistant news editor for The Battalion.

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The Battalion

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The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Communications.

Letters Policy

Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must be signed and include the address and telephone number of the writer.

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