

U.S. should pressure Israel, Syria to remove troops from Lebanon

Last month Lebanon celebrated the 14th anniversary of the beginning of the war in which 100,000 people have been killed and 200,000 wounded.

The fighting, which has lasted almost without interruption since 1975, has brought ruin and horror to what was once one of the most democratic, most orderly, best educated and most technologically and culturally advanced nations in the Middle East.

The shooting in Lebanon is commonly regarded in the outside world as a manifestation of a civil war in which Christians are on one side and Muslims are on the other. This is not so.

Lebanon has a long history of intercommunal hostility that has often descended to violence. But Lebanon's 14-year-old travail is not, to any significant extent, the result of hostility between Lebanese of different political or religious persuasions. It is the result of foreign interference in, and aggression against, Lebanon.

The fighting, which began in 1975, was between the Lebanese Israeli military presence would be

Nabil Joubran
President, Lebanese Student Association

Christian militiamen and armed units of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which had moved its headquarters to Beirut from Jordan after the Black September massacre of 1970, and established itself as the government of a state within a state.

The confrontation arising from the PLO's presence in Lebanon led to invasion by the Syrian army as the principal, and almost sole, component of the so-called Arab Deterrent Force, and later by Israel.

The Israelis' objectives were largely realized when the PLO was expelled. They were not concerned to help the Lebanese regain their independence. The Israeli army still occupies southern Lebanon which serves as a buffer to Israel's northern border.

In any normal circumstances, the Israeli military presence would be

rightly regarded as intolerable by any sovereign government. But, it is overshadowed by the much more sinister occupation of Lebanese territory by a Syrian army of 30,000 to 40,000 soldiers.

Syria refuses to acknowledge Lebanon's sovereignty or right to exist, and so occupies at least two-thirds of Lebanon and is attempting to destroy all those Lebanese who try to maintain their country's independence.

On April 21, over 11,000 Lebanese and Americans of Lebanese origin, Muslims and Christians, demonstrated in Washington D.C. in favor of the U.S. government's using its influence on other democracies to bring about withdrawal of foreign armies from Lebanon.

In the meantime, Lebanese students in universities and colleges around the States are getting support from their American friends and all those who care about issues such as freedom, democracy and influencing the federal government to make a move to pressure the countries involved in Lebanon to pull their troops out.

Student offers remedies to construction woes

Ron Pippin
Senior Journalism Major

The Texas A&M campus is being turned upside down. You can't get to class without trudging through ankle-deep muck and mire. Female students can't walk down Ireland Street without being chased by slobbering bricklayers. And if the cement mixers don't run you over, the dump trucks will.

These are common complaints among students who fail to see the necessity and value of the construction taking place around the A&M campus.

Mike Stanglin, a senior finance major from Grapevine, said he's particularly bothered by the construction of the utility plant behind the Trigon.

"You would think they could find a better place for the plant, maybe off-campus," he said. "I mean that area is enough of an eyesore already."

Well do not fret, Mike. In November 1988, Keith Chapman, manager of construction at A&M, reported in *The Battalion* that the mid-campus site for a new utility plant was chosen for economic and aesthetic reasons.

"We are putting a lot of effort into making a utility plant that doesn't look like a utility plant," Chapman said. "It's kind of the same philosophy we used with the parking garage. It will be a brick structure, pleasing to the eye."

There's nothing more beautiful to me than a brick structure. And every time I pass the parking garage, I consider myself lucky to be attending a university that places so much emphasis on environmental art.

It's difficult for me to complain when I realize it's all being done for us, the students of Texas A&M University. Just think how much better off we'll be once the corner markers are completed.

Someday we'll be able to return to campus with our children and say, "Son, I remember when I was here. All these beautiful buildings used to be a bunch of old trees and grass. And all those darn squirrels and birds are gone, too."

For those of you who refuse to accept the changes and feel your rights as students are being violated, I have come up with several proposals, soon to be pre-

presented to the Board of Regents, that may improve the situation:

- A hardhat fee will be included on each student's fall fee slip.
- Helicopter shuttles will replace shuttle buses.
- All professors will be supplied with bullhorns so students can hear them.
- Each student will volunteer 10-15 hours a week to help with construction. Classes will be conducted by foremen, teaching students to lay bricks, sheet rock, etc. Each student will receive an Aggie Construction Certification Card.
- A special construction cheer, I mean "yell", will be added next year. The yell will go as follows:
Builders build,
Builders build,
Build, build,
Builders, builders build,
AAAAYYYYYY!"
- Crowded classes will be held in the Zachry staff parking lot, because there's always plenty of room.
- Sororities will hold mixers with construction teams to increase worker morale. (A construction cookie crew would be a nice gesture as well).
- Yell leaders will teach construction workers to say "Howdy" instead of "Ooh Baby!"

It is my belief that the implementation of these recommendations will make your stay at A&M a more pleasurable one and assuage some of the "trauma" that the thankless few of you are experiencing.

For those of you who continue to renounce the construction, Highway 6 runs both ways (but Asbury Street no longer does).

As with all columns, opinions expressed by Guest Columnists are not necessarily those of The Battalion. Persons interested in submitting guest columns to The Battalion should contact the Opinion Page Editor at 845-3314.

For a month and a half now, the Syrian army has been fighting against the Lebanese army and bombing Beirut daily.

The United States government seems to be indifferent.

Not acting against these mass killings that the Syrian army is conducting in Lebanon is no less than a declaration of American endorsement of the Syrian government — the government that is attempting to murder

Lebanon. All that we, the Lebanese, are asking for is a country free of foreign, armed intervention so we can work out our problems away from any outside influence.

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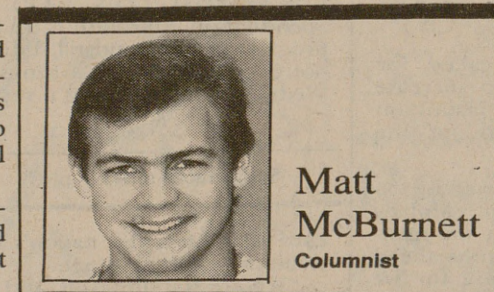
EPA toxic waste cleanup plan needs revision

After decades of polluted landfills, cancer-causing playgrounds and contaminated drinking water, the United States has finally freed itself of unclaimed hazardous waste sites. This amazing work is due to the wonderful effort of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Of course this is an absurd scenario. Superfund, the EPA program designed to rid us of toxic waste, is a failure. The fault lies with the EPA and the courts.

Superfund has managed to spotlessly clean 38 sites. Well doesn't that seem peachy?

It doesn't when one considers that the program began nine years ago and has managed to spend over \$4 billion on its feeble efforts. Even worse is that 1,137 top priority waste sites remain uncleaned and over 29,000 lower priority sites are still hazardous — staggering numbers that indicate the hazardous waste situation is out of hand.



Matt McBurnett
Columnist

Obviously the EPA is not using all of its resources. Superfunding should come from the responsible parties. This is only just — the government should not be responsible for private industry's mistakes.

The EPA blessed the Superfund program with the "treble-damages" trump card. If a company does not comply with Superfund orders, the EPA is allowed to fine the responsible company an amount triple the cost of cleanup. So far this is seen merely as a threat.

Superfund must use this valuable tool to survive. Too much of the program's money is spent in the courtroom. Unfortunately, this prevents the needed funds from being applied to the cleanup effort.

As it is now, to collect treble-damages the EPA must fight it out in court with the polluting company. To win, they must spend much of their budget on the legal proceedings, and therefore an unending spiral of litigation is perpetuated.

Because most of its funding is used in court, Superfund is forced to employ workers of low quality. According to an anonymous EPA contractor, the typical Superfund project manager is a "25-year-old kid on his first job out of college." An agency with such an important purpose must be an employer, not an educator.

Another problem arises because Superfund is legally forced to provide cleanup methods proven to be 100 percent effective. With such provisions as this, no inno-

vative new ideas are explored. So now, not only are the engineers toxic-waste rookies, but they are also not allowed to do their jobs.

Superfund can work, but the program must be altered. An agency of this magnitude must be provocative, not reactive. The process must take on an image of Eliot Ness, the tough Chicago mafia buster of the 1920's. Like Ness (not the Scottish monster), the agency's only advantage is that it has the law on its side.

Superfund must use its treble-damage capabilities. This would encourage many companies to dispose of their waste properly. The extra money collected from the fines would also help the agency recruit capable engineers.

If more inspiration is needed, the EPA should publicize the names of the violators and the quantities of toxins dumped. In light of the public outcry over Exxon's recent Alaskan oil fiasco, it is apparent that

the media has the power to produce change.

Someone should inform the leaders of our court system that the United States faces one of its toughest survival battles in history. In 1983, Senator Al Gore noted that the United States generates an annual amount of hazardous waste equivalent to fifteen times the body weight of every American.

Strict laws and numerous enforcement agencies now govern modern disposal of hazardous waste. If these programs are successful, the number of hazardous waste disposal sites will not increase significantly. Still, something must be done about the waste which is currently contaminating our country. The Superfund program, with a few modifications, can be a workable solution.

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(USPS 045 360)

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The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Journalism.

The Battalion is published Monday through Friday during Texas A&M regular semesters, except for holiday and examination periods.

Mail subscriptions are \$17.44 per semester, \$34.62 per school year and \$36.44 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request.

Our address: The Battalion, 230 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843-1111. Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station TX 77843-4111.

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