

BATTALION EDITORIALS

Aggie Freshmen:
The Decision Is Yours

You are the class of '70 at Texas A&M. In a few weeks you will be leaving a way of life which you have grown accustomed to through years of familiarity. As you step out from the old way of life you will be gaining a new one.

The new existence you shall soon be leading will not be an easy one. Especially at first. In many ways it will be like Plato's story of the man in a cave. The man was satisfied with the darkness of the cave because he had never been outside. And when he left the confines of the cave the sunlight struck him with blinding sharpness because he wasn't used to it.

You will soon be faced with the same decision he had to make. You can either retreat to the security of the world you know, or you can face the light until your eyes become used to it. And once you become accustomed to a lighted world with all its rewards, you can never be satisfied with the darkness again.

If you have the sincere desire and determination to succeed in college, there's no reason why you shouldn't. There is only one magic formula — hard work. It won't be easy, and at times the benefits will seem far away. But those who stick it out will be rewarded with a higher education and the experience of going to school at one of the world's most unique universities.

At A&M your mind, your body, your spirit, and your character will all have the opportunity to be developed. Those who enter here as boys will graduate as men.

It's an arduous but not an impossible road. Yet chances are good that at least one out of every three of you will fall by the wayside before the journey is over. This is not just at A&M but at many universities throughout the nation. The crucial period is the freshman year. For it is at this time that the usual academic burdens are combined with problems of adjustment. The sooner you can make the transition to college routine the better your chances are of doing well at A&M.

You will not be alone. You will have over 2,000 other freshmen in the same situation, with the same problems and the same doubts. Most are able to overcome the early obstacles and go on to successful college careers.

And successful college careers usually provide the foundation for successful lives. For college is not an end in itself. Its primary purpose is the development of the individual, and in helping him take his place in the real world beyond the ivy-covered walls of the college campus.

This may seem distant to you now but four years can go much sooner than you might think. And what these next four years will hold rests squarely up to you and no one else. There will likely be people helping you financially, there will be counselors to give you advice, and there will be teachers and fellow students to lend their aid. But in the final analysis, these next four years are your years, they can be whatever you choose to make them.

There will be two paths you can take. You can either return to the easy, more secure existence with its lesser rewards or you can meet A&M's challenge and emerge with an open mind — a thing so precious that men have died in the past and will continue dying to defend it.

It's your decision. And it's your life.

Why It Never Rains At A&M

Why doesn't it rain at A&M? Is it because someone finally broke down and bought an umbrella? Is it because some farmer's crop is slowly burning up? Could it even possibly be caused by atmospheric changes far above the ground?

The lack of rain on this campus could be caused by many reasons, but I honestly think that it is a result of that great rain god, Zeus, (Izten if you're Hungarian) looking down upon our little campus and frowning upon our rain flag. Yes, he'd rather see us burn in the summer sun than to give reason to fly that old tattered, faded and torn, red, white, and blue flag. It waves proudly in the wind but as the days pass, its character seems to fade.

And I'm sure that Zeus is not alone. His chief advisors, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Betsy Ross, are also condemning the rain on this speck in the universe. As Zeus roars and thunders in the sky, A&M stands dry and barren seeing none of the great god's wrath.

If the noble heritage of our country's fathers is not enough to discourage the mighty Zeus, then I'm sure that that noble gentleman, Lawrence Sullivan Ross, will also condemn the tattered flag waving and nod solemnly to Zeus to prevent the approaching rain.

Students of A&M, citizens of College Station, are we going to continue this practice of waving a flag of which we are ashamed, a flag that is embarrassing for us, the students of the largest military school in the United States. When and if ever it rains, lift your eyes to the flagpole in front of the Academic Building and remember those days in the past when Washington crossed the Delaware, Lincoln spoke at Gettysburg, MacArthur stepped into the ocean, and Francis Scott Key wrote that patriotic song which later was to become our national anthem, The Star Spangled Banner. If the government of the state of Texas refuses to buy our campus a decent flag, than I'm sure the federal government will issue forth funds to save the honor of our national symbol.

Only after this great change has taken place will Zeus once again wave his arms proudly calling forth rain and lightning while A&M's great statesman smiles silently from his heavenly post.

P.S. As I finish writing this editorial and look out of the window at the falling rain, I can only say that "old Zeus" came to the rescue . . . he allowed it to rain at night. When The Battalion runs an editorial, it always gets results. HK

THE BATTALION

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CADET SLOUCH

by Jim Earle



"Don't say a thing to me or ask me a question or anything! I'm primed for a quiz and you might disarrange my brain cells!"

Sound Off

Editor

The Battalion,

In a special report on the shootings Monday at TU, Walter Cronkite interviewed a Mr. Bakal, author of a book titled "To Keep And Bear Arms." I have not read Mr. Bakal's book, but from the interview, I gather that he is an advocate of legislation to restrict sale, ownership and use of firearms by private citizens. He specifically mentioned such things as requiring prospective gun purchasers to furnish affidavits pertaining to mental health, police records, citizenship and other information. Further, he would have gun owners register with local authorities (police), and even give such authorities the power to determine who may or may not own firearms by arbitrarily deciding whether or not to issue permits. By enacting laws to restrict sale and use of firearms by private citizens, Mr. Bakal and other misguided people think that this will disarm criminal elements, and crimes involving firearms will all but cease.

New York's "Sullivan Law", which "disarmed" New Yorkers has many of the features which are being advocated for the entire United States. History has shown, both here, and in other countries especially, that such laws were indeed effective in disarming law abiding citizens, but have had little effect on criminals, who get hold of firearms, regardless of the law.

It is the position of the National Rifle Association and my own, (I am a Life Member) that the answer to crimes involving firearms lies not in laws directed at guns themselves, but at the misuse of guns. Legislation which provides heavy penalties for misuse of firearms, effectively and vigorously enforced, would be a far better deterrent, more in line with the constitutional right to keep and bear arms, and certainly more acceptable to the thousands of Americans who own and enjoy the use of firearms.

Since the assassination of President Kennedy by Lee Oswald with a mail order rifle, more than 50 anti-gun bills have been introduced in Congress. Through the efforts of the National Rifle Association, which represents more than 400,000 active sportsmen interested in guns, they have been thus far blocked. With Mr. Bakal on national television less than seven hours after the incident at Austin, calling for restrictions on gun ownership by private citizens, those of us who own and enjoy the use of firearms, whether it be hunting, tin can plinking, target shooting, collecting or whatever, must be

(See Sound-Off, page 3)

Traditions Create A New Way Of Life

By HERKY KILLINGSWORTH

When it was discovered that I had attended Texas A&M under three different football coaches, it was immediately decided that I should extend a special message to the Class of '70. All I have to say is . . . Congratulations.

You've picked a wonderful school and now that I have fulfilled my duty in glorifying our campus let me tell you why our campus has won the heart of America, or at least the heart of our relatives. Well, would you believe that some people like this place very much.

The reason A&M is so great is that glorious invention TRADITION. Ever since the tradition of throwing Christians to the lions was established back in the ancient times, tradition has been a basis for every society, every country, and even every school. Every college has its traditions: Tech likes to party, Rice loves to study, and Texas tries hard to win football games. But needless to say, every tradition must eventually fall. For example, have

(See Traditions, page 3)

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EDITOR — GERALD GARCIA
Editorial Assistants — Herky Killingsworth, John Hotard, Jim Butler, Tim Lane
Photographer — Herky Killingsworth