

Stalemate

About 50 students gathered Tuesday morning near the Memorial Student Center, when junior Lindsey Scoggin was lying on the grass, and failed to move after several students asked him to.

# Here comes the grass again:

#### Respect memories ...

By DOUG GRAHAM

People got hot yesterday about somebody sitting on the Memorial Student Center grass. Most wanted him off, and a few applauded his refusal to leave.

Passing by, I didn't know why he got on the grass, and disliked seeing him sitting there, so I joined the mainly civilian crowd to hear what was going on.

I was ashamed. I was ashamed.

The arguments two girls were using were astonishing. They said that by stepping on the grass he hurt America. They said "Highway 6 Runs Both Ways," and "love it or leave it," ad nauseum.

They used all the wrong, narrowminded arguments for what I thought was right, and I wanted to crawl in hole and pull it in after me.

pull it in after me.

They used asinine arguments for a basi-

cally rational and logical stand.

Why not respect a tradition most people follow and stay off the grass?

Admittedly, as the MSC Council

pointed out last year, the grass has never been a memorial — but has become one with the passage of time. Originally the aim was to keep students off the newly planted grass, but now it has come to symbolize the respect people have for a bunch of faceless Aggies who died in warfare for

I doubt many were John Waynes, and figure most were killed against their will and best endeavors.

Yet they still died in the country's defense and I'm grateful.

That is why I think not walking on the grass is a simple and nice tradition.

But I don't think it was worth getting

hyper and completely irrational about. For all I know that guy didn't know he was on the grass and then got stuborn when he was brusquely told to get off.

He might have reacted better if the reason behind the tradition had been explained calmly. Then he might have realized why people feel the way they do on that subject.

I would hope he'd then have enough decency to respect what others feel and refrain afterwards from stepping on the

Then again, maybe he would have still stayed on the grass. But won't excuse threatening him. That's not true Texas

A&M tradition, either. Friendliness and courtesy are supposed to be our trademark. The violence, though it might have been the quickest and most satisfying route, would have been wrong.

And I was glad nobody tried that ap-

The reason is that violence is associated with dogma and dogma is associated with dead ideas. And traditions are ideas, see?

Not walking on the grass in itself is no big deal. In fact, if it were just a tradition for its own sake, I'd say "Why not break

I'm hoping that Aggie traditions don't become icons to be worshipped because then they'll be useless stiflers of thought

Texas A&M could become like Christmas, which has its roots in the celebration of Jesus Christ's birth. It is now X-mas, stripped of much of its Christian joy, a day important to many only because they buy each other gifts.

One hopes the answer to "Why shouldn't I walk on the grass?" is not sim-

One hopes it will be a human answer, not a righteous flare-up about an assault on A&M's tradition.

The tradition is never important. The

idea behind it is. Once that idea is gone, then all is left is a shell, a facade.

And staying off the grass is a nice way to demonstrate a polite, quiet sort of gratitude for those who sacrificed their

lives for us all. The answer lies in the students. They ought to pass around a petition for a referendum on whether the grass should be memorialized. That would keep the issue out of the grasp of administrators and stu-dent government and leave the issue to

Thus the students will decide on a tradition themselves. Are they not the true arbiters of what will and won't be tradition? If the vote is yes, then the grass will be a university memorial. It also means school regulation in addition to the force of tradition will protect it. If a person obstinately refuses to stay off the grass, then students will be able to call the campus police to enforce the regulation instead of growing

violent themselves.

Happily that will mean Aggies will work through a system, and an indiviual won't be threatened with harm.

## Right to choose. . .

By J. WAGNER TYNES

I've looked. I've honestly looked hard. But nowhere can I find anything official that states that the Memorial Student Center grass is a memorial of any kind, much less to the same people whom the building is dedicated to.

OK, OK, you reply, that's a subject that can be argued for hours. But why bring it

up again now?

The answer is simple, "fellow" Aggies. I was witness to a little incident Tuesday morning that made me angry at first but now seems lost somewhere out in that limbo far beyond the absurd. You know what I'm talking about...somewhere out

around insanity. Come to think of it, perhaps insane is the right word for it.

What happened, in over-simplified terms, is this: A student was sitting on the sacred grass. He was studying. Yes, studying. ing. Remember studying? It's what we came here for.

Anyway, it wasn't long before this student looked up and noticed that the concrete around his grassy seat was filled with a less than friendly crowd.

No, let me re-phrase that: they were nad. Plain downright, butt-kicking mad. The guy on the grass held his ground (no pun intended) but it wasn't long before things were getting serious.

The crowd kept growing and steadily became more and more vocal. One young lady (I use the term lightly) was very vocal about the situation, continually berating the student and his attitudes, as well as everything else about him she could think of at the moment. She even went so far as to go out into the grass herself and take the guy's books and sandals, telling him that would get them back when got off the

Things got a little more heated when the student finally surrendered and moved to the sidewalk. The crowd didn't seem willing to accept this as a concession and they

During the final few minutes of the episode, the student was asked loudly, (and I'm dead serious) if he were Communist, or maybe even a Socialist. He was even approached by one big Aggie who told him sternly that no, he didn't have to keep off the grass, but if he didn't, he would have his arm broken.

At one point, a black student walked and offered his hand to the grass-sitter, telling him to stick by his guns. As he left very angry and very rascist comments fil-

led the air. Somehow, I wasn't surprised. Well, anyway, I could go on all day describing the small insanities committed by this friendly, tradition-loving group. But there's something that I mentioned earlier that I want to return to.

In the beginning, way back when the MSC policies were laid down, there was included a line which read "the use of the Memorial Student Center grounds will be left to the discretion of the individual."

So it seems that the grass was never memorialized at all in any way, shape, fashion or form. Some of you may remember last year when Student Government passed a resolution that recom-mended that the MSC Council officially memorialize the grass.

However, there are apparently none of you who remember that the recommendation was rejected by the council. In fact, they adopted a formal policy which stated, in part, that "the use of the Memorial Stu-dent Center grounds will not be discour-

Look, folks, this is a stupid issue to begin with. There are people being killed by starvation, wars, and disease all over the world, and here at Texas A&M, the world-renowned institute of higher learning, we are arguing, no, threatening each other over a few measly blades of grass which are fictitiously dedicated to a bunch of guys who already have a whole building

Let's try to be sane about this. If you want to consider the grass a memorial to the dead, then do so. But don't expect others to think the same way. Grass is a comfortable and pleasant thing to relax on and the area around the MSC is especially beautiful. Just try to ignore the few who like to sit on the grass instead of hard concrete benches.

And there's another point. Some people don't bow their heads when they pray. Does that mean they're atheists? Just because a person treads on the precious MSC grass doesn't mean he is trying to slap A&M traditions in the face.

Letters to the Editor

# Gentlemen - off with your hats

After every game people write comments on observed behavior during yell practice and the game, and I'd like to put in my 10 (inflated 2) cents on the occasion of this my fifth season here at A&M.

It is incomprehensible that gentlemen (?) come to college without having learned, among other manners, to remove

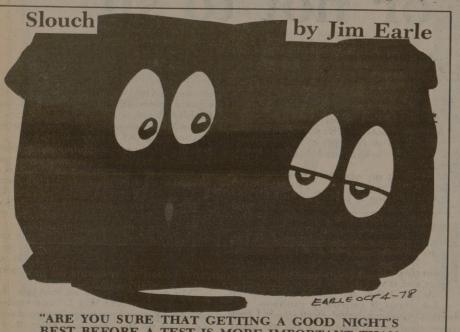
their hats and caps in classes and while eating, but not to show that much respect during the prayer, national anthem, and Spirit at games in intolerable. If Ags are supposed really to care about each other and want to help each other, one has to wonder about those immediately adjacent

to those who fail to uncover.

Would it be so bad thoughtfully and

kindly to remind them of the custom? It takes a lot of character to be a gentleman (synonomous with Aggie) these days, to maintain our time-honored principles, and to stand firm in our respect for God, our country (as expressed by the flag and national anthem), and the greatest damn university anywhere.

—Jim Metcalf, '75, '80



REST BEFORE A TEST IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN

This past Saturday several students were surprised to find a new ruling at Kyle Field. The ruling was that no more coolers or drink containers were to be allowed in

Thirsty game

According to the ticket checkers in the apper deck, the ruling became effective that morning.

How were the students suppose to be aware of this? When was the decision made? And who made it? The concession stand stockholders?

We wonder if the people making this decision realize the impact of this new rule. First, all that is offered are sugar containing drinks, some students for medical reasons can not have sugar. Secondly, the cost is for a "sip" of coke with lots of ice is very high, one would need a bank roll to keep from dehydrating. Third, letting the students take their own drinks helps prevent many more cases of heat exhaustion from happening.

Does this mean that the university will become liable for people with no money for drinks or with medical problems that are overcome by the hear? Dehydration can be very dangerous. This ruling is

analagous to crossing the desert with no water, but allowed to buy drinks from the desert concession stand. If the price for the addition to the stadium expanion is "HEAT STROKE" for students, then to hell with it. No expansion is worth a stu-

If the problem is that the school is afraid of people taking alcohol into the stadium, then check the containers, otherwise leave things alone and let us bring our drinks.

-Melinda Biersdorfer, '78 Mendee Welker, '78 H. Lynn Millegan, '79

Editor's note: this letter was accompanied by 26 other signatures.

#### Misallocation

Editor:

I recently became aware that this year's budget passed by Student Government included a cutback in funds allocated for Parents' Day and Aggie Muster. As a former Student Government vice president, I seriously question the Senate's budgeting priorities.
Surely these traditional A&M functions,

Parents' Day and Aggie Muster, deserve full funding, especially since these activities directly benefit so many students. If the Senate chooses to spend Aggie Muster and Parents' Day money elsewhere, it is their responsibility to ensure that students will receive comparable benefits. I

do not believe they have done so.

I sincerely hope that the Senate will reconsider its budgeting priorities and will restore full funding to Aggie Muster and Parents' Day.

-William C. Altman, '79

# TOP OF THE NEWS

### **CAMPUS**

#### Training for government career

The Southern Regional Training Program in Public Administration is now accepting applications for fellowships for the 1979-1980 academic year. Applications must be received by Feb. 23, 1979. The program prepares students for careers in government and is sponsored by the Universities of Alabama, Kentucky and Tennessee. For more information write to: Coleman B. Ransone Jr., director, Southern Regional Training Program in Public Administration, Drawer I, University of Alabama, Birmingham, Ala. 35486.

#### \$100 essay contest starts soon

English Department judges at Texas A&M University have begun accepting entries for the second annual Thomas F. Mayo Prize essay contest. The deadline for entries is Oct. 30. The winner will receive \$100.

#### Drives get \$10,000 from A&M

Texas A&M University employees have contributed more than \$10,000 so far to the joint College Station United Fund and Bryan-Brazos County United Way drives, said Chuck Cargill, campus chairman. The drive ends Oct. 31.

#### STATE

#### Texas refinery fire prompts suit

The Texas City Refining Corp., owner of the refinery in Galveston hit by explosion and fire in May, has sued the U.S. Department of Energy to temporarily sidestep complex government regulations. The refinery said it will be put out of business if forced to comply with the regulations involving oil entitlements. The refinery is attempting to win exemption temporarily from the energy department's entitlement program. That program, aimed at insuring an equitable distribution of less expensive "old" crude oil, distributes the cheap oil on the basis of previous months' purchases. U.S. District Judge Finis Cowan has issued a temporary restraining order preventing the Department of Energy from enforcing the regulations, at least until a hearing on the suit next Tuesday.

#### **NATION**

#### Three killed in refinery explosion

Two explosions and a fire ripped through a Conoco oil refinery in Denver Tuesday morning killing three workers, injuring at least eight others and sending a fireball 500 feet into the sky. A second explosion burst a storage tank about an hour later. A spokesman at the Colorado School of Mines earthquakener said the explosion registered 3.5 on the Richter scale at the center's seismograph. Police said a search of the plant area prompted by an anonymous telephone call indicating the explosion was sabotage produced no evidence of a bomb.

#### New strategy for Gulf swimmer

Aides to marathon swimmer Stella Taylor aboard the boat Idle Day devised a new strategy Tuesday to beat the Gulf Stream currents in her bid to swim from the Bahamas to Florida. The new plan called for Taylor to "go north with" the Gulf Stream for a few hours, rather than continue battling with the currents. Then, aides hope a 3:45 p.m. EDT incoming tide will help push her ashore. The new strategy, said aide Joe Edwards, will take up to 10 hours. Besides strength, he said Taylor would need "a lot of powerful prayers."

#### Hearst abductors sentenced

Symbionese Liberation Army members William and Emily Harris are not afraid of years behind bars — they are confident they one day will return to the streets to work for social change. That was the thrust of a statement they issued when they pleaded guilty in Oakland, Calif., to simple kidnap charges for the Feb. 4, 1974, abduction of Patricia Hearst from her Berkeley, Calif., apartment. Harris, 33, and his 31-year-old wife appeared Tuesday before Alameda County Superior Court Judge Stanley P. Golde for sentencing on charges of kidnapping Miss Hearst, kidnapping a man whose car was used in the abduction, robbing Hearst's fiance, Steven Weed, and false imprisonment. According to the criminal statutes, the couple could be eligible for parole in 1983 or 1984 under terms of the charges.

#### Sugar price hike gets boost

The Senate Finance Committee, ignoring President Carter's warning about inflationary consequences, Tuesday in Washington approved a sugar industry bill setting the market price of raw sugar at 17 cents a pound. The president opposes a provision which would escalate the 17-cent price twice a year, based on changes in the Wholesale Price Index and parity. The ways and means bill sets a 15-cent market price that could remain stable over the next five years. The administration has promised that if sugar producers' costs rose above 15 cents, the administration would make up the difference with payments to producers. Domestically-produced sugar, which makes up 55 percent of U.S. consumption, is now supported by the government at 14.65 cents

#### WEATHER

The weather will be partly cloudy today and fair to cool tonight with mild temperatures. The high will be in the mid-80s and the low in the low 60s. Winds will be light and variable to light and southernly tonight.

#### THE BATTALION

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