

regional

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The American University of Beirut is grappling with the legacy of nine years of civil war in Lebanon.

Founded by American missionaries in 1866, the university has been praised for helping foster the climate of Arab nationalism that led to the overthrow of colonial powers in the Middle East.

But now it is almost more a Lebanese than an Arab institution. The war has reduced enrollment of students from countries other than Lebanon, as well as contributed to a budget deficit of more than \$8 million.

Christian and Moslem students have repeatedly clashed on the campus over political issues that have divided their nation.

The university's American president, Malcolm Kerr, was assassinated in a hallway outside his office last January.

An engineering professor, Frank Regier, was kidnapped and held for more than two months after the Moslem militia takeover of west Beirut in February.

The university has Lebanese police and army guards at its gates, but some American faculty members feel the institution will continue to be a target as long as American foreign policy

is viewed as anti-Arab.

"The United States often makes decisions in Lebanon without paying attention to whether it puts Americans here in danger," said English instructor Tanyss Ludescher of Galena, Ill.

She pointed to the gunfire of the battleship New Jersey against Druse positions during last spring's civil war, and the recent U.S. veto of a U.N. Security Council resolution critical of the Israeli occupation of south Lebanon.

Ludescher — and several other Americans who spoke on condition they not be identified — charged that diplomats at the U.S. Embassy ignored them and other U.S. citizens here. She noted that the Americans have closed their Beirut embassy offices after the Sept. 20 truck-bomb attack on their east Beirut annex.

"They haven't even bothered to give us a telephone number where we can reach them in an emergency," she said. "It's a private club. When there's trouble they take care of each other, not us."

Welfare policy under challenge

PORTLAND (AP) — A lawsuit is challenging Oregon's

policy of cutting off welfare payments to people who have received lump-sum settlements as a result of personal injuries.

The lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court last week by Legal Aid Service on behalf of two Portland mothers, seeks certification as a class-action lawsuit on behalf of all welfare recipients who have faced such cutoffs.

The state's policy, the lawsuit says, is to take a lien for half of the amount of any personal injury settlement that goes directly to the welfare recipient. The recipient's monthly welfare allotment is then divided into the amount of the recipient's half of the settlement, and welfare payments are suspended for the resulting number of months.

The lawsuit contends such cutoffs deny equal protection of the law by letting the state count money from a personal injury settlement as "income."

The lawsuit was filed on behalf of Eufemia LaMadrid and Debbie Viskov.

LaMadrid was severely burned in a fire and received \$7,450 in compensation, after the state had taken an equal amount, the lawsuit said. The state then suspended monthly payments on which LaMadrid and her son were expected to live for the next 15 months.

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