

Lebanon: a small country with a global influence

Editor's note: This is the first of a three-part series on Lebanon written by several members of the Lebanese Student Association to commemorate Lebanese Independence Day on Monday.

by Amine Tarhini

Lebanon is one of those lands that could be described as microscopic in size but macroscopic in influence. Its history is indeed the history of our civilized world. Its proximity to the sea and its central location in the cradle of civilization are some of the reasons for its influence. The Eastern Mediterranean Sea was the first to carry and distribute the products of civilization — both material and cultural. The earliest of the historical inhabitants of Lebanon were the Semitic Canaanites (3000 B.C.), who later were called Phoenicians by the Greeks. The Phoenicians' greatest

contribution to mankind was an exclusively alphabetic and adequately developed system of writing. They also sailed across the open sea, estab-

Analysis

lishing east to west trunk routes which they monopolized for centuries.

Gubla (Jubayl), Tyre and Sidon, which is known for its purple dye industry, were among the Phoenicians' first important outlets along with other ports in Egypt.

But the Phoenicia-Lebanese contributions to world progress did not end with the Canaanites-Phoenicians. The Lebanese also influenced civilization during the Greco-Roman period.

Philosophy was of course the most significant legacy of Greece. But members of the Syro-Lebanese family, which

ruled in Rome, also completed on Lebanese soil one of the greatest temples of the world — the Heliopolis or modern Baalbek.

During the sixteenth century, Lebanon was under the Ottoman Turkish Empire, an empire known for its contributions in architecture and poetry.

The Arabic language and grammar were perfected and Ephrem Al-Bustani wrote the first modern Arabic language dictionary.

Turkey entered World War I in 1914 on the side of the Central Powers. In 1918, General Allenby, commander of the Allied troops operating from Egypt, occupied Palestine with support from Arab troops under King Faisal.

This opened the way for the occupation of Lebanon and Syria, which ended Turkish control over the area.

In April 1920, at the San Remo conference in Italy, France was given mandate

over Lebanon and Syria while Great Britain was given mandate over Palestine and Iraq, since both France and Great Britain were considered rightful heirs to the partitioned Ottoman empire.

France helped in creating a provisional constitution to govern the new state of Lebanon.

In September 1939, with the cloud of the second world war looming in the international horizon, a high French commissioner proclaimed martial law, suspended the constitution, dissolved the chamber and limited the powers of the president. He sent imperial troops which, in cooperation with Free French units, expelled Vichy and Axis forces and again occupied Syria-Lebanon. In September 1943, the French mandate was terminated and full independence was achieved.

Thursday: The history of Lebanon from 1943 to 1975.

Former student Caperton to speak on Texas' future

by David Johnson

Battalion Staff
State Senator and former Texas A&M student body president, Kent Caperton '71, will speak tonight at 7:30 in 701 Rudder Tower. The program is entitled, "What is Texas' Future? An Inside Look at Texas Conservation Laws."

Caperton, who graduated from Texas A&M with a bachelor's degree in finance, was student body president during the 1970-71 school year. In addition, he served as student body vice-president, senator and on several committees.

Caperton represents Texas' 5th senatorial district which includes the Bryan-College Sta-

tion area. He has served on several legislative committees and was appointed by Lt. Governor

Bill Hobby to the Sunset Commission. The Sunset Commission periodically reviews all state laws to determine their effec-

tiveness and submits outdated laws to the legislature to be repealed.

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A&M Senate reviews issues

by Beverly Hamilton

Battalion Staff

The Student Senate will meet tonight in Room 204 of the Harrington Classroom Complex to discuss proposals on the drinking age, football game transportation and evaluations of professors.

The senators will discuss a resolution calling for the defeat of the proposal by members of the state Legislature to raise the drinking age to 21.

In addition, the Senate will discuss the possibility of running campus shuttle buses after football games for off-campus students.

The Senate will also discuss establishing a Student Government student book exchange so students can exchange books without having to go to bookstores.

The following proposals will also be discussed:

• **University Office Bill** — A recommendation that advisers and pre-registration workers stagger their lunch hours so they are available to register students during the noon hour.

• **Professor Evaluation** — A recommendation that the University administer standardized professor evaluation forms once a semester and provide the results of the evaluations to faculty and administration.

• **1983-84 Senate Reapportionment** — A recommendation that the Student Senate be reapportioned for the 1983-84 school term.

• **1983 Election Regulations Revisions** — A recommendation that the election regulations be revised because of problems in recent elections.

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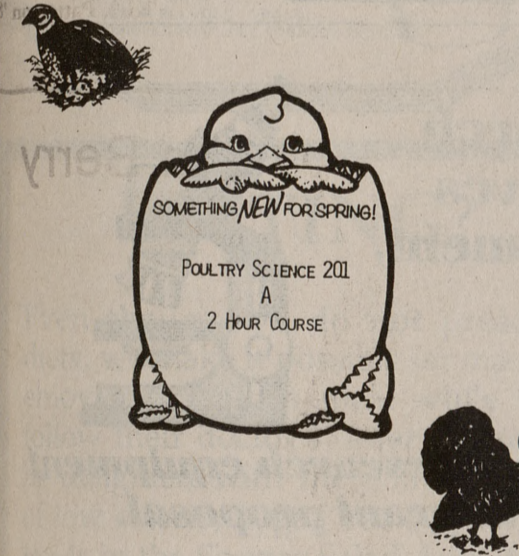


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