

SLOUCH by Jim Earle



"I heard you made a swing by Padre Island for a swim."

OPINION

Howdy, canary

A student — like a canary in a cage full of cats — can be lonely in a crowd. And a lot of that is going on around here. A week of school has passed, and the first-day jitters are gone. For many freshmen — and other students, especially transfers — now is when the loneliness begins. Empty hours, boring hours, stretch all the way to December and Christmas. Some of the hours will be filled with classes and books, of course, but only so many. The others can be very long, and sometimes even dangerous, for people who have nothing else to do. Texas Aggies have one built-in advantage. We encourage people to say hello — "Howdy" if you're a traditionalist — and that is good. But often the effort stops there. People go back to just staring at each other in halls, in classes or elsewhere on campus. It doesn't have to be that way. Lonely canaries usually want to make friends — all they need is an opening out of their cage.

EDITOR'S NOTE: An editorial like the one above is usually categorized with pieces to encourage voting, giving to the United Way or watching for children on bicycles. The editor has little hope his effort will do any good, but he feels obligated to write it anyway. In this case, however, there is hope, because building a new friendship takes so little effort — and the rewards are great. And after you've done it once, it's easier to do the next time. It might even become a habit.

Thoughts on Thotz

With this issue, The Battalion begins a comic strip — Thotz — drawn by Doug Graham. Graham, a senior in journalism, discusses his creation: One ambition of all shade-tree cartoonists is to draw their own strip. I chose dinosaurs, mainly because I have loved those extinct beasts since I was a kid. That is why each one of my characters is an actual species. For instance, the duck-billed one, Cheeseworth, is a trachodon. Also, dinosaurs give me freedom — and freedom is what I need to probe the way people think and act. I hope Thotz doesn't turn into just a gag strip. I want it to mean something overall. It is my version of the Wright Flyer. My first attempt, FEEM, which was a ground-borne strip about roaches and rats, was such an abortion, Right-to-Life couldn't have saved it. Thotz has been around a while, running once a week, then twice a week. Finally, starting this week, it will run five days a week. I kind of feel like Wilbur and Orville right now. I want my biplane to soar.

THE BATTALION

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Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words and are subject to being cut to that length or less if longer. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit such letters and does not guarantee to publish any letter. Each letter must be signed, show the address of the writer and list a telephone number for verification. Address correspondence to Letters to the Editor, The Battalion, Room 216, Reed McDonald Building, College Station, Texas 77843.

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READER'S FORUM

By CURTIS DILLON

Among the many pursuits of the male is the company of a female that is pleasing to the eye. The male goes thru adolescence dreaming that he will meet and go through life with a beauty pageant queen that will do no less than make men salivate on their boots. Not only must the girl make his own heart flutter, but also turn the heads of other men in order to heighten his own prestige.

Such is the desire of the male, that a rating system has been set up, so that members of the virile sex may know the quality of the merchandise before inspecting it. This rating system is of great value when being conned into taking out a friend's sister who could not hire a date to go to the prom, or being set up on a blind date with a girl often mistaken for a contestant at a dog fight.

The system is based on ten and ranges from one extreme to the other. Descriptive information is supplied with each in order to better understand the quality of each score.

10. Gorgeous — Being the top rating, this is the most desired. It is unfortunate that there are few of these, and therefore impractical that the common male should have one for a girl friend. She makes the

male sigh in realization of the hopelessness of pursuit. If the male is lucky enough to get a date with a gorgeous girl, it is necessary to carry a baseball bat to beat off all the other males. This type of girl has her own pick of the elite males. She is the head cheerleader, dates the captain of the football team, marries a millionaire, and lives a leisurely life dabbling in diamonds.

9. Beautiful — The beautiful girl is simply breath taking and always has two to three beaux whimpering at her feet. Muscling in on the circle of admirers requires trips to the back alley. When gaining the favor of a beautiful girl, she must not be left unattended for even a moment, or the male will be quickly replaced by one of the competition.

8. Pretty — It is more practical for the male to set his sights on this type as how they are easier to keep as long as the male keeps the compliments flowing. Pretty girls never have trouble getting dates, so the male must please her to be the one that takes her home at night.

7. Cute — These girls are categorized by a dimpled smile and are always giggling. They tend to be little girlish in appearance, are easy to please, and not to be overlooked when found.

6. Nice — When observing this type of

The international system for rating female looks

girl there is no discernible great quality that can be pointed out, yet there is a definite feminine charm. Nice girls make up the highest percentage category and will accept a date from any decent male.

5. Plain — Nothing good can be seen in the girl of plain looks, but then there is nothing bad to be seen either. These girls are found sitting as wall flowers at dances. They have been known to grab a male by the hand, waltz him onto the dance floor, and then ask him if he would like to dance.

4. Homely — A forlorn look defines this class, somewhat like a large tired plow horse. The destitute look comes from being passed over too frequently, but will brighten up when in the vicinity of anything of a masculine nature.

3. Ugly — There are very few ugly girls in this world, and it is fortunate indeed. They resemble the cartoon character Broom Hilda. Males walking alone at night on dark streets must be wary of this kind, because most are known to carry hog tying string for such occasions.

2. Grotesque — There are even fewer beasts of this group. They are typically employed by the horror movie industry, live in deep recesses of the earth, and fantasize about kidnapping the Dallas Cowboys and ruining their reputations.

1. Freak — This oddity happens once in a millennium, but it is said that everyone there is a mate, and hence the eye of the beholder (Quasimodo). The trouble is getting them born the same life span.

While the rating system is used to the males, it can be a rather disconcerting experience to a female to find out she has been rated at. However, due to the male population, the women have a rating system of their own.

Perhaps rather than basing their own looks, it is based on character, that judge women on their looks might be on the bottom end of the female scale. One thing is for sure, a female never rate a male as high as his ego he should be.

A girl is born into her beauty as the person that she is. Make-up can't be used to change the way she looks, and harsh words about looks can hurt feelings and tear down the well-being of not so blessed with beauty. A girl may be able to change her looks, but a male can change his character for the better.

—Dillon is a senior biomedical science major at Texas A&M University

DICK WEST If many countries non-align themselves with Vietnam's non-alignment, watch out

By DICK WEST

WASHINGTON — This year's conference of non-aligned nations in Havana featured a row over which side they should be non-aligned with.

Fidel Castro of Cuba, the host country, which is firmly non-aligned with Russia, welcomed the delegates with an unbiased review of world affairs from the Soviet point of view.

His attempt to commit the movement to pro-Soviet non-alignment was resisted by President Tito of Yugoslavia, who used to be non-aligned with Russia himself.

Tito took the position that the only way non-aligned countries could stay non-aligned with each other was by adhering to a policy of neutral non-alignment toward the aligned nations.

Meanwhile, Yasser Arafat of the Palestine Liberation Organization, which is non-aligned with everyone who is non-aligned against Israel, spoke out in favor of breaking off non-alignment with Egypt.

And so it went. Officials of certain aligned countries, who were attending the conference as observers, were properly horrified by these proceedings. Their tactics, however, were questionable.

The aligned observers made a point of walking out of the conference in protest whenever some speaker was advocating non-alignment against their side.

Some diplomatic experts felt the protests would have been more effective had the aligned observers remained in their seats and clapped their hands over their ears.

The theory is that once a protesting observer walks out, he is both gone and forgotten. But if he remains in his seat with his hands covering his ears, he can con-

spicuously continue to refuse to listen indefinitely.

Another impressive technique is for the observer occasionally to remove one hand from his ear and use it to hold his nose.

Be that as it may, the time has come look ahead and answer the question: whether non-alignment?

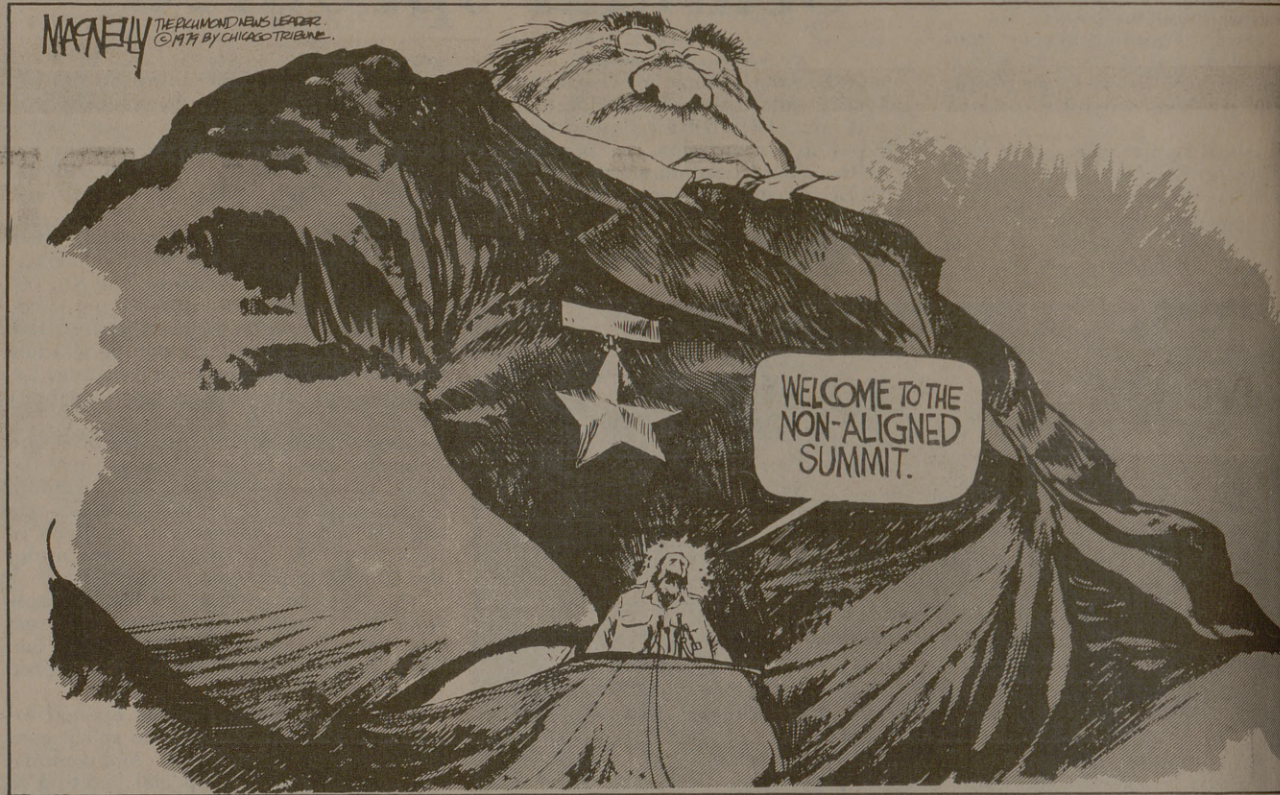
My reading is that the answer will be found in Asia where Vietnam's non-alignment with Russia crosses Cambodia's non-alignment with China.

If a majority of the 95 nations represented at Havana non-align themselves with Vietnam's non-alignment, watch out! It could be a signal that militants who favor

a more aggressive non-alignment have gained the upper hand. What certainly would be a pretty kettle of fish.

There is such a thing as pushing alignment too far, you know.

The danger is that the aligned nations will get together and form an alliance in combat it.



LETTERS Bicyclists should respect traffic rules; motorists should respect cyclists' rights

Editor: I have thought of writing this letter from the first time I drove on campus a year ago, yet now I feel I must.

Although I do not ride my bike on campus much, every time I do ride it, I obey fully all the laws of the road a bicyclist and motorist are to obey (i.e. yield right of way to pedestrians, use a front and rear light during dark, give legible hand signals when times come, follow the line of traffic which also includes not passing cars at a stop on their right).

I just bought a new bike three days ago and have to ride it as my transportation to and from wherever. As I respect the laws on my bike, I expect motorists to respect me, too, in such ways as to not plow me over or pull out in front of me as the car ahead of me turns onto a side street.

Such was my ride over to campus shortly ago today. A girl in a light blue truck pulled out in front of me forcing me to wear off some new tread on my tires. Try to put yourself in the place of the cyclist sometimes, motorists. Respect has to be mutual, not one way. —Mary Wilson

neither foreign aid or the ARC do anything to alleviate the day-to-day suffering of the boat people.

His account of 30,000 Vietnamese people fleeing to Laos is unclear. If, in fact, Mr. Bucchi's information is accurate a possible explanation of this would be that the Vietnamese people are fleeing into Laos as a stopping point for further travel overland into Thailand. The only other method of overland travel is through Cambodia, quite a risky venture in itself. It is also true that Laos is a client state of Socialist Vietnam with a large garrison of Vietnamese troops there — I do not believe the North Vietnamese would flee the economic straits of Vietnam to go into equally strapped Laos. Mr. Bucchi's so-called "ironic point" is unclear.

His assertion that the Vietnamese share racial, political or cultural likenesses with

Russia, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Burma and China is completely false. For centuries the Indo-Chinese have battled among themselves primarily due to racial differences. It would be very difficult for the Vietnamese to assimilate into any of these cultures of which Russia, Laos, Cambodia, Burma and China are socialist/communist states — the very type of social system the refugees are fleeing.

The suffering of the boat people is continuous — from the time they must bribe Vietnamese officials with at least \$3,000 in gold per person to flee Vietnam, to being raped, beaten and killed by Thai pirates, to the endless red tape facing them once they do get to a safe haven. Yet they still try to escape from a system of political, economic, religious and physical oppression in leaky, dilapidated boats.

I don't argue that we have "our own

needy people — in Appalachia, or "the sick, unemployment" in the United States, but I have heard this argument for years. These needy people have had a better opportunity for years to find a job for themselves through our welfare system. You don't have to tell the refugees to find a job — they come here and find hard. Their values of the work ethic that made this country what it is today

In closing, I would like to say the months spent in the Marines in Vietnam taught me one thing — people are people, they hurt, cry and laugh all over the world. These refugees are seeking something a lot of us in this country are granted — freedom.

By they way Mr. Bucchi, when did ancestors come over on the boat to Europe? —Mike

