

Hearths & Crafts

Make War, Not Peace!

by Dr. Richard Craft

Covert action during the night began a year or two ago. At first there were random forays which were easily dealt with by a firm-footed response. However, it soon became evident that while testing my defenses they were making plans for an all out invasion. I awoke one morning early this spring, to find that, indeed, they had arrived for good. It was then that I declared all-out war, and began to use weapons of mass destruction, which included biological, mechanical, and chemical means.

It was suggested that I take the matter up with some international body or better yet deal with the invaders on a one-on-one basis. I soon found out that they operated rather loosely in close knit groups or cells and did their "own thing." I would have to cut off each tentacle, one at a time. I then began to feel guilty with the thought that I possibly had failed to understand their grievances and perhaps I was guilty for living where I was. Perhaps I deserved this invasion of my privacy and should allow them to destroy what I held dear. Maybe I was playing the big bully or trying to be the policeman for the entire community. Why don't I mind my own business and try to live in harmony with this faction; after all, *they say*, nothing was ever accomplished by war. Maybe I should ignore them, or relate to them, or tolerate them, after all there is nothing I can do about it now... they're here. Why, even those I thought would side with me are saying, don't kill, just discourage them and maybe they'll go away. But each morning I find more and more of their presence. Under the current situation, I could get hurt. I could break a leg.

The only bright spot so far is that they haven't picked on the Bushes yet; they're still blooming. Their drug-induced pervasiveness has to stop. You see, they have murderous tendencies and love the taste of blood, especially during the time they are high on grass. They won't show their faces during the day, because they do all their dirty work underground at night. My whole life has been shattered by their presence. I've come to the conclusion, it's either them or me.

Had enough of me beating around the bush (small b)? By now,

you've surmised that my subject isn't political, or even human, in nature. I've declared war on the *moles*. Yes, I said, moles. They have invaded my turf, and all you can see on my lawn are tunnels leading everywhere. The rain has created a partial level battleground because I am forever crisscrossing my lawn with my wide wheeled tractor, trying to crush their burrowing. I've used a steel mole trap (they ignore it), grub killer, mole pellets, and even have resorted to sticking peanut butter down their... tunnels. *They say* that peanut butter closes their mouths and they die a slow agonizing death. I cannot confirm the last statement. *They also say* that mothballs down the hatch create a noxious environment and just tonight I heard there is a plant that smells like a skunk that frightens them away. Must I now decide between having a property that smells like a skunk, or learning to live with moles? I don't want to deter them; I want them... gone! Kaput! Finished!

The other day was a victory, of sorts. One of those little critters must have stuck his head out just as my lawn mower was at his front door. Remnants of Mr. Mole were left as a warning to his kin to move out. I meant business.

What does this have to do with the promotion of the Town of Wawarsing? Well, the word must be out from city slicker to grubs that Wawarsing is the place to be. *Barthel's Farm Market, Country Flowers, Burd's Vegetable Stand*, home gardening, lawn restoration, flowering plants and bushes (small b) are transforming our region into a veritable picture of beauty. I see a great deal of pride in our homes, lawns, and flowers as I drive the roads of our town. My hat goes off to the *Shawangunk Garden Club*, who, for the last three years, have donated 800 Kousa Dogwood trees to the residents of our town. This has kicked off our growing season, and we don't stop.

It's a great time of year, watching the ferns, hostas, lilies, lilacs, and perennials, poking their noses out of the ground after a long winter's sleep. Wawarsing is beautiful.

What about the moles? I've got good news. Their presence seems to be diminishing in my little corner of the world. Maybe I'm too much for them. ☆

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