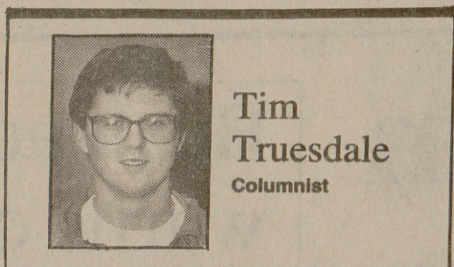


Prayer makes comeback in the United States

When I was growing up, my mom told me no one ever wins in war. Based on what I've seen these past three weeks, I've been tempted to agree. At first glance, it seems difficult to conceive of anything positive coming out of the Persian Gulf War. Sure, we've been able to test our newest weapons systems. But is that the only thing that keeps this war from being a total loss? Although a majority supports President Bush's actions, a large minority does not. However, the American people are virtually unanimous in supporting the men and women risking their lives for what they believe in. It's the first time in a long time we have felt so much solidarity on any issue. Relatives, friends and even roommates are staring death in the face daily. They are not alone. Thanks to

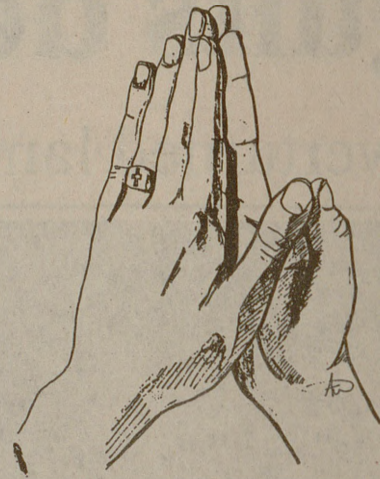


Tim Truesdale
Columnist

the media, we all are seeing the realities of death from narrow range. This has served to temper our collective conscience. Getting that perfect stereo for my car is somehow not as important as seeing my brother come back alive. The war forces us to ask ourselves, "What really matters in life: wealth or people?" Our money always has said "In God We Trust." But this is a circular statement. By definition, our god is whatever we put our trust in. For some time now, we've believed man can solve all his problems by

applying rationality and logic. The Baker-Aziz meeting shattered this dream. "We certainly hope and pray for a speedy solution to this conflict." Statements of this nature are constantly repeated on the nightly news. Our nation's newspapers now report people gathering for prayer on a daily basis. Prayer is obviously making a comeback in the United States. Last week, Bush himself was shown kneeling in prayer. And he called on Americans to set aside Sunday as a day of prayer. The war is forcing us to ask, "Who can we count on in times of dire need — man or God?" For some time, educators have found incredulous our lack of knowledge of world geography. In my opinion, this ignorance is rooted in a spirit of isolationism. For too long, we've been disinterested in events outside the United States because we've believed we could not be touched by those events.

The poet claims that "No man is an island." I agree. But I would add that in our world no country is an island either.



The only way to win a war is to wage it. Likewise, the only way to ensure peace is to wage it. The strongest

enemy of peace is not war. Poverty, ignorance are peace's greatest foes. And like the Good Book says, "To whom much is given, much will be required." Each of us who opposes war should be asking, "Does peace happen spontaneously? Or does it require some type of sacrificial action?" George Bush promised us a kinder, gentler nation. But no government program could give us that. We had to wait it out for work for it. Ironically, it is a terrorist — Saddam Hussein — who has given us that will. We are a nation turning back to God. We are relearning how to support each other, rather than "looking out for number one." And hopefully, we are learning that maintaining peace can be as difficult as waging war. If all this is true, then this war doesn't appear to be a total loss. *Tim Truesdale is a graduate student in urban planning.*

Remember black heritage Students often ignore Black History Month

During all the confusion of knowing what to be called for Black History Month, I received some disheartening, but enlightening news. Every year, black organizations on campus go through a great number of trials to set up interesting events to commemorate black achievement in the past and greater accomplishments for the future. Most of the programs will be very successful in the area of attempt.

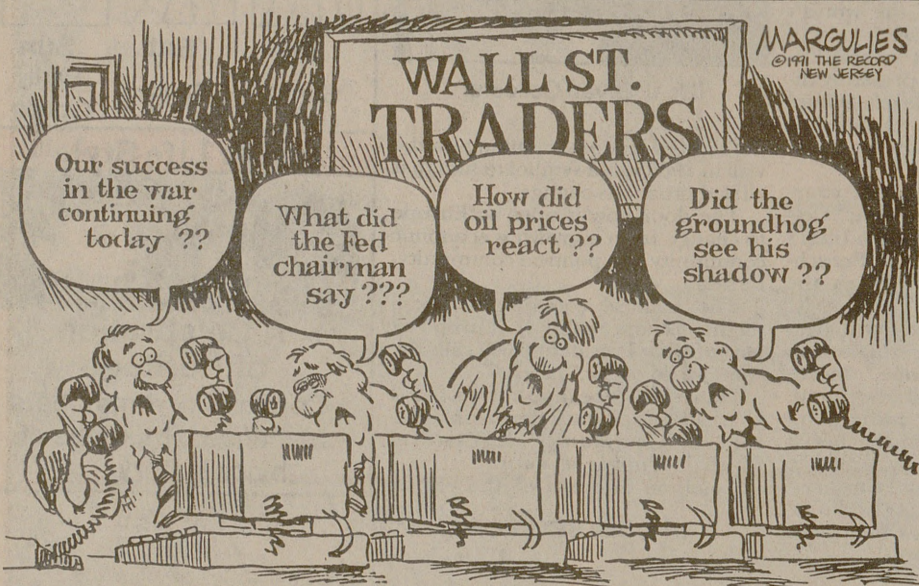
Will Adams
Reader's Opinion

He said, "After all the excitement, either perpetrated or not, over Black History Month, nobody will remember the real reason for celebrating (if you must ask, you're truly lost) and make it to the programs." He seemed to think most would treat the month just as another ritual to go through. I only pray that students at Texas A&M University remember how much work it took to get the black race where it is today. I'd also like to remind the black students that as little as they might care for school-related programs, they should remember the cause and prove a certain friend of mine wrong. "The black man's history — when you refer to him as the black man, you go way back. But when you refer to him as Negro, you can only go back as far as the Negro goes. And when you go beyond the shores of America, you can't find a Negro." — Malcolm X.

Will Adams is a senior sociology major.

"I only pray that students at Texas A&M University remember how much work it took to get the black race where it is today."

The programs, no doubt, will be announced and the organizations will come with their half of the program. The only problem is that the audience never comes through on their end. Participation always has been lax during black history programs. I hadn't dwelled on the thought until an "anonymous" person mentioned that the turn out for a recent program was sadly low and there would not be a great deal of support for any upcoming programs.



Remember freedom of speech

EDITOR: Normally, when I read Mail Call and run across an excessively rubbish-filled letter, I shake my head and wait for someone else to take up the necessary rebuttal. However, when I read B. Jon Traylor's letter in the Feb. 4 issue of The Battalion, there was not a moment's hesitation before I mentally started my reply. My points of contention with that highly inflammatory, blatantly closed-minded letter are too great to be addressed individually, but I'll do my best to spotlight the major infractions. "Normally I am unprovincial and very open-minded toward the opinions and ideas of others," Traylor wrote. That was the opening sentence. "If you don't like it, leave! We don't need you." Those were the closing sentences. Pardon me, but don't those two contrasting declarations in the same letter strike you as absurd at best? For the record, let me say I am not a "dove" and have marched in no rallies. I reluctantly have decided to support the military action of allied forces because it seems no effective alternatives were left us. However, I shudder each time I hear of a soldier's death and would rejoice to see peace in the gulf. I do my part by writing letters to soldiers I have come to know and love in the past few months. I quietly listen to both sides and respect those who speak with educated conviction. But you, Traylor, disgrace the values our country are built on: freedom of speech, freedom of assembly. The world you present is one where citizens of different opinions would be hauled in a truck to Mexico and kicked out to "waller." Wanting peace, I tell you, is not wanting "to spit on the American flag and the graves of our forefathers!" I may not be marching in peace rallies, but I do respect the rights of those who are. If anything is a disgrace to this country, it is your letter. If you don't agree with my opinion, I suppose you'll want to haul me off to Mexico. *Toni Garrard '94*

I would like to leave the protesters with a thought: It's better to suffer hardships or death with some honor than to live with absolutely none. *Robert W. Low '94*

A true example of A&M spirit

EDITOR: On Feb. 1, I was going home for my mother's birthday. I started out on a farm road between Hearne and Temple when the engine in my car blew up; no fire, just lots of smoke. I pulled over on the side of the road, knowing I was nowhere near a phone to call for help. A few minutes before my despair, I was passed by a fellow Aggie who saw the smoke from my car. He slowed down once in front of me. Then he saw me pull over and pop the hood, as smoke rolled out. I saw he pulled over and was coming back to my aid. Much to my unlucky, but very lucky day, he would be passing through my final destination. This fellow Aggie not only gave me a ride to a phone, but took me home over 130 miles. I'm very proud to say I'm an Aggie, because I know it reaches beyond Aggie-land and the years one spends in school. Thank you very much Aaron Petree; you are a true example of Aggie spirit and camaraderie. *Kristi McAnally '91*

God bless the troops

EDITOR: I am writing in response to Mr. Brendan Wyly '88 and his 24 accompanying signatures. You say that you "... oppose only the policy that forces these troops to kill and die for unclear reasons." You also stated that "... we must oppose the policy and the war precisely because they endanger U.S. troops ..." I would like to know, Wyly, what awful policy it is that you oppose. Could it possibly be the one that allows Americans to choose whether or not to be in the military? No one forced the men to join the armed forces; it's what is called voluntary. Although many joined during peacetime, it is made clear that in time of war (now) it is their duty to serve our country. It is not up to you or me or them to decide for what reason (clear or unclear), when, where or why to fight. We, the taxpayers, do not pay to support our troops only in peacetime but also in this time of war. As to the endangering of our troops, please recall that they are the "armed" forces. They (most) are trained to kill; it is part of their jobs. They get paid to do it. Wyly, you have the right, given by government, to vocally, etc., oppose whatever you dislike. Please allow our forces to give the Iraqi-oppressed people of Kuwait the same. Call me "pseudo-patriotic," or what you will. But I do not forsake you the right to be free, please do not forsake anyone else the same liberty ... God bless the troops. *Lucio F. Muñoz '93*

Protesters try to make scene

EDITOR: I am writing in support of B. Jon Traylor's letter in the Feb. 4 edition of The Battalion. I agree 100 percent with what he says. I too would share the expense of dumping these people off in Mexico. If they do not like it, then get out. I think all protesters are people who can't get attention any other way, so they try to make a big scene. It really amazes me that these people would sell out their country and fellow citizens for attention. If these people think they are accomplishing anything more than proving that they are a very sorry excuse for American citizens, they are wrong.

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by Nito

The Battalion

(USPS 045 360)

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