

Lebanese violence sparks forest fires, leaves 11 dead

From Associated Press reports
BEIRUT, Lebanon — Forest fires caused by tank and artillery battles raged in the hills around Beirut on Monday, trapping thousands of people in mountain towns. At least 11 people were reported killed in the latest fighting.
In the waters off the Christian sector, Syrian gunboats seized a ship carrying supplies to the Christian forces. A senior Iraqi official said Iraq would urge Arab League ministers to call an emergency Arab summit to press Syria to leave Lebanon.
The second gunfight in three days erupted in south Lebanon, where Is-

raeli troops reportedly killed two guerrillas.
The mountain fighting centered on Ein el-Tuffaha, 18 miles east of Beirut, and the Christian stronghold of Souk el-Gharb, 16 miles to the south. The two towns sit on roads leading to the Christian enclave from the Bekaa valley.
Syrian guns above Ein el-Tuffaha hammered the Christian town of Bekfaya for seven hours, setting the surrounding woods afire.
Bekfaya's estimated 15,000 people were trapped in basements because fires blocked all escape routes from the town.

Another 5,000 people were stuck in nearby Ein Saadeh, said a police spokesman.
Both sides battled with tank fire overnight and through the day Monday around Souk el-Gharb, ringed by Syria's Druse allies.
Along Beirut's dividing Green Line, Syrian and Christian troops clashed with automatic weapons as howitzer and mortar guns thundered overhead, keeping the city's remaining 150,000 residents in bomb shelters.
Most of Beirut's 1.5 million people have fled the battered city over the past six months, seeking refuge in north,

east and south Lebanon.
Police said 11 people died and 34 were wounded in the latest Syrian-Christian duels. That raised the casualty toll to at least 844 killed and 2,508 wounded since March 8, when fighting erupted between the soldiers of Christian army commander Gen. Michel Aoun and the Syrian army.
In recent weeks, the Syrian and Druse militiamen have been pressuring the Christian defenses along the 66-mile mountain front forming the eastern flank of the 310-square-mile Christian enclave, where an estimated 1 million Christians are trapped with their backs

to the Mediterranean.
Two Syrian gunboats intercepted the merchant ship Carla about 20 miles off the coast of the enclave at mid-morning as it tried to bring supplies to the Christians, a police spokesman said.
The vessel was escorted to the Syrian-controlled port of Tripoli in north Lebanon, the spokesman said, speaking on condition of anonymity. He had no information about its nationality or owners.
The Syrian navy has turned back several ships trying to reach the Christian sector. Eight vessels have been sunk or set on fire by Syrian artillery.

Christian radio stations blamed the Syrians for the escalation in fighting, claiming they want to sabotage peace efforts of an Arab League committee.
"We're back to the same old game," said an announcer on the Voice of Free Lebanon radio. "Whenever the committee schedules a new meeting, the Syrians let all hell break loose while publicly pledging cooperation to defuse the fighting."
The foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, Morocco and Algeria, the three members of the committee, are to meet Wednesday in Saudi Arabia in an effort to reactivate peace efforts.

Many grocers reject environmentalists call for 'food police'

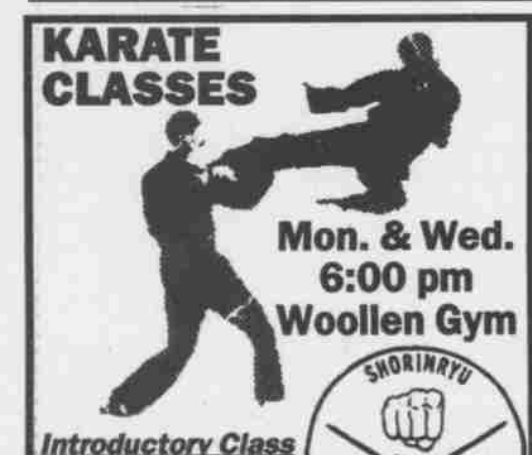
From Associated Press reports
WASHINGTON — An environmental group launched a campaign Monday to enlist grocers in the fight against pesticides on food, but grocery industry groups quickly denounced the drive as an attempt to "create a major crisis of confidence" in the nation's food supply.
The National Toxics Campaign said four regional grocery chains in California, Arizona and Massachusetts, and a large Canadian chain had agreed to sign a pledge designed to reduce pesticides on fresh fruits and vegetables.
The companies represent fewer than 200 stores in the United States, but Craig Merrilees, director of the program, called their participation "a major breakthrough" in efforts to use market forces to push for a reduction in pesticide use on food.
There are more than 35,000 supermarkets nationwide.
John O'Connor, executive director of the NTC, said efforts were underway to sign up hundreds of grocery retailers in every state; other organizers of the effort said talks were underway with several large chains.
But the environmentalists acknowl-

edged that most grocery chains, including the largest companies, have as yet shown little sign of wanting to join forces with the environmentalists.
Indeed, industry trade groups have expressed open hostility.
Representatives for distributors, processors and retailers of fruits and vegetables denounced the environmentalists' attempt to take the fight against pesticides into supermarkets, saying it is the government's job to determine safe pesticide levels for food products.
"We do not want to be the nation's food police," declared Karen Brown, a spokeswoman for the Food Marketing Institute, a trade group representing more than 1,500 grocery chains and stores.
She and other industry spokesmen characterized the environmentalists' efforts with such phrases as "misguided zealots," "coercion," "intimidation" and "blackmail."
"These organizations are seeking to create a major crisis of confidence in the food supply," declared Robert Carey, president of the Produce Mar-

keting Association. He accused the environmentalists of trying "to coerce supermarket retailers into assuming the job of government."
Meanwhile, the environmentalists accused the industry groups of trying to intimidate members into not joining the effort.
The environmentalists released a copy of a Food Marketing Institute letter sent to all its members in which it called the environmentalists "self-appointed vigilantes ... preying upon public fears and confusion."
The letter included advice from a Washington law firm that said participation in the anti-pesticide campaign might violate antitrust laws if the pledge were interpreted as a boycott against a supplier.
"I think what scares them is change," said Merrilees, who has been negotiating with grocery executives for months.
The agreement between the environmentalists, four U.S. chains, a distributor and the Canadian chain commits the retailers to little beyond general goals

of seeking a reduction in pesticides on foods.
In the agreement, the grocers pledge to "request" growers to disclose what pesticides were used on produce; to "actively encourage" the phasing out of cancer-causing chemicals on produce by 1995; and to "whenever economically feasible, carry certified organic produce and produce certified to contain no detected pesticide residues."
Stronger provisions once demanded by some environmentalists are missing from the pledge. Demands, for example, to have grocers post pesticide contents of fruits and vegetables or to immediately curb pesticide use are not included.
Pesticide use has received heavy attention following the uproar earlier this year over the pesticide Alar, which ultimately was pulled off the U.S.

market by its manufacturer after sales of apple products plummeted. Last week the manufacturers of the fungicide EBDG said they were taking it off the market because tests showed a higher-than-acceptable cancer risk.
While the participants in the pledge included Proviso Inc., the second largest grocery chain in Canada, with more than 1,000 stores, the signers represented no large U.S. chains.

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